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"PHELIM—BEHAVE, I SAY—NOW STOP WID YOU—WELL—WELL, BUT YOU'RE THE TAZIN' PHELIM!"
—*Phelim O'Toole's Courtship*, p. 1068, *T. and S. of the L. P.*

COLLIER'S UNABRIDGED EDITION.

THE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM CARLETON.

VOLUME III.

TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY:

NED M'KEOWN.
THE THREE TASKS.
SHANE FADH'S WEDDING.
LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.
THE BATTLE OF THE FACTIONS.
THE STATION.
THE PARTY FIGHT AND FUNERAL.
THE LOUGH DERG PILGRIM.
THE HEDGE SCHOOL.
THE MIDNIGHT MASS.
THE DONAGH; OR, THE HORSE STEALERS.
PHIL PURCEL, THE PIG-DRIVER.
THE GEOGRAPHY OF AN IRISH OATH.
THE LIANHAN SHEE.
GOING TO MAYNOOTH.
PHELIM O'TOOLE'S COURTSHIP.
THE POOR SCHOLAR.

THE BLACK PROPHET.

WILD GOOSE LODGE.

TUBBER DERG.

NEAL MALONE.

ART MAGUIRE.

ILLUSTRATED.

NEW YORK:
P. F. COLLIER, PUBLISHER.

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TRAITS AND STORIES

OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY.

INTRODUCTION.

It will naturally be expected, upon a new issue of works which may be said to treat exclusively of a people who form such an important and interesting portion of the empire as the Irish peasantry do, that the author should endeavor to prepare the minds of his readers—especially those of the English and Scotch—for understanding more clearly their general character, habits of thought, and modes of feeling, as they exist and are depicted in the subsequent volume. This is a task which the author undertakes more for the sake of his country than himself; and he rejoices that the demand for the present edition puts it in his power to aid in removing many absurd prejudices which have existed for time immemorial against his countrymen.

It is well known that the character of an Irishman has been hitherto uniformly associated with the idea of something unusually ridiculous, and that scarcely anything in the shape of language was supposed to proceed from his lips, but an absurd *congeries* of brogue and blunder. The habit of looking upon him in a ludicrous light has been so strongly impressed upon the English mind, that no opportunity has ever been omitted of throwing him into an attitude of gross and overcharged caricature, from which you might as correctly estimate his intellectual strength and moral proportions, as you would the size of a man from his evening shadow. From the immortal bard of Avon down to the writers of the present day, neither play nor farce has ever been presented to Englishmen, in which, when an Irishman *is* introduced, he is not drawn as a broad, grotesque blunderer, every sentence he speaks involving a bull, and every act the result of headlong folly, or cool but unstudied effrontery. I do not remember an instance in which he acts upon the stage any other part than that of the buffoon of the piece, uttering language which, wherever it may have been found, was at all events never heard in Ireland, unless upon the boards o a theatre. As for the Captain O'Cutters, O'Blunders, and Dennis Bulgrudderies, of the English stage, they never had existence except in the imagination of those who were as ignorant of the Irish people as they were of their language and feelings. Even Sheridan himself was forced to pander to this erroneous estimate and distorted conception of our character; for, after all, Sir Lucius O'Trigger was *his* Irishman but not Ireland's Irishman. I know that several of my readers may remind me of Sir Boyle Roche, whose bulls have become not only notorious, but proverbial. It is well known now, however, and was when he made them, that they were studied bulls, resorted to principally for the purpose of putting the government and opposition sides of the Irish House of Commons into good humor with each other, which they never failed to do—thereby, on more occasions than one, probably, preventing the effusion of blood, and the loss of life, among men who frequently decided even their political differences by the sword or pistol.

That the Irish either were or are a people remarkable for making bulls or blunders, is an imputation utterly unfounded, and in every sense untrue. The source of this error on the part of our neighbors is, however, readily traced. The language of our people has been for centuries, and is up to the present day, in a transition state. The English tongue is gradually superseding the Irish. In my own native place, for instance, there is not by any means so much Irish spoken now, as there was about twenty or five-and-twenty years ago. This fact, then, will easily account for the ridicule which is, and I fear ever will be, unjustly heaped upon those who are found to use a language which they do not properly understand. In the early periods of communication between the countries, when they stood in a hostile relation to each other, and even long afterwards, it was not surprising that "the wild Irishman" who expressed himself with difficulty, and often impressed the idiom of his own lan-

guage upon one with which he was not familiar, should incur, in the opinion of those who were strongly prejudiced against him, the character of making the bulls and blunders attributed to him. Such was the fact, and such the origin of this national slander upon his intellect,—a slander which, like every other, originates from the prejudice of those who were unacquainted with the quickness and clearness of thought that in general characterizes the language of our people. At this moment there is no man acquainted with the inhabitants of the two countries, who does not know, that where the English *is* vernacular in Ireland, it is spoken with far more purity and grammatical precision than is to be heard beyond the Channel. Those, then, who are in the habit of defending what are termed our bulls, or of apologizing for them, do us injustice; and Miss Edgeworth herself, when writing an essay upon the subject, wrote an essay upon that which does not, and never did exist. These observations, then, easily account for the view of us which has always been taken in the dramatic portion of English literature. There the Irishman was drawn in every instance as the object of ridicule, and consequently of contempt; for it is incontrovertibly true, that the man whom you laugh at you will soon despise.

In every point of view this was wrong, but principally in a political one. At that time England and Englishmen knew very little of Ireland, and, consequently, the principal opportunities afforded them of appreciating our character were found on the stage. Of course, it was very natural that the erroneous estimate of us which they formed there should influence them everywhere else. We cannot sympathize with, and laugh at, the same object at the same time; and if the Irishman found himself undeservedly the object of coarse and unjust ridicule, it was not very unnatural that he should requite it with a prejudice against the principles and feelings of Englishmen, quite as strong as that which was entertained against himself. Had this ridicule been confined to the stage, or directed at us in the presence of those who had other and better opportunities of knowing us, it would have been comparatively harmless. But this was not the case. It passed from the stage into the recesses of private life, wrought itself into the feelings until it became a prejudice, and the Irishman was consequently looked upon, and treated, as being made up of absurdity and cunning,—a compound of knave and fool, fit only to be punished for his knavery, or laughed at for his folly. So far, therefore, that portion of English literature which attempted to describe the language and habits of Irishmen, was unconsciously creating an unfriendly feeling between the two countries, a feeling which, I am happy to say, is fast disappearing, and which only requires that we should have a full and fair acquaintance with each other in order to be removed for ever.

At present, indeed, their mutual positions, civil, commercial, and political, are very different from what they were half a century ago, or even at a more recent period. The progress of science, and the astonishing improvements in steam and machinery, have so completely removed the obstructions which impeded their intercourse, that the two nations can now scarcely be considered as divided. As a natural consequence, their knowledge of each other has improved; and, as will always happen with generous people, they begin to see that the one was neither knave or fool, nor the other a churl or a boor. Thus has mutual respect arisen from mutual intercourse, and those who hitherto approached each other with distrust are beginning to perceive, that in spite of political or religious prejudices, no matter how stimulated, the truthful experience of life will in the event create nothing but good-will and confidence between the countries.

Other causes, however, led to this;—causes which in every state of society exercise a quick and powerful influence over the minds of men:—I allude to literature.

When the Irishman was made to stand forth as the butt of ridicule to his neighbors, the first that undertook his vindication was Maria Edgeworth. During her day, the works of no writer made a more forcible impression upon the circles of fashionable life in England, if we except the touching and inimitable Melodies of my countryman, Thomas Moore. After a lapse of some years, these two were followed by many others, who stood forth as lofty and powerful exponents of the national heart and intellect. Who can forget the melancholy but indignant reclamations of John Banim,—the dark and touching power of Gerald Griffin,—or the unrivalled wit and irresistible drollery of Samuel Lover? Nor can I omit remarking, that amidst the array of great talents to which I allude, the genius of our female writers bore off, by the free award of public opinion, some of the brightest wreaths of Irish literature. It would be difficult indeed, in any country, to name three women who have done more in setting right the character of Ireland and her people, whilst exhibiting at the same time the manifestations of high genius, than Miss Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, and Mrs. Hall. About the female

creations of the last-named lady, especially, there is a touching charm, blending the graceful and the pensive, which reminds us of a very general but peculiar style of Irish beauty, where the lineaments of the face combine at once both the melancholy and the mirthful in such a manner, that their harmony constitutes the unchangeable but ever-varying tenderness of the expression.

That national works like these, at once so healthful and so true, produced by those who knew the country, and exhibiting Irishmen not as the blundering buffoons of the English stage, but as men capable of thinking clearly and feeling deeply—that such works, I say, should enable a generous people, as the English undoubtedly are, to divest themselves of the prejudices which they had so long entertained against us, is both natural and gratifying. Those who achieved this great object, or aided in achieving it, have unquestionably rendered services of a most important nature to both the countries, as well as to literature in general.

Yet, whilst the highly gifted individuals whom I have named succeeded in making their countrymen respected, there was one circumstance which, nothwithstanding every exhibition of their genius and love of country, still remained as a reproach against our character as a nation. For nearly a century we were completely at the mercy of our British neighbors, who probably amused themselves at our expense with the greater license, and a more assured sense of impunity, inasmuch as they knew that we were utterly destitute of a national literature. Unfortunately the fact could not be disputed. For the last half century, to come down as far as we can, Ireland, to use a plain metaphor, instead of producing her native intellect for home consumption, was forced to subsist upon the scanty supplies which could be procured from the sister kingdom. This was a reproach which added great strength to the general prejudice against us.

A nation may produce one man or ten men of eminence, but if they cannot succeed in impressing their mind upon the spirit and intellect of their own country, so as to create *in her* a taste for literature or science, no matter how highly they may be appreciated by strangers, they have not reached the exalted purposes of genius. To make this more plain I shall extend the metaphor a little farther. During some of the years of Irish famine, such were the unhappy circumstances of the country, that she was exporting provisions of every description in the most prodigal abundance, which the generosity of England was sending back again for our support. So was it with literature. Our men and women of genius uniformly carried their talents to the English market, whilst we labored at home under all the dark privations of a literary famine.

In truth, until within the last ten or twelve years, an Irish author never thought of publishing in his own country, and the consequence was that our literary men followed the example of our great landlords; they became absentees, and drained the country of its intellectual wealth precisely as the others exhausted it of its rents.

Thus did Ireland stand in the singular anomaly of adding some of her most distinguished names to the literature of Great Britain, whilst she herself remained incapable of presenting anything to the world beyond a school-book or a pamphlet; and even of the latter it is well-known that if the subject of it were considered important, and its author a man of any talent or station in society, it was certain to be published in London.

Precisely in this state was the country when the two first volumes of the "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" were given to the public by the house of Messrs. Curry and Co., of Sackville Street. Before they appeared, their author, in consequence of their originating from an Irish press, entertained no expectation that they would be read, or excite any interest whatever in either England or Scotland. He was not, however, without a strong confidence that notwithstanding the wild and uncleared state of his own country at the time, so far as native literature was concerned, his two little pioneers would work their way with at least moderate success. He felt conscious that everything depicted in them was true, and that by those who were acquainted with the manners, and language, and feelings of the people, they would sooner or later be recognized as faithful delineations of Irish life. In this confidence the event justified him; for not only were his volumes stamped with an immediate popularity at home, where they could be best appreciated, but awarded a very gratifying position in the literature of the day by the unanimous and not less generous verdict of the English and Scotch critics.

Thus it was that the publication of two unpretending volumes, written by a peasant's son, established an important and gratifying fact—that our native country, if without a literature at the time, was at least capable of appreciating, and willing to foster the humble exertions of such as endeavored to create one. Nor was this all; for so far as resident authors were concerned, it was now clearly established that an Irish writer could be

successful at home without the necessity of appearing under the name and sanction of the great London or Edinburgh booksellers.

The rapid sale and success of the first series encouraged the author to bring out a second, which he did, but with a different bookseller. The spirit of publishing was now beginning to extend, and the talent of the country to put itself in motion. The popularity of the second effort surpassed that of the first, and the author had the gratification of knowing that the generosity of public feeling and opinion accorded him a still higher position than before, as did the critics of the day, without a dissentient voice. Still, as in the case of his first effort, he saw with honest pride that his own country and his countrymen placed the highest value upon his works, because they best understood them.

About this time the literary taste of the metropolis began to feel the first symptoms of life. As yet, however, they were very faint. Two or three periodicals were attempted, and though of very considerable merit, and conducted by able men, none of them, I believe, reached a year's growth. The "Dublin Literary Gazette," the "National Magazine," the "Dublin Monthly Magazine," and the "Dublin University Review," all perished in their infancy—not, however, because they were unworthy of success, but because Ireland was not then what she is now fast becoming, a reading, and consequently a thinking, country. To every one of these the author contributed, and he has the satisfaction of being able to say that there has been no publication projected purely for the advancement of literature in his own country, to which he has not given the aid of his pen, such as it was, and this whether he received remuneration or not. Indeed, the consciousness that the success of his works had been the humble means of inciting others to similar exertion in their own country, and of thus giving the first impulse to our literature, is one which has on his part created an enthusiastic interest in it which will only die with him.

Notwithstanding the failure of the periodicals just mentioned, it was clear that the intellect of the country was beginning to feel its strength and put forth its power. A national spirit that rose above the narrow distinctions of creed and party began to form itself, and in the first impulses of its early enthusiasm a periodical was established, which it is only necessary to name—the "Dublin University Magazine"—a work unsurpassed by any magazine of the day; and which, moreover, without ever departing from its principles, has been as a bond of union for literary men of every class, who have from time to time enriched its pages by their contributions. It has been, and is, a neutral spot in a country where party feeling runs so high, on which the Roman Catholic Priest and the Protestant Parson, the Whig, the Tory, and the Radical, divested of their respective prejudices, can meet in an amicable spirit. I mention these things with great satisfaction, for it is surely a gratification to know that literature, in a country which has been so much distracted as Ireland, is progressing in a spirit of noble candor and generosity, which is ere long likely to produce a most salutary effect among the educated classes of all parties, and consequently among those whom they influence. The number, ability, and importance of the works which have issued from the Dublin press within the last eight or ten years, if they could be enumerated here, would exhibit the rapid progress of the national mind, and satisfy the reader that Ireland in a few years will be able to sustain a native literature as lofty and generous, and beneficial to herself, as any other country in the world can boast of.

This hasty sketch of its progress I felt myself called upon to give, in order that our neighbors may know what we have done, and learn to respect us accordingly; and, if the truth must be told, from a principle of honest pride, arising from the position which our country holds, and is likely to hold, as an intellectual nation.

Having disposed of this topic, I come now to one of not less importance as being connected with the other,—the condition and character of the peasantry of Ireland.

It may be necessary, however, before entering upon this topic, to give my readers some satisfactory assurance that the subject is one which I ought well to understand, not only from my humble position in early life, and my uninterrupted intercourse with the people as one of themselves, until I had reached the age of twenty-two years, but from the fact of having bestowed upon it my undivided and most earnest attention ever since I left the dark mountains and green vales of my native Tyrone, and began to examine human life and manners as a citizen of the world. As it is admitted, also, that there exists no people whose character is so anomalous as that of the Irish, and consequently so difficult to be understood, especially by strangers, it becomes a still more appropriate duty on my part to give to the public, proofs sufficiently valid, that I come to a subject of such difficulty with unusual advantages on my side, and that, consequently, my exhibitions of Irish peasant life,

in its most comprehensive sense, may be relied on as truthful and authentic. For this purpose, it will be necessary that I should give a brief sketch of my own youth, early station in society, and general education, as the son of an honest, humble peasant.

My father, indeed, was a very humble man, but, in consequence of his unaffected piety and stainless integrity of principle, he was held in high esteem by all who knew him, no matter what their rank in life might be. When the state of education in Ireland during his youth and that of my mother is considered, it will not be a matter of surprise that what they did receive was very limited. It would be difficult, however, if not impossible, to find two persons in their lowly station so highly and singularly gifted. My father possessed a memory not merely great or surprising, but absolutely astonishing. He could repeat nearly the whole of the Old and New Testament by heart, and was, besides, a living index to almost every chapter and verse you might wish to find in it. In all other respects, too, his memory was equally amazing. My native place is a spot rife with old legends, tales, traditions, customs, and superstitions; so that in my early youth, even beyond the walls of my own humble roof, they met me in every direction. It was at home, however, and from my father's lips in particular, that they were perpetually sounding in my ears. In fact, his memory was a perfect storehouse, and a rich one, of all that the social antiquary, the man of letters, the poet, or the musician, would consider valuable. As a teller of old tales, legends, and historical anecdotes he was unrivalled, and his stock of them was inexhaustible. He spoke the Irish and English languages with nearly equal fluency. With all kinds of charms, old rauns, or poems, old prophecies, religious superstitions, tales of pilgrims, miracles, and pilgrimages, anecdotes of blessed priests and friars, revelations from ghosts and fairies, was he thoroughly acquainted. And so strongly were all these impressed upon my mind, by frequent repetition on his part, and the indescribable delight they gave me on mine, that I have hardly ever since heard, during a tolerably enlarged intercourse with Irish society, both educated and uneducated —with the antiquary, the scholar, or the humble senachie—any single tradition, usage, or legend, that, as far as I can at present recollect, was perfectly new to me or unheard before, in some similar or cognate dress. This is certainly saying much; but I believe I may assert with confidence that I could produce, in attestation of its truth, the names of Petrie, Sir W. Betham, Ferguson, and O'Donovan, the most distinguished antiquaries, both of social usages and otherwise, that ever Ireland produced. What rendered this, besides, of such peculiar advantage to me in after life, as a literary man, was, that I heard them as often in the Irish language as in the English, if not oftener: a circumstance which enabled me in my writings to transfer the genius, the idiomatic peculiarity and conversational spirit of the one language into the other, precisely as the people themselves do in their dialogue, whenever the heart or imagination happens to be moved by the darker or better passions.

Having thus stated faithfully, without adding or diminishing, a portion, and a portion only, of what I owe to one parent, I cannot overlook the debt of gratitude which is due to the memory of the other.

My mother, whose name was Kelly—Mary Kelly—possessed the sweetest and most exquisite of human voices. In her early life, I have often been told by those who had heard her sing, that any previous intimation of her presence at a wake, dance, or other festive occasion, was sure to attract crowds of persons, many from a distance of several miles, in order to hear from her lips the touching old airs of their country. No sooner was it known that she would attend any such meeting, than the fact spread throughout the neighborhood like wild-fire, and the people flocked from all parts to hear her, just as the fashionable world do now, when the name of some eminent songstress is announced in the papers; with this difference, that upon such occasions the voice of the one falls only upon the ear, whilst that of the other sinks deeply into the heart. She was not so well acquainted with the English tongue as my father, although she spoke it with sufficient ease for all the purposes of life; and for this reason, among others, she generally gave the old Irish versions of the songs in question, rather than the English ones. This, however, as I said, was not her sole motive. In the first place, she had several old songs, which at that time,—I believe, too, I may add at this,—had never been translated; and I very much fear that some valuable ones, both as to words and airs, have perished with her. Her family were all imbued with a poetical spirit, and some of her immediate ancestors composed in the Irish tongue several fine old songs, in the same manner as Carolan did; that is, some in praise of a patron or a friend, and others to celebrate rustic beauties, that have long since been sleeping in the dust. For this reason she had many old compositions that were almost peculiar to our family, which I am afraid could not now be pro-

cured at all, and are consequently lost. I think her uncle, and I believe her grandfather, were the authors of several Irish poems and songs, because I know that some of them she *sang*, and others she only *recited*.

Independently of this, she had a prejudice against singing the Irish airs to English words; an old custom of the country was thereby invaded, and an association disturbed which habit had rendered dear to her. I remember on one occasion, when she was asked to sing the English version of that touching melody, "The Red-haired Man's Wife," she replied, "I will sing it for you; but the English words and the air are like a quarrelling man and wife: *the Irish melts into the tune, but the English doesn't*," an expression scarcely less remarkable for its beauty than its truth. She spoke the words in Irish.

This gift of singing with such sweetness and power the old sacred songs and airs of Ireland, was not the only one for which she was remarkable. Perhaps there never lived a human being capable of giving the Irish cry, or Keene, with such exquisite effect, or of pouring into its wild notes a spirit of such irresistible pathos and sorrow. I have often been present when she has "raised the keene" over the corpse of some relative or neighbor, and my readers may judge of the melancholy charm which accompanied this expression of her sympathy, when I assure them that the general clamor of violent grief was gradually diminished, from admiration, until it became ultimately hushed, and no voice was heard but her own—wailing in sorrowful but solitary beauty. This pause, it is true, was never long, for however great the admiration might be which she excited, the hearts of those who heard her soon melted, and even strangers were often forced to confess her influence by the tears which she caused them to shed for those whose deaths could, otherwise, in no other way have affected them. I am the youngest, I believe, of fourteen children, and of course could never have heard her until age and the struggles of life had robbed her voice of its sweetness. I heard enough, however, from her blessed lips, to set my heart to an almost painful perception of that spirit which steeps these fine old songs in a tenderness which no other music possesses. Many a time, of a winter night, when seated at her spinning-wheel, singing the *Trougha*, or *Shuil agra*, or some other old "song of sorrow," have I, then little more than a child, gone over to her, and with a broken voice and eyes charged with tears, whispered, "Mother dear, don't sing that song, it makes me sorrowful;" she then usually stopped, and sang some one which I liked better because it affected me less. At this day I am in possession of Irish airs, which none of our best antiquaries in Irish music have heard, except through me, and of which neither they nor I myself know the names.

Such, gentle reader, were my humble parents, under whose untaught, but natural genius, setting all other advantages aside, it is not to be wondered at that my heart should have been so completely moulded into that spirit and those feelings which characterize my country and her children.

These, however, were my domestic advantages; but I now come to others, which arose from my position in life as the son of a man who was one of the people. My father, at the farthest point to which my memory goes back, lived in a townland called Prillisk, in the parish of Clogher, and county of Tyrone; and I only remember living there in a cottage. From that the family removed to a place called Tonagh, or, more familiarly, Towney, about an English mile from Prillisk. It was here I first went to school to a Connaught-man named Pat Frayne, who, however, remained there only for a very short period in the neighborhood. Such was the neglected state of education at that time, that for a year or two afterwards there was no school sufficiently near to which I could be sent. At length it was ascertained that a master, another Connaught-man by the way, named O'Beirne, had opened a school—a hedge-school of course—at Findramore. To this I was sent, along with my brother John, the youngest of the family next to myself. I continued with him for about a year and a half, when who should return to our neighborhood but Pat Frayne, the redoubtable prototype of Mat Kavanagh in "the Hedge School." O'Beirne, it is true, was an excellent specimen of the hedge-schoolmaster, but nothing at all to be compared to Frayne. About the period I write of, there was no other description of school to which any one could be sent, and the consequence was, that rich and poor (I speak of the peasantry), Protestant and Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist, boys and girls, were all congregated under the same roof, to the amount of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty, or two hundred. In this school I remained for about a year or two, when our family removed to a place called Nurchasy, the property of the Rev. Dr. Story, of Corick. Of us, however, he neither could nor did know anything, for we were under-tenants, our immediate landlord being no less a person than Hugh Traynor, then so famous for the distillation, *sub rosa*, of exquisite *mountain dew*, and to whom the reader will find allu-

sions made in that capacity more than once in the following volume. Nurchasy was within about half a mile of Findramore, to which school, under O'Beirne, I was again sent. Here I continued, until a classical teacher came to a place called Tulnavert, now the property of John Birney, Esq., of Lisburn, to whom I had the pleasure of dedicating the two first volumes of my "Traits and Stories." This tyrannical blockhead, whose name I do not choose to mention, instead of being allowed to teach classics, ought to have been put into a strait-waistcoat or the stocks, and either whipped once in every twenty-four hours, or kept in a madhouse until the day of his death. He had been a student in Maynooth, where he became deranged, and was, of course, sent home to his friends, with whom he recovered sufficiently to become cruel and hypocritical, to an extent which I have never yet seen equalled. Whenever the son of a rich man committed an offence, he would grind his teeth and growl like a tiger, but in no single instance had he the moral courage or sense of justice to correct him. On the contrary, he uniformly "nursed his wrath to keep it warm," until the son of a poor man transgressed, and on his unfortunate body he was sure to wreak signal vengeance for the stupidity or misconduct of the wealthy blockhead. This was his system, and my readers may form some opinion of the low ebb at which knowledge and moral feeling were at the time, when I assure them, that not one of the humbler boys durst make a complaint against the scoundrel at home, unless under the certainty of being well flogged for their pains. A hedge-schoolmaster was then held in such respect and veneration, that no matter how cruel or profligate he might be, his person and character, unless in some extraordinary case of cruelty, resulting in death or mutilation, were looked upon as free from all moral or legal responsibility. This certainly was not the fault of the people, but of those laws, which, by making education a crime, generated ignorance, and then punished it for violating them.

For the present it is enough to say, that a most interesting child, a niece of my own, lost her life by the severity of Pat Frayne, the Connaught-man. In a fit of passion he caught the poor girl by the ear, which he nearly plucked out of her head. The violence of the act broke some of the internal muscles or tendons,—suppuration and subsequently inflammation, first of the adjoining parts and afterwards of the brain, took place, and the fine intelligent little creature was laid in a premature grave, because the ignorance of the people justified a pedantic hedge-schoolmaster in the exercise of irresponsible cruelty. Frayne was never prosecuted, neither was the classical despot, who by the way sits for the picture of the fellow in whose school, and at whose hands, the Poor Scholar receives the tyrannical and heartless treatment mentioned in that tale. Many a time the cruelty exercised towards that unhappy boy, whose name was Quin, has wrung my heart and brought the involuntary tears to my eyes,—tears which I was forced to conceal, being very well assured from experience, that any sympathy of mine, if noticed, would be certain to procure me or any other friend of his, an ample participation in his punishment. He was, in truth, the scape-goat of the school, and it makes my blood boil, even whilst I write, to think how the poor friendless lad, far removed from either father or mother, was kicked, and cuffed, and beaten on the naked head, with a kind of stick between a horse-rod and a cudgel, until his poor face got pale, and he was forced to totter over to a seat in order to prevent himself from fainting or falling in consequence of severe pain.

At length, however, the inhuman villain began to find, when it was too late, that his ferocity, in spite of the terror which it occasioned, was soon likely to empty his school. He now became as fawning and slavish as he had before been insolent and savage; but the wealthy farmers of the neighborhood, having now full cognizance of his conduct, made common cause with the poorer men whose children were so shamefully treated, and the result was, that in about six weeks they forced him to leave that part of the country for want of scholars, having been literally groaned out of it by the curses and indignation of all who knew him.

Here then was I once more at a loss for a school, and I must add, in no disposition at all to renew my acquaintance with literature. Our family had again removed from Nurchasy, to a place up nearer the mountains, called Springtown, on the northern side of the parish. I was now about fourteen, and began to feel a keen relish for all the sports and amusements of the country, into which I entered with a spirit of youth and enthusiasm rarely equalled. For about two years I attended no school, but it was during this period that I received, notwithstanding, the best part of my education. Our farm in Springtown was about sixteen or eighteen acres, and I occasionally assisted the family in working at it, but never regularly, for I was not called upon to do so, nor would I have been permitted even had I wished it. It was about six months after our removal to Springtown, that an incident in my early

life occurred which gave rise to one of the most popular tales perhaps, with the exception of "The Miser," that I have written—that is "The Poor Scholar." There being now no classical school within eighteen or twenty miles of Springtown, it was suggested to our family by a nephew of the parish priest, then a young man of six or eight and twenty, that, under the circumstances, it would be a prudent step on their part to prepare an outfit, and send me up to Munster as a poor scholar, to complete my education. Pat Frayne, who by the way had been a poor scholar himself, had advised the same thing before, and as the name does not involve disgrace I felt no reluctance in going, especially as the priest's nephew, who proposed it, had made up his mind on accompanying me for a similar purpose. Indeed, the poor scholars who go to Munster are indebted for nothing but their bed and board, which they receive kindly and hospitably from the parents of the scholars. The masters are generally paid their full terms by these pitiable beings, but this rule, like all others, of course, has its exceptions. At all events, my outfit was got ready, and on a beautiful morning in the month of May I separated from my family to go in quest of education. There was no collection, however, in my case, as mentioned in the tale; as my own family supplied the funds supposed to be necessary. I have been present, however, at more than one collection made for similar purposes, and heard a good-natured sermon not very much differing from that given in the story.

The priest's nephew, on the day we were to start, suddenly changed his mind, and I consequently had to undertake the journey alone, which I did with a heavy heart. The further I got from home, the more my spirits sank, or in the beautiful image of Goldsmith,

"I dragged at each remove a lengthening chain."

I travelled as far as the town of Granard, and during the journey, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the almost parental tenderness and hospitality which I received on my way could not be adequately described. The reader will find an attempt at it in the story. The parting from home and my adventures on the road are real.

Having reached Granard my courage began to fail, and my family at home, now that I had departed from them, began also to feel something like remorse for having permitted one so young and inexperienced as I then was, to go abroad alone upon the world. My mother's sorrow, especially, was deep, and her cry was, "Oh, why did I let my boy go? maybe I will never see him again!"

At this time, as the reader may be aware from my parental education, there was not a being alive more thoroughly imbued with superstition; and, whether for good or ill, at all events that superstition returned me to my family. On reaching Granard, I felt, of course, fatigued, and soon went to bed, where I slept soundly. It was not, however, a dreamless sleep: I thought I was going along a strange path to some particular place, and that a mad bull met me on the road, and pursued me with such speed and fury that I awoke in a state of singular terror. That was sufficient; my mind had been already wavering, and the dream determined me. The next morning after breakfast I bent my steps homewards, and, as it happened, my return took a weighty load of bitter grief from the heart of my mother and family. The house I stopped at in Granard was a kind of small inn, kept by a man whose name was Peter Grehan. Such were the incidents which gave rise to the tale of "The Poor Scholar."

I was now growing up fast, and began to feel a boyish ambition of associating with those who were older and bigger than myself. Although miserably deficient in education—for I had been well beaten but never taught—yet I was looked upon as a prodigy of knowledge; and I can assure the reader that I took very good care not to dispel that agreeable delusion. Indeed, at this time, I was as great a young literary coxcomb as ever lived, my vanity being high and inflated exactly in proportion to my ignorance, which was also of the purest water. This vanity, however, resulted as much from my position and circumstances as from any strong disposition to be vain on my part. It was generated by the ignorance of the people, and their extreme veneration for any thing in the shape of superior knowledge. In fact, they insisted that I knew every earthly subject, because I had been a couple of years at Latin, and was designed for a priest. It was useless to undeceive men who would not be convinced, so I accordingly gave them, as they say, "the length of their tether;" nay, to such purpose did I ply them with proofs of it, that my conversation soon became as fine a specimen of pedantic bombast as ever was uttered. Not a word under six feet could come out of my lips, even of English; but as the best English, after all, is but commonplace, I peppered them with vile Latin, and an occasional verse in Greek, from St. John's Gospel, which I translated for them into a wrong meaning, with an air of lofty superiority that made them turn up their

eyes with wonder. I was then, however, but one of a class which still exists, and will continue to do so until a better informed generation shall prevent those who compose it from swaggering about in all the pompous pride of young impostors, who boast of knowing "the seven languages." The reader will find an illustration of this in the sketch of "Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth."

In the meantime, I was unconsciously but rapidly preparing myself for a position in Irish literature, which I little dreamt I should ever occupy. I now mingled in the sports and pastimes of the people, until indulgence in them became the predominant passion of my youth. Throwing the stone, wrestling, leaping, foot-ball, and every other description of athletic exercise filled up the measure of my early happiness. I attended every wake, dance, fair, and merry-making in the neighborhood, and became so celebrated for dancing hornpipes, jigs, and reels, that I was soon without a rival in the parish.

This kind of life, though very delightful to a boy of my years, was not, however, quite satisfactory, as it afforded me no ultimate prospect, and the death of my father had occasioned the circumstances of the family to decline. I heard, about this time, that a distant relative of mine, a highly respectable priest, had opened a classical school near Glasslough, in the county of Monaghan. To him I accordingly went, mentioned our affinity, and had my claims allowed. I attended his school with intermission for about two years, at the expiration of which period I once more returned to our family, who were then very much reduced.

I was now about nineteen, strong, active, and could leap two-and-twenty feet on a dead level; but though thoroughly acquainted with Irish life among my own class, I was as ignorant of the world as a child. Ever since my boyhood, in consequence of the legends which I had heard from my father, about the far-famed Lough-derg, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, I felt my imagination fired with a romantic curiosity to perform a station at that celebrated place. I accordingly did so, and the description of that most penal performance, some years afterwards, not only constituted my *début* in literature, but was also the means of preventing me from being a pleasant, strong-bodied parish priest at this day; indeed, it was the cause of changing the whole destiny of my subsequent life.

"The Lough-derg Pilgrim" is given in the present edition, and may be relied on, not so much as an ordinary narrative, as a perfect transcript of what takes place during the stations which are held there in the summer months.

Having returned from this, I knew not exactly how to dispose of myself. On one thing I was determined—never to enter the Church;—but this resolution I kept faithfully to myself. I had nothing for it now but to forget my sacerdotal prospects, which, as I have said, had already been renounced, or to sink down as many others like me had done, into a mere tiller of the earth,—a character in Ireland far more unpopular than that which the Scotch call "a sticket minister!"

It was about this period, that chance first threw the inimitable Adventures of the renowned Gil Blas across my path. During my whole life I had been an insatiable reader of such sixpenny romances and history-books as the hedge-schools afforded. Many a time have I given up my meals rather than lose one minute from the interest excited by the story I was perusing. Having read Gil Blas, however, I felt an irrepressible passion for adventure, which nothing could divert; in fact, I was as much the creature of the impulse it excited, as the ship is of the helmsman, or the steam-engine of the principle that guides it.

Stimulated by this romantic love of adventure, I left my native place, and directed my steps to the parish of Killanny, in the county of Louth, the Catholic clergyman of which was a nephew of our own Parish Priest, brother to him who proposed going to Munster with me, and an old school-fellow of my own, though probably twenty years my senior. This man's residence was within a quarter or half a mile's distance of the celebrated Wild-goose Lodge, in which, some six months before, a whole family, consisting of, I believe, eight persons, men, women, and children, had been, from motives of personal vengeance, consumed to ashes. I stopped with him for a fortnight, and succeeded in procuring a tuition in the house of a wealthy farmer named Piers Murphy, near Corcreagh. This, however, was a tame life, and a hard one, so I resolved once more to give up a miserable salary and my board, for the fortunate chances which an ardent temperament and a strong imagination perpetually suggested to me as likely to be evolved out of the vicissitudes of life. Urged on, therefore, by a spirit of romance, I resolved to precipitate myself on the Irish Metropolis, which I accordingly entered with two shillings and ninepence in my pocket; an utter stranger, of course friendless; ignorant of the world, without aim or object, but not without a certain strong feeling of vague and shapeless ambition, for the truth was I had not yet begun to

think, and, consequently, looked upon life less as a reality than a vision.

Thus have I, as a faithful, but I fear a dull guide, conducted my reader from the lowly cottage in Prillisk, where I first drew my breath, along those tangled walks and green lanes which are familiar to the foot of the peasant alone, until I enter upon the highways of the world, and strike into one of its greatest and most crowded thoroughfares—the Metropolis. Whether this brief sketch of my early and humble life, my education, my sports, my hopes and struggles, be calculated to excite any particular interest, I know not; I can only assure my reader that the details, so far as they go, are scrupulously correct and authentic, and that they never would have been obtruded upon him, were it not from an anxiety to satisfy him that in undertaking to describe the Irish peasantry as they are, I approach the difficult task with advantages of knowing them, which perhaps few Irish writers ever possessed; *and this is the only merit which I claim.*

A few words now upon the moral and physical condition of the people may not be unsuitable before I close, especially for the sake of those who may wish to acquire a knowledge of their general character, previous to their perusal of the following volume. This task, it is true, is not one of such difficulty now as it was some years ago. Much light has been thrown on the Irish character, not only by the great names I have already enumerated, but by some equally high which I have omitted. On this subject it would be impossible to overlook the names of Lever, Maxwell, or Otway, or to forget the mellow hearth-light and chimney-corner tone, the happy dialogue and legendary truth which characterize the exquisite fairy legends of Crofton Croker. Much of the difficulty of the task, I say, has been removed by these writers, but there remains enough still behind to justify me in giving a short dissertation upon the habits and feelings of my countrymen.

Of those whose physical state has been and is so deplorably wretched, it may not be supposed that the tone of morals can be either high or pure; and yet if we consider the circumstance in which he has been for such a lengthened period placed, it is undeniable that the Irishman is a remarkably moral man. Let us suppose, for instance, that in England and Scotland the great body of the people had for a couple or three centuries never received an adequate or proper education: in that case, let us ask what the moral aspect of society in either country would be to-day? But this is not merely the thing to be considered. The Irishman was not only *not* educated, but actually punished for attempting to acquire knowledge in the first place, and in the second, punished also for the ignorance created by its absence. In other words, the penal laws rendered education criminal, and then caused the unhappy people to suffer for the crimes which proper knowledge would have prevented them from committing. It was just like depriving a man of his sight, and afterwards causing him to be punished for stumbling. It is beyond all question, that from the time of the wars of Elizabeth and the introduction of the Reformation, until very recently, there was no fixed system of wholesome education in the country. The people, possessed of strong political and religious prejudices, were left in a state of physical destitution and moral ignorance, such as were calculated to produce ten times the amount of crime which was committed. Is it any wonder, then, that in such a condition, social errors and dangerous theories should be generated, and that neglect, and poverty, and ignorance combined should give to the country a character for turbulence and outrage? The same causes will produce the same effects in any country, and were it not that the standard of personal and domestic comfort was so low in Ireland, there is no doubt that the historian would have a much darker catalogue of crime to record than he has. The Irishman, in fact, was mute and patient under circumstances which would have driven the better fed and more comfortable Englishman into open outrage and contempt of all authority. God forbid that I for a moment should become the apologist of crime, much less the crimes of my countrymen! but it is beyond all question that the principles upon which the country was governed have been such as to leave down to the present day many of their evil consequences behind them. The penal code, to be sure, is now abolished, but so are not many of its political effects among the people, Its consequences have not yet departed from the country, nor has the hereditary hatred of the laws, which unconsciously descended from father to son, ceased to regulate their conduct and opinions. Thousands of them are ignorant that ever such a thing as a penal code existed; yet the feeling against law survives, although the source from which it has been transmitted may be forgotten. This will easily account for much of the political violence and crime which moments of great excitement produce among us; nor need we feel surprised that this state of things should be continued, to the manifest injury of the people themselves, by the baneful effects of agitation.

The period, therefore, for putting the

character of our country fairly upon its trial has not yet arrived; although we are willing to take the Irishman as we find him; nor would we shrink even at the present moment from comparing him with any of his neighbors. His political sins and their consequences were left him as an heirloom, and result from a state of things which he himself did not occasion. Setting these aside, where is the man to be found in any country who has carried with him through all his privations and penalties so many of the best virtues of our nature? In other countries the man who commits a great crime is always a great criminal, and the whole heart is hardened and debased, but it is not so in Ireland. The agrarian and political outrage is often perpetrated by men who possess the best virtues of humanity, and whose hearts as individuals actually abhor the crime. The moral standard here is no doubt dreadfully erroneous, and until a correct and Christian one, emanating from a better system of education, shall be substituted for it, it will, with a people who so think and feel, be impossible utterly to prevent the occurrence of these great evils. We must wait for thirty or forty years, that is, until the rising or perhaps the subsequent generation shall be educated *out of* these wild and destructive prejudices, before we can fully estimate the degree of excellence to which our national character may arrive. In my own youth, and I am now only forty-four years, I do not remember a single school under the immediate superintendence of either priest or parson, and that in a parish the extent of which is, I dare say, ten miles by eight. The instruction of the children was altogether a matter in which no clergy of any creed took an interest. This was left altogether to hedge schoolmasters, a class of men who, with few exceptions, bestowed such an education upon the people as is sufficient almost, in the absence of all other causes, to account for much of the agrarian violence and erroneous principles which regulate their movements and feelings on that and similar subjects. For further information on this matter the reader is referred to the "Hedge School."

With respect to these darker shades of the Irish character, I feel that, consistently with that love of truth and impartiality which has guided, and I trust ever shall guide, my pen, I could not pass them over without further notice. I know that it is a very questionable defence to say that some, if not principally all, of their crimes originate in agrarian or political vengeance. Indeed, I believe that, so far from this circumstance being looked upon as a defence, it ought to be considered as an aggravation of the guilt; inasmuch as it is, beyond all doubt, at least a far more manly thing to inflict an injury upon an enemy face to face, and under the influence of immediate resentment, than to crouch like a cowardly assassin behind a hedge and coolly murder him without one moment's preparation, or any means whatsoever of defence. This is a description of crime which no man with one generous drop of blood in his veins can think of without shame and indignation. Unhappily, however, for the security of human life, every crime of the kind results more from the dark tyranny of these secret confederacies, by which the lower classes are organized, than from any natural appetite for shedding blood. Individually, the Irish loathe murder as much as any people in the world; but in the circumstances before us, it often happens that the Irishman is not a free agent—very far from it: on the contrary, he is frequently made the instrument of a system, to which he must become either an obedient slave or a victim.

Even here, however, although nothing can or ought to be said to palliate the cowardly and unmanly crime of assassination, yet something can certainly be advanced to account for the state of feeling by which, from time to time, and by frequent occurrence, it came to be so habitual among the people, that by familiarity it became stripped of its criminality and horror.

Now it is idle, and it would be dishonest, to deny the fact, that the lower Irish, until a comparatively recent period, were treated with apathy and gross neglect by the only class to whom they could or ought to look up for sympathy or protection. The conferring of the elective franchise upon the forty-shilling freeholders, or in other words upon paupers, added to the absence of proper education, or the means of acquiring it, generated, by the fraudulent subdivision of small holdings, by bribery, perjury, and corruption, a state of moral feeling among the poorer classes which could not but be productive of much crime. And yet, notwithstanding this shameful prostitution of their morals and comfort, for the purposes of political ambition or personal aggrandizement, they were in general a peaceable and enduring people; and it was only when some act of unjustifiable severity, or oppression in the person of a middleman, agent, or hard-hearted landlord, drove them houseless upon the world, that they fell back upon the darker crimes of which I am speaking. But what, I ask, could be expected from such a state of things? And who generated it? It is not, indeed, to be wondered at that a set of men, who so completely neglected their duties as the old landlords of Ireland did,

should have the very weapons turned against themselves which their own moral profligacy first put into the hands of those whom they corrupted. Up to this day the peasantry are charged with indifference to the obligation of an oath, and in those who still have anything to do in elections, I fear with too much truth. But then let us inquire who first trained and familiarized them to it? Why, the old landlords of Ireland; and now their descendants, and such of themselves as survive, may behold, in the crimes which disgrace the country, the disastrous effects of a bad system created by their forefathers or themselves.

In the meantime, I have no doubt that by the removal of the causes which produced this deplorable state of things, their disastrous effects will also soon disappear. That the present landlords of Ireland are, with the ordinary number of exceptions, a very different class of men from those who have gone before them, is a fact which will ultimately tell for the peace and prosperity of the country. Let the ignorance of the people, or rather the positive bad knowledge with which, as to a sense of civil duties, their minds are filled, be removed, and replaced with principles of a higher and more Christian tendency. Let the Irish landlords consider the interests of their tenantry as their own, and there is little doubt that with the aids of science, agricultural improvement, and the advantages of superior machinery, the Irish will become a prosperous, contented, and great people.

It is not just to the general character of our people, however, to speak of these crimes as national, for, in fact, they are not so. If Tipperary and some of the adjoining parts of Munster were blotted out of the moral map of the country, we would stand as a nation in a far higher position than that which we occupy in the opinion of our neighbors. This is a distinction which in justice to us ought to be made, for it is surely unfair to charge the whole kingdom with the crimes which disgrace only a single county of it, together with a few adjacent districts—allowing, of course, for some melancholy exceptions in other parts.

Having now discussed, with, I think, sufficient candor and impartiality, that portion of our national character which appears worst and weakest in the eyes of our neighbors, and attempted to show that pre-existing circumstances originating from an unwise policy had much to do in calling into existence and shaping its evil impulses, I come now to a more agreeable task—the consideration of our social and domestic virtues. And here it is where the Irishman immeasurably outstrips all competitors. His hospitality is not only a habit but a principle; and indeed of such a quick and generous temperament is he, that in ninety cases out of a hundred the feeling precedes the reflection, which in others prompts the virtue. To be a stranger and friendless, or suffering hunger and thirst, is at any time a sufficient passport to his heart and purse; but it is not merely the thing or virtue, but also his manner of doing it, that constitutes the charm which runs through his conduct. There is a natural politeness and sincerity in his manner which no man can mistake; and it is a fact, the truth of which I have felt a thousand times, that he will make you feel the acceptance of the favor of kindness he bestows to be a compliment to himself rather than to you. The delicate ingenuity with which he diminishes the nature or amount of his own kindness, proves that he is no common man, either in heart or intellect; and when all fails he will lie like Lucifer himself, and absolutely seduce you into an acceptance of his hospitality or assistance. I speak now exclusively of the peasantry. Certainly in domestic life there is no man so exquisitely affectionate and humanized as the Irishman. The national imagination is active and the national heart warm, and it follows very naturally that he should be, and is, tender and strong in all his domestic relations. Unlike the people of other nations, his grief is loud but lasting, vehement but deep; and whilst its shadow has been chequered by the laughter and mirth of a cheerful disposition, still in the moments of seclusion, at his bedside prayer, or over the grave of those he loved, it will put itself forth after half a life with a vivid power of recollection which is sometimes almost beyond belief.

The Irish, however, are naturally a refined people; but by this I mean the refinement which appreciates and cherishes whatever there is in nature, as manifested through the influence of the softer arts of music and poetry. The effect of music upon the Irish heart I ought to know well, and no man need tell me that a barbarous or cruel people ever possessed national music that was beautiful and pathetic. The music of any nation is the manifestation of its general feeling, and not that which creates it; although there is no doubt but the one when formed perpetuates and reproduces the other. It is no wonder, then, that the domestic feelings of the Irish should be so singularly affectionate and strong, when we consider that they have been, in spite of every obstruction, kept under the softening influence of music and poetry. This music and poetry, too, essentially their own—and whether streaming of a summer

evening along their pastoral fields, echoing through their still glens, or poured forth at the winter hearth, still, by its soft and melancholy spirit, stirring up a thousand tender associations that must necessarily touch and improve the heart. And it is for this reason that that heart becomes so remarkably eloquent, if not poetical, when moved by sorrow. Many a time I have seen a Keener commence her wail over the corpse of a near relative, and by degrees she has risen from the simple wail or cry to a high but mournful recitative, extemporized, under the excitement of the moment, into sentiments that were highly figurative and impressive. In this she was aided very much by the genius of the language, which possesses the finest and most copious vocabulary in the world for the expression of either sorrow or love.

It has been said that the Irish, notwithstanding a deep susceptibility of sorrow, are a light-hearted people; and this is strictly true. What, however, is the one fact but a natural consequence of the other? No man for instance ever possessed a higher order of humor, whose temperament was not naturally melancholy, and no country in the world more clearly establishes that point than Ireland. Here the melancholy and mirth are not simply in a proximate state, but frequently flash together, and again separate so quickly, that the alternation or blending, as the case may be, whilst it is felt by the spectators, yet stands beyond all known rules of philosophy to solve it. Any one at all acquainted with Ireland, knows that in no country is mirth lighter, or sorrow deeper, or the smile and the tear seen more frequently on the face at the same moment. Their mirth, however, is not levity, nor their sorrow gloom; and for this reason none of those dreary and desponding reactions take place, which, as in France especially, so frequently terminate in suicide.

The recreations of the Irish were very varied and some of them of a highly intellectual cast. These latter, however, have altogether disappeared from the country, or at all events are fast disappearing. The old Harper is now hardly seen; the Senachie, where he exists, is but a dim and faded representative of that very old Chronicler in his palmy days; and the Prophecy-man unfortunately has survived the failure of his best and most cherished predictions. The poor old Prophet's stock in trade is nearly exhausted, and little now remains but the slaughter which is to take place at the mill of Louth, when the mill is to be turned three times with human blood, and the miller to have six fingers and two thumbs on each hand, as a collateral prognostication of that bloody event.

The amusement derived from these persons was undoubtedly of a very imaginative character, and gives sufficient proof, that had the national intellect been duly cultivated, it is difficult to say in what position as a literary country Ireland might have stood at this day. At present the national recreations, though still sufficiently varied and numerous, are neither so strongly marked nor diversified as formerly. Fun, or the love of it, to be sure, is an essential principle in the Irish character; and nothing that can happen, no matter how solemn or how sorrowful it may be, is allowed to proceed without it. In Ireland the house of death is sure to be the merriest one in the neighborhood; but here the mirth is kindly and considerately introduced, from motives of sympathy—in other words, for the alleviation of the mourners' sorrow. The same thing may be said of its association with religion. Whoever has witnessed a Station in Ireland made at some blessed lake or holy well, will understand this. At such places it is quite usual to see young men and women devoutly circumambulating the well or lake on their bare knees, with all the marks of penitence and contrition strongly impressed upon their faces; whilst again, after an hour or two, the same individuals may be found in a tent dancing with ecstatic vehemence to the music of the bagpipe or fiddle.

All these things, however, will be found, I trust I may say faithfully depicted in the following volume—together with many other important features of our general character; which I would dwell on here, were it not that they are detailed very fully in other parts of my works, and I do not wish to deprive them of the force of novelty when they occur, nor to appear heavy by repetition.

In conclusion, I have endeavored, with what success has been already determined by the voice of my own country, to give a panorama of Irish life among the people—comprising at one view all the strong points of their general character—their loves, sorrows, superstitions, piety, amusements, crimes, and virtues; and in doing this, I can say with solemn truth that I painted them honestly, and without reference to the existence of any particular creed or party.

W. Carleton.

Dublin.

NED M'KEOWN.

Ned M'Keown's house stood exactly in an angle, formed by the cross-roads of Kilrudden. It was a long, whitewashed building, well thatched and furnished with the usual appurtenances of yard and offices. Like most Irish houses of the better sort, it had two doors, one opening into a garden that sloped down from the rear in a southern direction. The barn was a continuation of the dwelling-house, and might be distinguished from it by a darker shade of color, being only rough-cast. It was situated on a small eminence, but, with respect to the general locality of the country, in a delightful vale, which runs up, for twelve or fourteen miles, between two ranges of dark, well-defined mountains, that give to the interjacent country the form of a low inverted arch. This valley, which altogether, allowing for the occasional breaks and intersections of hill-ranges, extends upwards of thirty miles in length, is the celebrated valley of the "Black Pig," so well known in the politico-traditional history of Ireland, and the legends connected with the famous Beal Dearg.*

That part of it where Ned M'Keown resided was peculiarly beautiful and romantic. From the eminence on which the house stood, a sweep of the most fertile meadow-land stretched away to the foot of a series of intermingled hills and vales, which bounded this extensive carpet towards the north. Through these meadows ran a smooth river, called the *Mullin-burn*, which wound its way through them with such tortuosity, that it was proverbial in the neighborhood to say of any man remarkable for dishonesty, "He's as crooked as the Mullin-burn," an epithet which was sometimes, although unjustly, jocularly applied to Ned himself. This deep but narrow river had its origin in the glens and ravines of a mountain which bounded the vale in a south-eastern direction; and after sudden and heavy rains it tumbled down with such violence and impetuosity over the crags and rock-ranges in its way, and accumulated so amazingly, that on reaching the meadows it inundated their surface, carrying away sheep, cows, and cocks of hay upon its yellow flood. It also boiled and eddied, and roared with a hoarse *sugh*, that was heard at a considerable distance.

On the north-west side ran a ridge of high hills, with the cloud-capped peek of Knock-

* The following extract, taken from a sketch by the author called "The Irish Prophecy-man," contains a very appropriate illustration of the above passage. "I have a little book that contains a prophecy of the milk-white hind an the bloody panther, an' a foreboding of the slaughter there's to be in the Valley of the Black Pig, as foretould by Beal Derg, or the prophet wid the red mouth, who never was known to speak but when he prophesied, or to prophesy but when he spoke."

"The Lord bless an' keep us!—an' why was he called the Man with the Red Mouth, Barney?"

"I'll tell you that: first, bekase he always prophesied about the slaughter an' fightin' that was to take place in the time to come; an', secondly, bekase, while he spoke, the red blood always trickled out of his mouth, as a proof that what he foretould was true." * *

"Glory be to God! but that's wondherful all out. Well, well!"

"Ay, an' Beal Derg, or the Red Mouth, is still livin'."

"Livin! why, is he a man of our own time?"

"Our own time! The Lord help you! It's more than a thousand years since he made the prophecy. The case you see is this: he an' the ten thousand witnesses are lyin' in an enchanted sleep in one of the Montherlony mountains."

"An' how is that known, Barney?"

"It's known. Every night at a certain hour one of the witnesses—an' they're all sogers, by the way—must come out to look for the sign that's to come."

"An' what is that, Barney?"

"It's the fiery cross; an' when he sees one on aich of the four mountains of the north, he's to know that the same sign's abroad in all the other parts of the kingdom. Beal Derg an' his men are then to waken up, an' by their aid the Valley of the Black Pig is to be set free forever."

"An' what is the Black Pig, Barney?"

"The Prospitarian church, that stretches from Enniskillen to Darry, an' back again from Darry to Enniskillen."

"Well, well, Barney, but prophecy is a strange thing, to be sure! Only think of men livin' a thousand years!"

"Every night one of Beal Derg's men must go to the mouth of the cave, which opens of itself, an' then look out for the sign that's expected. He walks up to the top of the mountain, an' turns to the four corners of the heavens, to thry if he can see it; an' when he finds that he cannot, he goes back to Beal Derg, who, afther the other touches him, starts up and axis him, 'Is the time come?' He replies, 'No; the *man is*, but the *hour* is *not!*' an' that instant they're both asleep again. Now, you see, while the soger is on the mountain top, the mouth of the cave is open, an' any one may go in that might happen to see it. One man it appears did, an' wishin' to know from curiosity whether the sogers were dead or livin', he touched one of them wid his hand, who started up an' axed him the same question, 'Is the time come?' Very fortunately he said, '*No;*' an' that minute the soger was as sound in his trance as before."

"An', Barney, what did the soger mane when he said, 'The man is, but the hour is not?'"

"What did he mane? I'll tell you that. The man is Bonyparty, which manes, when put into proper explanation, the *right side*; that is, the true cause. Larned men have found *that* out."

many rising in lofty eminence above them; these, as they extended towards the south, became gradually deeper in their hue, until at length they assumed the shape and form of heath-clad mountains, dark and towering. The prospect on either range is highly pleasing, and capable of being compared with any I have ever seen, in softness, variety, and that serene lustre which reposes only on the surface of a country rich in the beauty of fertility, and improved by the hand of industry and taste. Opposite Knockmany, at a distance of about four miles, on the south-eastern side, rose the huge and dark outline of Cullimore, standing out in gigantic relief against the clear blue of a summer sky, and flinging down his frowning and haughty shadow almost to the firm-set base of his lofty rival; or, in winter, wrapped in a mantle of clouds, and crowned with unsullied snow, reposing in undisturbed tranquillity, whilst the loud voice of storms howled around him.

To the northward, immediately behind Cullimore, lies Althadhawan, a deep, craggy, precipitous glen, running up to its very base, and wooded with oak, hazel, rowan-tree, and holly. This picturesque glen extends two or three miles, until it melts into the softness of grove and meadow, in the rich landscape below. Then, again, on the opposite side, is *Lumford's Glen*, with its overhanging rocks, whose yawning depth and silver waterfall, of two hundred feet, are at once finely and fearfully contrasted with the elevated peak of Knockmany, rising into the clouds above it.

From either side of these mountains may be seen six or eight country towns—the beautiful grouping of hill and plain, lake, river, grove, and dell—the reverend cathedral*—the white-washed cottage, and the comfortable farm-house. To these may be added the wild upland and the cultivated demesne, the green sheep-walk, the dark moor, the splendid mansion, and ruined castle of former days. Delightful remembrance! Many a day, both of sunshine and storm, have I, in the strength and pride of happy youth, bounded, fleet as the mountain roe, over these blue hills! Many an evening, as the yellow beams of the setting sun shot slantingly, like rafters of gold, across the depth of this blessed and peaceful valley, have I followed, in solitude, the impulses of a wild and wayward fancy, and sought the quiet dell, or viewed the setting sun, as he scattered his glorious and shining beams through the glowing foliage of the trees, in the vista, where I stood; or wandered along the river, whose banks were fringed with the hanging willow, whilst I listened to the thrush singing among the hazels that crowned the sloping green above me, or watched the splashing otter, as he ventured from the dark angles and intricacies of the upland glen, to seek his prey in the meadow-stream during the favorable dusk of twilight. Many a time have I heard the simple song of Roger M'Cann, coming from the top of brown Dunroe, mellowed, by the stillness of the hour, to something far sweeter to the heart than all that the labored pomp of musical art and science can effect; or the song of Katty Roy, the beauty of the village, streaming across the purple-flowered moor,

"Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains."

Many a time, too, have I been gratified, in the same poetical hour, by the sweet sound of honest Ned M'Keown's ungreased cart-wheels, clacking, when nature seemed to have fallen asleep after the day-stir and animation of rural business—for Ned was sometimes a carman—on his return from Dublin with a load of his own groceries, without as much money in his pocket as would purchase an wherewith to silence the sounds which the friction produced—regaling his own ears the while, as well as the music of the cart would permit his melody to be heard, with his favorite tune of *Cannie Sooqoh*.*

Honest, blustering, good-humored Ned was the indefatigable merchant of the village; ever engaged in some ten or twenty pound speculation, the capital of which he was sure to extort, perhaps for the twelfth time, from the savings of Nancy's frugality, by the equivocal test of a month or six weeks' consecutive sobriety, and which said speculation he never failed to wind up by the total loss of the capital for Nancy, and the capital loss of a broken head for himself. Ned had eternally some bargain on his hands: at one time you might see him a yarn-merchant, planted in the next market-town upon the upper step of Mr. Birney's hall-door, where the yarn-market was held, surrounded by a crowd of eager country-women, anxious to give Ned the preference, first, because he was a well-wisher; secondly, because he hadn't his heart in the penny; and thirdly, because he gave sixpence a spangle more than any other man in the market.

There might Ned be found, with his twenty pounds of hard silver jingling in the bottom of a green bag, as a decoy to his customers, laughing loud as he piled the yarn in

* To-wit, of Clogher.

* "The Jolly Pedlar,"—a fine old Irish air.

an ostentatious heap, which, in the pride of his commercial sagacity, he had purchased at a dead loss. Again you might see him at a horse-fair, cantering about on the back of some sleek but broken-winded jade, with spavined legs, imposed on him as "a great bargain entirely," by the superior cunning of some rustic sharper; or standing over a hogshead of damaged flaxseed, in the purchase of which he shrewdly suspected himself of having overreached the seller—by allowing him for it a greater price than the prime seed of the market would have cost him. In short, Ned was never out of a speculation, and whatever he undertook was sure to prove a complete failure. But he had one mode of consolation, which consisted in sitting down with the fag-end of Nancy's capital in his pocket, and drinking night and day with this neighbor and that, whilst a shilling remained; and when he found himself at the end of his tether, he was sure to fasten a quarrel on some friend or acquaintance, and to get his head broken for his pains.

None of all this blustering, however, happened within the range of Nancy's jurisdiction. Ned, indeed, might drink and sing, and swagger and fight—and he contrived to do so; but notwithstanding all his apparent courage, there was *one* eye which made him quail, and before which he never put on the hector;—there was *one*, in whose presence the loudness of his song would fall away into a very awkward and unmusical quaver, and under whose glance his laughing face often changed to the visage of a man who is disposed to anything but mirth.

The fact was this: Whenever Ned found that his speculation was *gone a shaughran*,* as he termed it, he fixed himself in some favorite public house, from whence he seldom stirred while his money lasted, except when dislodged by Nancy, who usually, upon learning where he had taken cover, paid him an unceremonious visit, to which Ned's indefensible delinquency gave the color of legitimate authority. Upon these occasions, Nancy, accompanied by two sturdy "servant-boys," would sally forth to the next market-town, for the purpose of bringing home "graceless Ned," as she called him. And then you might see Ned between the two servants, a few paces in advance of Nancy, having very much the appearance of a man performing a pilgrimage to the gallows, or of a deserter guarded back to his barrack, in order to become a target for the muskets of his comrades. Ned's compulsory return always became a matter of some notoriety; for Nancy's excursion in quest of the "graceless" was not made without frequent denunciations of wrath against him, and many melancholy apologies to the neighbors for entering upon the task of personally securing him. By this means her enterprise was sure to get wind, and a mob of the idle young men and barefooted urchins of the village, with Bob M'Cann, "*a three-quarter cliff*"* of a fellow—half knave, half fool, was to be found, a little below the village, upon an elevation of the road, that commanded a level stretch of half a mile or so, in anxious expectation of the procession. No sooner had this arrived at the point of observation, than the little squadron would fall rearward

* Gone astray.

* This is equal to the proverb—"he wants a square," that is, though knavish not thoroughly rational; in other words, a combination of knave and fool. Bob, in consequence of his accomplishments, was always a great favorite in the village. Upon some odd occasions he was a ready and willing drudge at everything, and as strong as a ditch. Give him only a good fog-meal—which was merely a trifle, just what would serve three men or so—give him, we say, a fog-meal of this kind, about five times a day, with a liberal promise of more, and never was there a Scotch Brownie who could get through so much work. He knew no fatigue; frost and cold had no power over him; wind, sleet, and hail he laughed at; rain! it stretched his skin, he said, after a meal—and that, he added, was a comfort. Notwithstanding all this, he was neither more nor less than an impersonation of laziness, craft, and gluttony. The truth is, that unless in the hope of being gorged he would do nothing; and the only way to get anything out of him was, never to let the gorge precede the labor, but always, on the contrary, to follow it. Bob's accomplishments were not only varied, but of a very elevated order, and the means of holding him in high odor among us. Great and wonderful, Heaven knows, did we look upon his endowments to be. No man, wise or otherwise, could "hunt the brock," alias the badger, within a hundred miles of Bob; for when he covered his mouth with his two hands, and gave forth the very sounds which the badger is said to utter, did we not look upon him—Bob—with as much wonder and reverence as we would have done upon the badger himself? Phup-um-phup—phup-um-phup — phup-um — phup-um—phup-um-phup. Who but a first-rate genius could accomplish this feat in such a style? Bob could crow like a cock, bark like a dog, mew like a cat, neigh like a horse, bray like an ass, or gobble like a turkey-cock. Unquestionably, I have never heard him equalled as an imitator of birds and beasts. Bob's crack feat, however, was performing the *Screw-pin Dance*, of which we have only this to say, that by whatsoever means he became acquainted with it, it is precisely the same dance which is said to have been exhibited by some strolling Moor before the late Queen Caroline. It is, indeed, very strange, but no less true, that many of the oriental customs are yet prevalent in the remote and isolated parts of Ireland. Had the late Mr. O'Brien, author of the Essay on Irish Round Towers, seen Bob perform the dance I speak of, he would have hailed him as a regular worshipper of Budh, and adduced his performance as a living confirmation of his theory. Poor Bob! he is gone the way of all fools, and all flesh.

NANCY, ACCOMPANIED BY TWO STURDY SERVANT-BOYS, WOULD SALLY FORTH TO THE NEXT MARKET-TOWN FOR THE PURPOSE OF BRINGING HOME GRACELESS NED.—*Ned M'Keown*, p. 656, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

of the principal group, for the purpose of extracting from Nancy a full and particular account of the capture.

"Indeed, childher, it's no wonder for yez to enquire! Where did I get him, Dick?—musha, and where would I get him but in the ould place, a-hagur; with the ould set: don't yez know that a dacent place or dacent company wouldn't sarve Ned?—nobody but Shane Martin, and Jimmy Tague, and the other blackguards." *

"And what will you do with him, Nancy?"

"Och! thin, Dick, avourneen, it's myself that's jist tired thinking of that; at any rate, consumin' to the loose foot he'll get this blessed month to come, Dick, agra!"

"Throth, Nancy," another mischievous monkey would exclaim, "if you hadn't great patience entirely, you couldn't put up with such threatment, at all at all."

"Why thin, God knows it's true for you, Barney. D'ye hear that, 'graceless?' the very childhre making a laughing-stock and a may-game of you!—but wait till we get under the roof, any how."

"Ned," a third would say, "isn't it a burning shame for you to break the poor crathur's heart this a-way? Throth, but you ought to hould down your head, sure enough—a dacent woman! that only for her you wouldn't have a house over you, so you wouldn't."

"And throth, and the same house is going, Tim," Nancy would exclaim, "and when it goes, let him see thin who'll do for him; let him thry if his blackguards will stand to him, when he won't have poor foolish Nancy at his back."

During these conversations, Ned would walk on between his two guards with a dogged-looking and condemned face; Nancy behind him, with his own cudgel, ready to administer an occasional bang whenever he attempted to slacken his pace, or throw over his shoulder a growl of dissent or justification.

On getting near home, the neighbors would occasionally pop out their heads, with a smile of good-humored satire on their faces, which Nancy was very capable of translating:

"Ay," she would say, addressing them, "I've caught him—here he is to the fore. Indeed you may well laugh, Kitty Rafferty; not a one of myself blames you for it.—Ah, ye mane crathur," aside to Ned, "if you had the blood of a hen in you, you wouldn't have the neighbors braking their hearts laughing at you in sich a way; and above all the people in the world, them Rafferty's, that got the decree against us at the last sessions, although I offered to pay within fifteen shillings of the differ—the grubs!"

Having seen her hopeful charge safely deposited on the hob, Nancy would throw her cloak into this corner, and her bonnet into that, with the air of a woman absorbed by the consideration of some vexatious trial; she would then sit down, and, lighting her *doodeen*,* exclaim—

"Wurrah, wurrah! but it's me that's the heart-scalded crathur with that man's four quarters! The Lord may help me and grant me patience with him, any way!—to have my little honest, hard-earned penny spint among a pack of vagabonds, that don't care if him and me wor both down the river, so they could get their skinful of drink out of him! No matther, agra, things can't long be this a-way; but what does Ned care?—give *him* drink and fighting, and his blackguards about him, and that's his glory. There now's the landlord coming down upon us for the rint; and unless he takes the cows out of the byre, or the bed from anundher us, what in the wide earth is there for him?"

The current of this lecture was never interrupted by a single observation from Ned, who usually employed himself in silently playing with "Bunty;" a little black cur, without a tail, and a great favorite with Nancy; or, if he noticed anything out of its place in the house, he would arrange it with great apparent care. In the meantime, Nancy's wrath generally evaporated with the smoke of the pipe—a circumstance which Ned well knew; for after she had sucked it until it emitted a shrill, bubbling sound, like that from a reed, her brows, which wore at other times an habitual frown, would gradually relax into a more benevolent expression—the parenthetical curves on each side of her mouth, formed by the irascible pursing of her lips, would become less

* The reader, here, is not to rely implicitly upon the accuracy of Nancy's description of the persons alluded to. It is true the men were certainly companions and intimate acquaintances, of Ned's, but not entitled to the epithet which Nancy in her wrath bestowed upon them. Shane was a roll king fighting, drinking butcher, who cared not a fig whether he treated you to a drink or a drubbing. Indeed, it was at all times extremely difficult to say whether he was likely to give you the drink first or the drubbing afterwards, or *vice versa*. Sometimes he made the drubbing the groundwork for the drink, and quite as frequently the drink the groundwork for the drubbing. Either one or other you were sure to receive at his hands; but his general practice was to give both. Shane, in fact, was a good-humored fellow, well liked, and nobody's enemy but his own. Jemmy Tague was a quiet man, who could fight his corner, however, if necessary. Shane was called Kittogue Shane, from being left-handed. Both were butchers, and both, we believe, are alive and kicking at this day.

* A short pipe.

marked—the dog or cat, or whatever else came in her way, instead of being kicked aside, or pursued in an underfit of digressional peevishness, would be put out of her path with gentler force—so that it was, in such circumstances, a matter of little difficulty to perceive that conciliation would soon be the order of the day. Ned's conduct on these critical occasions was very prudent and commendable: he still gave Nancy her own way; never "jawed back to her;" but took shelter, as it were, under his own patience, until the storm had passed, and the sun of her good humor began to shine out again. Nancy herself, now softened by the fumes of her own pigtail, usually made the first overtures to a compromise, but, without departing from the practice and principles of higher negotiators, always in an indirect manner: as, "Biddy, avourneen," speaking to her niece, "maybe that crathur," pointing to Ned, "ate nothing to-day; you had better, agra! get him the could bacon that's in the cupboard, and warm for him, upon the *greeshaugh*,* them *yallow-legs*† that's in the colindher; though God he knows it's ill my common ‡—but no matther, ahagur! There's enough said, I'm thinking—give them to him."

On Ned seating himself to his bacon and potatoes, Nancy would light another pipe, and plant herself on the opposite hob, putting some interrogatory to him, in the way of business—always concerning a third person, and still in a tone of dry ironical indifference: as—

"Did you see Jimmy Connolly on your travels?"

"No."

"Humph! Can you tell us if Andy Morrow sould his coult?"

"He did."

"May be you have *gumption* enough to know what he got for him?"

"Fifteen guineas."

"In troth, and it's more nor a poor body would get; but, anyway, Andy Morrow desarves to get a good price; he's a man that takes care of his own business, and minds nothing else. I wish that filly of ours was dockt; you ought to spake to Jim M'Quade about her: it's time to make her up—you know, we'll want to sell her for the rint."

This was an assertion, by the way, which Ned knew to have everything but truth in it.

"Never heed the filly," Ned would reply, "I'll get Charley Lawdher § to dock her—but it's not her I'm thinking of: did you hear the news about the tobacky?"

"No; but I hope we won't be long so."

"Well, any how, we wor in luck to buy in them three last rowls."

"Eh?—in luck? death-alive, how, Ned?"

"Sure there was three ships of it lost last week, on their way from the kingdom of Swuzerland, in the Aist Indians, where it grows: we can rise it thruppence a-pound now."

"No, Ned! you're not in airnest?"

"Faith, Nancy, you may say I am; and as soon as Tom Loan comes home from Dublin, he'll tell us all about it; and for that matther, maybe it may rise sixpence a-pound; any how we'll gain a lob by it, I'm thinking."

"May I never stir, but that's luck! Well, Ned, you may thank me for that, any way, or sorra rowl we'd have in the four corners of the house; and you wanted to persuade me against buying them; but I knew betther—for the tobacky's always sure to get a bit of a hitch at this time o' the year."

"Bedad, you can do it, Nancy: I'll say that for you—that is, and give you your own way."

"Eh!—can't I, Ned? And, what was betther, I bate down Pether M'Entee three-ha'pence a-pound afther I bought them."

"Ha! ha! ha!—by my sannies, Nancy, as to market-making, they may all throw their caps at you, you thief o' the world; you can do them nately!"

"Ha! ha! ha! Stop, Ned; don't drink that water—it's not from the garden-well. I'll jist mix a sup of this last stuff we got from the mountains, till you taste it: I think it's not worse nor the last—for Hugh Traynor's* an ould hand at making it."

This was all Ned wanted: his point was now carried; but with respect to the rising of the tobacco, the less that is said about it the better for his veracity.

Having thus given the reader a slight sketch of Ned and Nancy, and of the beautiful valley in which this worthy speculator had his residence, I shall next proceed to introduce him to the village circle, which, during the long winter nights, might be found in front of Ned's kitchen-fire of blazing turf, whose light was given back in ruddy reflection from the bright pewter plates, that were ranged upon the white and well-scoured dresser in just and gradual order, from the small egg-plate to the large and capacious dish, whereon, at Christmas and Easter, the substantial round of corned

* Hot embers.

† A kind of potato.

‡ It's ill becoming—or it ill becomes me, to overlook his conduct.

§ A blacksmith, and an honest man.

* Hugh, who, by the way, is still living, and, I am glad to hear, in improved circumstances, was formerly in the habit of making a drop of the right sort.

beef used to rear itself so proudly over the more ignoble joints at the lower end of the table.

Seated in this clear-obscure of domestic light—which, after all, gives the heart a finer and more touching notion of enjoyment than the glitter of the theatre or the blaze of the saloon—might be found first, Andy Morrow,* the juryman of the quarter-sessions, sage and important in the consciousness of legal knowledge, and somewhat dictatorial withal in its application to such knotty points as arose out of the subjects of their nocturnal debates. Secondly, Bob Gott, who filled the foreign and military departments, and related the wonderful history of the ghost which appeared to him on the night after the battle of Bunker's-hill. To him succeeded Tom M'Roarkin, the little asthmatic anecdotarian of half the country, remarkable for chuckling at his own stories. Then came old M'Kinny, poacher and horse-jockey; little, squeaking, thin-faced Alick M'Kinley, a facetious farmer of substance; and Shane Fadh, who handed down traditions and fairy tales. Enthroned on one hob sat Pat Frayne, the schoolmaster with the short arm, who read and explained the newspaper for "old Square Colwell," and was looked upon as premier to the aforesaid cabinet; Ned himself filled the opposite seat of honor.

One night, a little before the Christmas holidays in the year 18—, the personages just described were seated around Ned's fire, some with their chirping pints of ale or porter, and others with their quantum of *Hugh Traynor*, or mountain-dew, and all with good humor, and a strong tendency to happiness, visible in their faces. The night was dark, close, and misty; so dark, indeed, that, as Nancy said, "you could hardly see your finger before you. Ned himself was full of fun, with a pint of porter beside him, and a pipe in his mouth, just in his glory for the night. Opposite to him was Pat Frayne, with an old newspaper on his knee, which he had just perused for the edification of his audience; beside him was Nancy, busily employed in knitting a pair of sheep's-grey stockings for Ned; the remaining personages formed a semicircular ring about the hearth. Behind, on the kitchen-table sat Paddy Smith, the servant-man, with three or four of the *gorsoons* of the village about him, engaged in a little under-plot of their own. On the other side, a little removed from the light, sat Ned's two nieces, Biddy and Bessy Connolly, the former with Atty Johnson's mouth within whisper-reach of her ear, and the latter seated close to her professed admirer, Billy Fulton, her uncle's shopman.* This group was completely abstracted from the entertainment which was going forward in the circle round the fire.

"I wondher," said Andy Morrow, "what makes Joe M'Crea throw down that fine ould castle of his, in Aughentain?"

"I'm tould," said M'Roarkin, "that he expects money; for they say there's a lot of it buried somewhere about the same building."

"Jist as much as there's in my wig," replied Shane Fadh, "and there's ne'er a pocket to it yet. Why, bless your sowl, how could there be money in it, whin the last man of the Grameses that owned it—I mane of the ould stock, afore it went into Lord Mountjoy's hands—sould it out, ran through the money, and died begging afther? Did none of you ever hear of—

'————————Ould John Grame,
That *swally'd* the castle of Aughentain?'"

"That was long afore my time," said the poacher; "but I know that the rabbit-burrow between that and Jack Appleden's garden will soon be run out."

"*Your* time!" responed Shane Fadh, with contempt; "ay, and your father's afore you: *my* father doesn't remimber more nor seeing his funeral, and a merry one it was; for my grandfather, and some of them that had a respect for the family and his forbarers, if they hadn't it for himself, made up as much money among them as berried him dacently any how,—ay, and gave him a rousin' wake into the bargain, with lashins of whiskey, stout beer, and ale; for in them times—God be with them—every farmer brewed his own ale and beer;†—more betoken, that one pint of it was worth a keg of this wash of yours, Ned."

"Wasn't it he that used to *appear?*" inquired M'Roarkin.

"Sure enough he did, Tom."

"Lord save us," said Nancy, "what could trouble him, I dunna?"

"Why," continued Shane Fadh, "some said one thing, and some another; but the upshot of it was this: when the last of the Grameses sould the estate, castle, and all, it seems he didn't resave all the purchase money; so, afther he had spint what he got, he applied to the purchaser for the remainder—him that the Mountjoy family bought it

* The names here are not fictitious. Andy Morrow, a most respectable and intelligent farmer, is not long dead, and few, if any, of the rest survive.

* Each pair have been since married, and live not more happily than I wish them. Fulton still lives in Ned's house at the Cross-roads.

† Fact; about seventy or eighty years ago the farmers of Ireland brewed their own malt drink.

from; but it seems he didn't draw up writings, or sell it according to law, so that the thief o' the world bafled him from day to day, and wouldn't give him a penny—bekase he knew, the blaggard, that the Square was then as poor as a church mouse, and hadn't money enough to thry it at law with him; but the Square was always a simple asy-going man. One day he went to this fellow, riding on an ould garran, with a shoe loose—the only baste he had in the world—and axed him, for God's sake, to give him of what he owed him, if it was ever so little; 'for,' says he, 'I have not as much money betune me and death as will get a set of shoes for my horse.'"

"'Well,' says the nager, 'if you're not able to keep your horse shod, I would jist recommend you to sell him, and thin his shoes won't cost you any thing,' says he.

"The ould Square went away with tears in his eyes, for he loved the poor brute, bekase they wor the two last branches of the ould stock."

"Why," inquired M'Kinley, in his small squeaking voice, "was the horse related to the family?"

"I didn't say he was related to the fam—— Get out, you *shingaun!*" * returned the old man, perceiving by the laugh that now went round, the sly tendency of the question—"no, nor to *your* family either, for he had nothing of the ass in him—eh? will you put that in your pocket, my little *skinadhre* †—ha! ha! ha!"

The laugh was now turned against M'Kinley.

Shane Fadh proceeded: "The ould Square, as I was tellin' yez, cried to find himself an' the poor baste so dissolute; but when he had gone a bit from the fellow, he comes back to the vagabone—'Now,' says he, 'mind my words—if you happen to live afther me, you need never expect a night's pace; for I here make a serous an' solemn vow, that as long as my property's in your possession, or in any of your seed, breed, or gineration's, I'll never give over hauntin' you an' them, till you'll rue to the back-bone your dishonesty an' chathery to me an' this poor baste, that hasn't a shoe to his foot.'

"'Well,' says the nager, 'I'll take chance of that, any way.'"

"I'm tould, Shane," observed the poacher, "that the Square was a fine man in his time, that wouldn't put up with sich treatment from anybody."

"Ay, but he was ould now," Shane replied, "and too wakely to fight. A fine man, Bill!—he was the finest man, 'cepting ould Square Storey, that ever was in this counthry. I hard my granfather often say that he was six feet four, and made in proportion—a handsome, black-a-vis'd * man, with great dark whiskers. Well! he spent money like sklates, and so he died miserable—but had a merry birrel, as I said."

"But," inquired Nancy, "did he ever *appear* to the rogue that chated him?"

"Every night in the year, Nancy, exceptin' Sundays; and what was more, the horse along with him—for he used to come ridin' at midnight upon the same garran; and it was no matther what place or company the other 'ud be in, the ould Square would come reglarly, and crave him for what he owed him."

"So it appears that horses have sowls," observed M'Roarkin, philosophically, giving, at the same time, a cynical chuckle at the sarcasm contained in his own conceit.

"Whether they have sowls or bodies," replied the narrator, "what I'm tellin' you is truth; every night in the year the ould chap would come for what was indue him; and as the two went along, the noise of the loose shoe upon the horse would be hard rattlin', and seen knockin' the fire out of the stones, by the neighbors and the thief that chated him, even before the Square would appear, at all at all."

"Oh, wurrah!" exclaimed Nancy, shuddering with terror. "I wouldn't take anything and be out now on the Drumfurrar road,† and nobody with me but myself."

"I think if you wor," said M'Kinley, "the light weights and short measures would be comin' acrass your conscience."

"No, in troth, Alick, wouldn't they; but may be if *you* wor, the promise you broke to Sally Mitchell might trouble you a bit: at any rate, I've a prayer, and if I only repated it *wanst*, I mightn't be afeard of all the divils in hell."

"Throth, but it's worth havin', Nancy: where did you get it?" asked M'Kinley.

"Hould your wicked tongue, you thief of a heretic," said Nancy, laughing, "when will *you* larn anything that's good? I got it from one that wouldn't have it if it *wasn't* good—Darby M'Murt, the pilgrim, since you must know."

"Whisht!" said Frayne: "upon my word, I believe the old Square's comin' to pay us a visit; does any of yez hear a horse trottin' with a shoe loose?"

* Fairy-like, or connected with the fairies.
† A thin, fleshless, etuated person.

* Black-visaged.
† A lonely mountain-road, said to have been haunted. It is on this road that the coffin scene mentioned in the Party Fight and Funeral is laid.

"I sartinly hear it," observed Andy Morrow.

"And I," said Ned himself.

There was now a general pause, and in the silence a horse, proceeding from the moors in the direction of the house, was distinctly heard; and nothing could be less problematical than that one of his shoes was loose.

"Boys, take care of yourselves," said Shane Fadh, "if the Square comes, he won't be a pleasant customer—he was a terrible fellow in his day: I'll hould goold to silver that he'll have the smell of brimstone about him."

"Nancy, where's your prayer *now?*" said M'Kinley, with a grin: "I think you had betther out with it, and thry if it keeps this old brimstone Square on the wrong side of the house."

"Behave yourself, Alick; it's a shame for you to be sich a hardened crathur: upon my sannies, I blieve your afeard of neither God nor the divil—the Lord purtect and guard us from the dirty baste!"

"You mane particklarly them that uses short measures and light weights," rejoined M'Kinley.

There was another pause, for the horseman was within a few perches of the crossroads. At this moment an unusual gust of wind, accompanied by torrents of rain, burst against the house with a violence that made its ribs creak; and the stranger's horse, the shoe still clanking, was distinctly heard to turn in from the road to Ned's door, where it stopped, and the next moment a loud knocking intimated the horseman's intention to enter. The company now looked at each other, as if uncertain what to do. Nancy herself grew pale, and, in the agitation of the moment, forgot to think of her protecting prayer. Biddy and Bessy Connolly started from the *settle* on which they had been sitting with their sweethearts, and sprung beside their uncle, on the hob. The stranger was still knocking with great violence, yet there was no disposition among the company to admit him, notwithstanding the severity of the night—blowing, as it really did, a perfect hurricane. At length a sheet of lightning flashed through the house, followed by an amazing loud clap of thunder; while, with a sudden push from without, the door gave way, and in stalked a personage whose stature was at least six feet four, with dark eyes and complexion, and coal-black whiskers of an enormous size, the very image of the Squire they had been describing. He was dressed in a long black surtout, which made him appear even taller than he actually was, had a pair of heavy boots upon him, and carried a tremendous whip, large enough to fell an ox. He was in a rage on entering; and the heavy, dark, close-knit brows, from beneath which a pair of eyes, equally black, shot actual fire, whilst the Turk-like whiskers, which curled themselves up, as it were, in sympathy with his fury, joined to his towering height, gave him altogether, when we consider the frame of mind in which he found the company, an appalling and almost supernatural appearance.

"Confound you, for a knot of lazy scoundrels," exclaimed the stranger, "why do you sit here so calmly, while any being craves admittance on such a night as this? Here, you lubber in the corner, with a pipe in your mouth, come and put up this horse of mine until the night settles."

"May the blessed mother purtect us!" exclaimed Nancy, in a whisper, to Andy Morrow, "if I believe he's a right thing!—would it be the ould Square? Did you ever set your eyes upon sich a"—

"Will you bestir yourself, you boor, and not keep my horse and saddle out under such a torrent?" he cried, "otherwise I must only bring him into the house, and then you may say for once that you've had the devil under your roof."

"Paddy Smith, you lazy spalpeen," said Nancy, winking at Ned to have nothing to do with the horse, "why don't you fly and put up the gintleman's horse? And you, Atty, avourneen, jist go out with him, and hould the candle while he's doin' it: be quick now, and I'll give you glasses a-piece when you come in."

"Let them put him up quickly; but I say, you Caliban," added the stranger, addressing Smith, "don't be rash about him except you can bear fire and brimstone; get him, at all events, a good feed of oats. Poor Satan!" he continued, patting the horse's head, which was now within the door, "you've had a hard night of it, my poor Satan, as well as myself. That's my dark spirit—my brave chuck, that fears neither man nor devil."

This language was by no means calculated to allay the suspicions of those who were present, particularly of Nancy and her two nieces. Ned sat in astonishment, with the pipe in his hand, which he had, in the surprise of the moment, taken from his mouth, his eyes fixed upon the stranger, and his mouth open. The latter noticed him, and stretching over the heads of the circle, tapped him on the shoulder with his whip:—

"I have a few words to say to you, sir," he said.

"To me, your honor!" exclaimed Ned, without stirring, however.

"Yes," replied the other, "but you seem to be fastened to your seat: come this way."

"By all manner of manes, sir," said Ned, starting up, and going over to the dresser, against which the stranger stood.

When the latter had got him there, he very coolly walked up, and secured Ned's comfortable seat on the hob, at the same time observing—

"You hadn't the manners to ask me to sit down; but I always make it a point of conscience to take care of myself, landlord."

There was not a man about the fire who did not stand up, as if struck with a sudden recollection, and offer him a seat.

"No," said he, "thank you, my good fellows, I am very well as it is: I suppose, mistress, you are the landlady," addressing Nancy; "if you be, I'll thank you to bring me a gill of your best whiskey,—your *best*, mind. Let it be as strong as an evil spirit let loose, and as hot as fire; for it can't be a jot too ardent such a night as this, for a being that rides the devil."

Nancy started up instinctively, exclaiming, "Indeed, plase your honor's reverence, I am the landlady, as you say, sir, sure enough; but, the Lawk save and guard us! won't a gallon of raw whiskey be too much for one man to drink?"

"A gallon! I only said a gill, my good hostess; bring me a gill—but I forget—I believe you have no such measure in this country; bring me a pint, then."

Nancy now went into the bar, whither she gave Ned a wink to follow her; and truly was glad of an opportunity of escaping from the presence of the visitor. When there, she ejaculated—

"May the holy Mother keep and guard us, Ned, but I'm afeard that's no Christian crathur, at all at all! Arrah, Ned, aroon, would he be that ould Square Grame, that Shane Fadh, maybe, angered, by spakin' of him?"

"Troth," said Ned, "myself doesn't know what he is; he bates any mortal *I* ever seen."

"Well, hould agra! I have it: we'll see whether he'll drink this or not, any how."

"Why, what's that you're doin'?" asked Ned.

"Jist," replied Nancy, "mixin' the smallest taste in the world of holy wather with the whiskey, and if he drinks *that*, you know he can be nothing that's bad." *

Nancy, however, did not perceive that the trepidation of her hand was such as to incapacitate her from making nice distinctions in the admixture. She now brought the spirits to the stranger, who no sooner took a mouthful of it, than he immediately stopped it on its passage, and fixing his eyes earnestly on herself, squirted it into the fire, and the next moment the whiskey was in a blaze that seemed likely to set the chimney in flames.

"Why, my *honest* hostess," he exclaimed, "do you give this to me for whiskey? Confound me, but two-thirds of it is water; and I have no notion to pay for water when I want spirits: have the goodness to exchange this, and get me some better stuff, if you have it."

He again put the jug to his mouth, and having taken a little, swallowed it:—"Why, I tell you, woman, you must have made some mistake; one-half of it is water."

Now, Nancy, from the moment he refused to swallow the liquor, had been lock-jawed; the fact was, she thought that the devil himself, or old Squire Graham, had got under her roof; and she stood behind Ned, who was nearly as terrified as herself, with her hands raised, her tongue clinging to the roof of her mouth, and the perspiration falling from her pale face in large drops. But as soon as she saw him swallow a portion of that liquid, which she deemed beyond the deghtition of ghost or devil, she instantly revived—her tongue resumed its accustomed office—her courage, as well as her good-humor, returned, and she went up to him with great confidence, saying,

Why, then, your Reverence's honor, maybe I did make a bit of a mistake, sir"—taking up the jug, and tasting its contents: "Hut! bad scran to me, but I did, beggin' your honor's pardon; how-an-diver, I'll soon rightify that, your Reverence."

So saying, she went and brought him a pint of the stoutest the house afforded. The stranger drank a glass of it, and then ordered hot water and sugar, adding—

"My honest friends here about the fire will have no objection to help me with this; but, on second consideration, you had better get us another quart, that as the night is cold, we may have a jorum at this pleasant fire, that will do our hearts good; and this pretty girl here," addressing Biddy, who really deserved the epithet, will sit beside me, and give us a song."

* The efficacy of holy water in all Roman Catholic countries, but especially in Ireland, is supposed to be very great. It is kept in the house, or, in certain cases, about the person, as a safeguard against evil spirits, fairies, or sickness. It is also used to allay storms and quench conflagrations; and when an Irishman or Irishwoman is about to go a journey, commence labor or enter upon any other important undertaking, the person is sure to be sprinkled with holy water, under the hope that the journey or undertaking will prosper.

It was surprising what an effect the punch, even in perspective, had upon the visual organs of the company; second-sight was rather its precursor than its attendant; for, with intuitive penetration, they now discovered various good qualities in his ghostship, that had hitherto been beyond their ken; and those very personal properties, which before struck them dumb with terror, already called forth their applause.

"What a fine man he is!" one would whisper, loud enough, however, to be heard by the object of his panegyric.

"He is, indeed, and a rale gintleman," another would respond in the same key.

"Hut! he's none of your proud, stingy upsthart *bodagahs** — none of your beggarly half-sirs,"† a third would remark: "he's the dacent thing entirely—you see he hasn't his heart in a thrifle."

"And so sign's on him," a fourth would add, with comic gravity, "he wasn't bred to shabbiness, as you may know by his fine behavior and his big whiskers."

When the punch was made, and the kitchen-table placed endwise towards the fire, the stranger, finding himself very comfortable, inquired if he could be accommodated with a bed and supper, to which Nancy replied in the affirmative.

"Then, in that case," said he, "I will be your guest for the night."

Shane Fadh now took courage to repeat the story of old Squire Graham and his horse with the loose shoe; informing the stranger, at the same time, of the singular likeness which he bore to the subject of the story, both in face and size, and dwelling upon the remarkable coincidence in the time and manner of his approach.

"Tut, man!" said the stranger, "a far more extraordinary adventure happened to one of my father's tenants, which, if none of you have any objection, I will relate."

There was a buzz of approbation at this; and they all thanked his honor, expressing the strongest desire to hear his story. He was just proceeding to gratify them, when another rap came to the door, and, before any of the inmates had time to open it, Father Ned Deleery and his curate made their appearance, having been on their way home from a conference held in the town of M——, eighteen miles from the scene of our present story.

It may be right here to inform the reader, that about two hundred yards from Ned's home, stood a place of Roman Catholic worship, called "the Forth,"* from the resemblance it bore to the *Forts* or *Raths*, so common in Ireland. It was a small green, perfectly circular, and about twenty yards in diameter. Around it grew a row of old overspreading hawthorns, whose branches formed a canopy that almost shaded it from sun and storm. Its area was encompassed by tiers of seats, one raised above another, and covered with the flowery grass. On these the congregation used to sit—the young men chatting or ogling their sweethearts on the opposite side; the old ones in little groups, discussing the politics of the day, as retailed by Mick M'Caffry,† the politician; while, up near the altar, hemmed in by a ring of old men and women, you might perceive a *voteen*, repeating some new prayer or choice piece of devotion—or some other, in a similar circle, perusing, in a loud voice, Dr. Gallagher's Irish Sermons, Pastorini's History of the Christian Church, or Columbkill's Prophecy—and, perhaps, a strolling pilgrim, the centre of a third collection, singing the *Dies ire*, in Latin, or the Hermit of Killarney, in English.

At the extremity of this little circle was a plain altar of wood, covered with a little thatched shed, under which the priest celebrated mass; but before the performance of this ceremony, a large multitude usually assembled opposite Ned's shop-door, at the cross-roads. This crowd consisted of such as wanted to buy tobacco, candles, soap, potash, and such other groceries as the peasantry remote from market-towns require. After mass, the public-house was filled to the door-posts, with those who wished to get a sample of Nancy's *Iska-behagh* ‡ and many a time has little Father Ned himself, of a frosty day, after having performed mass with a celerity highly agreeable to his auditory, come in to Nancy, nearly frost-bitten, to get his breakfast, and a toothful of mountain dew to drive the cold out of his stomach.

The fact is, that Father Deleery made himself quite at home at Ned's without any reference to Nancy's saving habits; the consequence was, that her welcome to him was extremely sincere—"from the teeth out." Father Ned saw perfectly through her assumed heartiness of manner, but acted as if the contrary was the case; Nancy understood him also, and with an intention of making

* A person vulgar, but rich, without any pretensions but those of wealth to the character of a gentleman; a churl.

† Half-sir; the same as above.

* This very beautiful but simple place of worship does not now exist. On its site is now erected a Roman Catholic chapel.

† Mick was also a schoolmaster, and the most celebrated village politician of his day. Every Sunday found him engaged as in the text.

‡ *Usquebaugh*—literally, "water of life."

up by complaisance for their niggardliness in other respects, was a perfect honeycomb. This state of cross-purposes, however, could not last long; neither did it. Father Ned never paid, and Nancy never gave credit; so, at length, they came to an open rupture; she threatened to process him for what he owed her, and he, in return, threatened to remove the congregation from "The Forth" to Ballymagowan bridge, where he intended to set up his nephew in the "public line," to the ruin of Nancy's flourishing establishment.

"Father Ned," said Nancy, "I'm a hard-working, honest woman, and I don't see why my substance is to be wasted by your Reverence when you won't pay for it."

"And do *you* forget," Father Ned would reply, "that it's me that brings you your custom? Don't you know that if I remove my flock to Ballymagowan, you'll soon sing to another tune? so lay that to your heart."

"Troth, I know that whatever I get I'm obliged to pay for it; and I think every man should do the same, Father Ned. *You* must get a hank of yarn from me, and a bushel or two of oats from Ned, and your riglar dues along with all; but, avourneen, it's yourself that won't pay a penny when you can help it."

"Salvation to me, but you'd skin a flint!"

"Well, if I would, I pay my debts first."

"You do?"

"Yes, troth, do I."

"Why then that's more than you'll be able to do long, plase the fates."

"If all my customers wor like your Reverence, it is."

"I'll tell you what it is, Nancy, I often threatened to take the congregation from 'The Forth,' and I'll do it—if I don't, may I never sup sorrow!"

Big with such a threat, Father Ned retired. The apprehensions of Nancy on this point, however, were more serious than she was willing to acknowledge. This dispute took place a few days before the night in question.

Father Ned was a little man, with a red face, slender legs, and flat feet; he was usually cased in a pair of ribbed minister's grey small-clothes, with leggings of the same material. His coat, which was much too short, rather resembled a jerkin, and gave him altogether an appearance very much at variance with an idea of personal gravity or reverence. Over this dress he wore in winter, a dark great-coat, with high collar, that buttoned across his face, showing only the point of his red nose; so that, when riding or walking, his hat rested more upon the collar of his coat than upon his head.

The curate was a tall, raw-boned young man, with high jutting cheek-bones, low forehead, and close knees; to his shoulders, which were very high, hung a pair of long bony arms, whose motions seemed rather the effect of machinery than volition. His hair, which was a bad black, was cropped close, and trimmed across his eye-brows, like that of a Methodist preacher; the small-clothes he wore were of the same web which had produced Father Ned's, and his body-coat was a dark blue, with black buttons. Each wore a pair of gray woollen mittens.

"There, Pether," said Father Ned, as he entered, "hook my bridle along with your own, as your hand is in—God save all here! Paddy Smith, ma bouchal, put these horses in the stable, till we dry ourselves a bit—Father Pether and I."

"Musha, but you're both welcome," said Nancy, wishing to wipe out the effects of the last tiff with Father Ned, by the assistance of the stranger's punch; "will ye bounce, ye spalpeens, and let them to the fire? Father Ned, you're dhreepin' with the rain; and, Father Pether, avourneen, you're wet to the skin, too."

"Troth, and he is, Nancy, and a little bit farther, if you knew but all. Mr. Morrow, how do you do, sir?—And—eh? Who's this we've got in the corner? A gintleman, boys, if cloth can make one! Mr. Morrow, introduce me."

"Indeed, Father Ned, I hav'nt the pleasure of knowing the gintleman myself."

"Well, no matter—come up, Pether. Sir, I have the honor of introducing you to my curate and coadjutor, the Reverend Pether M'Clatchaghan, and to myself, his excellent friend, but spiritual superior, the Reverend *Edward* Delcecy, Roman Catholic Rector of this highly respectable and extensive parish; and I have further the pleasure," he continued, taking up Andy Morrow's Punch, "of drinking your very good health, sir."

"And I have the honor," returned the stranger, rising up, and diving his head among the flitches of bacon that hung in the chimney, "of introducing you and the Rev. Mr. M'—M'—M'——"

"Clatchagan, sir," subjoined Father Ned.

——"Peter M'Illclatchagan, to Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus."

"By my word, sir, but it's a good and appropriate name, sure enough," said Father Ned, surveying his enormous length; "success to me but you're an Alexandrine from head to foot—*non solum Longinus, sed Alexandrinus.*"

"You're wrong, sir, in the Latin," said Father Peter.

"Prove it, Peter—prove it."

"It should be *non tantum*, sir."

"By what rule, Pether?"

"Why, sir, there's a phrase in Corderius's Colloquies that I could condimn you from, if I had the book."

"Pether, you think you're a scholar, and, to do you justice, you're cute enough sometimes; but, Pether, you didn't travel for it, as I did—nor were you obliged to lep out of a college windy in Paris, at the time of the French Revolution, for your larning, as I was: not you, man, you ate the king's mutton comfortably at home in Maynooth, instead of travelling like your betters."

"I appale to this gintleman," said Father Peter turning to the stranger. "Are you a classical scholar, sir—that is, do you understand Latin?"

"What kind?" demanded the stranger dryly.

"If you have read Corderius's Colloquies, it will do," said Father Peter.

"No, sir," replied the other, "but I have read his commentator, *Bardolphus*, who wrote a treatise upon the *Nasus Rubricundus* of the ancients."

"Well, sir, if you did, it's probable that you may be able to understand our dispute, so"——

"Peter, I'm afeard you've got into the wrong box; for I say he's no chicken that's read *Nasus Rubricundus*, I can tell you that; I had my own trouble with it: but, at any rate, will you take your punch, man alive, and don't bother us with your Latin?"

"I beg your pardon, Father Ned: I insist that I'm right; and I'll convince you that you're wrong, if God spares me to see Corderius to-morrow."

"Very well then, Pether, if you're to decide it to-morrow, let us have no more of it to-night."

During this conversation between the two reverend worthies, the group around the fire were utterly astonished at the erudition displayed in this learned dispute.

"Well, to be sure, larnin's a great thing, entirely," said M'Roarkin, aside, to Shane Fadh.

"Ah, Tom, there's nothing like it: well, any way, it's wonderful what *they* know!"

"Indeed it is, Shane—and in so short a time, too! Sure, it's not more nor five or six years since Father Pether there used to be digging praties on the one ridge with myself—by the same token, an excellent *spadesman* he was—and now he knows more nor all the Protestant parsons in the Diocy."

"Why, how could *they* know any thing, when they don't belong to the thrue church?" said Shane.

"Thrue for you, Shane," replied M'Roarkin; "I disremimbered that clincher."

This discourse ran parallel with the dispute between the two priests, but in so low a tone as not to reach the ears of the *classical* champions, who would have ill-brooked this eulogium upon Father Peter's agricultural talent.

"Don't bother us, Pether, with your arguing to-night," said Father Ned, "it's enough for you to be seven days in the week at your disputations.—Sir, I drink to our better acquaintance."

"With all my heart, sir," replied the stranger.

"Father Ned," said Nancy, "the gintleman was going to tell us a strange story, sir, and maybe your Reverence would wish to hear it, docthor?"

"Certainly, Nancy, we'll be very happy to hear any story the gintleman may plase to tell us; but, Nancy, achora, before he begins, what if you'd just fry a slice or two of that glorious flitch, hanging over his head, in the corner?—that, and about six eggs, Nancy, and you'll have the priest's blessing, *gratis*."

"Why, Father Ned, it's too fresh, entirely—sure it's not a week hanging yet.

"Sorra matter, Nancy dheelish, we'll take with all that—just try your hand at a slice of it. I rode eighteen miles since I dined, and I feel a craving, Nancy, a *vacuum* in my stomach, that's rather troublesome."

"To be sure, Father Ned, you must get a slice, with all the veins in my heart; but I thought maybe you wouldn't like it so *fresh*: but what on earth will we do for eggs? for there's not an egg under the roof with me."

"Biddy, a hagur," said Father Ned, "just slip out to Molshy Johnson, and tell her to send me six eggs for a rasher, by the same token that I heard two or three hens cackling in the byre, as I was going to conference this morning."

"Well, Docthor," said Pat Frayne, when Biddy had been gone some time, on which embassy she delayed longer than the priest's judgment, influenced by the cravings of his stomach, calculated to be necessary,—"Well, Docthor, I often pity you, for fasting so long; I'm sure, I dunna how you can stand it, at all, at all."

"Troth, and you may well wonder, Pat; but we have *that* to support us, that you, or any one like you, know nothing about—*inward* support, Pat—inward support."

"Only for that, Father Ned," said Shane Fadh, "I suppose you could never get through with it."

"Very right, Shane—very right: only for it, we never could do.—What the dickens is keeping this girl with the eggs?—why she might be at Mr. Morrow's, here, since. By the way, Mr. Morrow," he continued, laugh-

ing, "you must come over to our church: you're a good neighbor, and a worthy fellow, and it's a thousand pities you should be sent down."

"Why, Docthor," said Andy, "do you really believe I'll go downwards?"

"Ah, Mr. Morrow, don't ask me that question—out of the pale, you know—out of the pale."

"Then you think, sir, there's no chance for me, at all?" said Andy, smiling.

"Not the laste, Andy, you must go this way," said Father Ned, striking the floor with the butt end of his whip, and winking—"to the lower raigons; and, upon my knowledge, to tell you the truth, I'm sorry for it, for you're a worthy fellow."

"Ah, Docthor," said Ned, "it's a great thing entirely to be born of the true church—one's always sure, then."

"Ay, ay; you may say that, Ned," returned the priest, "come or go what will, a man's always safe at the long run, except he dies without his clargy.—Shane, hand me the jug, if you please.—Where did you get this stuff, Nancy?—faith, it's excellent."

"You forget, Father Ned, that that's a secret.——But here's Biddy with the eggs, and now you'll have your rasher in no time."

When the two clergymen had discussed the rashers and eggs, and while the happy group were making themselves intimately acquainted with a fresh jug of punch, as it circulated round the table—

"Now, sir," said Father Ned to the stranger, "we'll hear your story with the greatest satisfaction possible; but I think you might charge your tumbler before you set to it."

When the stranger had complied with this last hint, "Well, gentlemen," said he, "as I am rather fatigued, will you excuse me for the position I am about to occupy, which is simply to stretch myself along the hob here, with my head upon the straw hassoch? and if you have no objection to that, I will relate the story."

To this, of course, a general assent was given. When he was stretched completely at his ease—

"Well, upon my veracity," observed Father Peter, "the gentleman's supernaturally long."

"Yes, Pether," replied Father Ned, "but observe his position—*Polysyllaba cuncta supina*, as Psorody says.—Arrah, salvation to me but you're a dull man, afther all!—but we're interrupting the gentleman. Sir, go on, if you please, with your story."

"Give me a few minutes," said he, "until I recollect the particulars."

He accordingly continued quiescent for two or three minutes more, apparently arranging the materials of his intended narration, and then commenced to gratify the eager expectations of his auditory, by emitting those nasal enunciations which are the usual accompaniments of sleep!

"Why, bad luck to the morsel of 'im but's asleep," said Ned; "Lord pardon me for swearin' in your Reverence's presence."

"That's certainly the language of a sleeping man," replied Father Ned, "but there might have been a little more respect than all that snoring comes to. Your health, boys."

The stranger had now wound up his nasal organ to a high pitch, after which he commenced again with somewhat of a lower and finer tone.

"He's beginning a new paragraph," observed Father Peter with a smile at the joke.

"Not at all," said Father Ned, "he's turning the tune; don't you perceive that he's snoring 'God save the King,' in the key of *bass relievo?*"

"I'm no judge of instrumental music, as you are," said the curate, "but I think it's liker the 'Dead March of Saul,' than 'God save the King;' however, if you be right, the gentleman certainly snores in a truly loyal strain."

"That," said little M'Roarkin, "is liker the Swine's melody, or the Bedfordshire hornpipe—he—he—he!"

"The poor gintleman's tired," observed Nancy, "afther a hard day's thravelling."

"I dare say he is," said Father Ned, in the sincere hospitality of his country; "at all events, take care of him, Nancy, he's a stranger, and get the best supper you can for him—he appears to be a truly respectable and well-bred man."

"I think," said M'Kinley, with a comical grin, "you might know that by his high-flown manner of sleeping—he snores very politely, and like a gentleman, all out."

"Well done, Alick," said the priest, laughing; "go home, boys, it's near bed-time; Paddy, ma bouchal, are the horses ready?"

"They'll be at the door in a jiffy, your Reverence," said Paddy going out.

In the course of a few minutes, he returned, exclaiming, "Why, thin, is it thinkin' to venthur out sich a night as it's comin' on yer Reverences would be? and it plashin' as if it came out of methers! Sure the life would be dhrownded out of both of ye, and yees might *cotch* a faver into the bargain."

"Sit down, gintlemen," said Ned; "sit down, Father Ned, you and Father Pether—we'll have another tumbler; and, as it's my

turn to tell a story, I'll give yez something to amuse yez,—the best I can, and, you all know, who can do more?"

"Very right, Ned; but let us see"—replied Father Ned, putting his head out of the door to ascertain what the night did; "come, Pether, it's good to be on the safe side of any house in such a storm; we must only content ourselves until it gets fair. Now, Ned, go on with your story, and let it be as pleasant as possible."

"Never fear, your Reverence," replied Ned—"here goes—and healths a-piece to begin with."

THE THREE TASKS.

"Every person in the parish knows the purty knoll that rises above the Routing Burn, some few miles from the renowned town of Knockimdowny, which, as all the world must allow, wants only houses and inhabitants to be as big a place as the great town of Dublin itself. At the foot of this little hill, just under the shelter of a dacent pebble of a rock, something above the bulk of half a dozen churches, one would be apt to see—if they knew how to look sharp, otherwise they mightn't be able to make it out from the gray rock above it, except by the smoke that *ris* from the chimbley—Nancy Magennis's little cabin, snug and cosey with its corrag* or *ould man* of branches, standing on the windy side of the door, to keep away the blast.

"Upon my word, it was a dacent little residence in its own way, and so was Nancy herself, for that matther; for, though a poor *widdy*, she was very *punctwell* in paying for Jack's schooling, as I often heard ould Terry M'Phaudeen say, who told me the story. Jack, indeed, grew up a fine slip; and for hurling, foot-ball playing, and lepping, hadn't his likes in the five quarters of the parish. It's he that knew how to handle a spade and a raping-hook, and what was betther nor all that, he was kind and tindher to his poor ould mother, and would let her want for nothing. Before he'd go to his day's work in the morning, he'd be sure to bring home from the clear-spring well that ran out of the other side of the rock, a pitcher of water to serve her for the day; nor would he forget to bring in a good creel of turf from the snug little peat-sack that stood thatched with rushes before the door, and leave it in the corner, beside the fire; so that she had nothing to do but put over her hand, without rising off of her sate, and put down a sod when she wanted it.

"Nancy, on her part, kept Jack very clane and comfortable; his linen, though coorse, was always a good color, his working clothes tidily mended at all times; and when he'd have occasion to put on his good coat to work in for the first time, Nancy would sew on the fore-part of each sleeve a stont patch of ould cloth, to keep them from being worn by the spade; so that when she'd rip these off them every Saturday night, they would look as new and fresh as if he hadn't been working in them at all, at all.

"Then when Jack came home in the winter nights, it would do your heart good to see Nancy sitting at her wheel, singing, '*Stachan Varagah*,' or '*Peggy Na Laveen*,' beside a purty clear fire, with a small pot of *murphys* boiling on it for their supper, or laid up in a wooden dish, comfortably covered with a clane praskeen on the well-swept hearth-stone; whilst the quiet, dancing blaze might be seen blinking in the nice earthen plates and dishes that stood over against the side-wall of the house. Just before the fire you might see Jack's stool waiting for him to come home; and on the other side, the brown cat washing her face with her paws, or sitting beside the dog that lay asleep, quite happy and contented, purring her song, and now and then looking over at Nancy, with her eyes half-shut, as much as to say, 'Catch a happier pair nor we are, Nancy, if you can.'

"Sitting quietly on the roost above the door, were Dicky the cock, and half-a-dozen hens, that kept this honest pair in eggs and *egg-milk* for the best part of the year, besides enabling Nancy to sell two or three clutches of March-birds every season, to help to buy wool for Jack's big-coat, and her own gray-beard gown and striped red and blue petticoat.

"To make a long story short—No two could be more comfortable, considering every thing. But, indeed, Jack was always observed to have a dacent ginteel turn with him; for he'd scorn to see a bad gown on his mother, or a broken Sunday coat on himself;

* The *Corrag* is a roll of branches tied together when green, and used for the purposes mentioned in the story. It is six feet high, and much thicker than a sack, and is changed to either side of the door according to the direction from which the wind blows.

and instead of drinking his little earning in a shebeen-house, and then eating his pratics dry, he'd take care to have something to *kitchen** them; so that he was not only snug and dacent of a Sunday, regarding wearables, but so well-fed and rosy, that a point of a rush would take a drop of blood out of his cheek.† Then he was the comeliest and best-looking young man in the parish, could tell lots of droll stories, and sing scores of merry songs that would make you split your sides with downright laughing; and when a wake or a dance would happen to be in the neighborhood, maybe there wouldn't be many a sly look from the party girls for pleasant Jack Magennis!

"In this way lived Jack and his mother, as happy and continted as two lords; except now and thin, that Jack would feel a little consarn for not being able to lay past anything for the *sore foot*,‡ or that might enable him to think of marrying—for he was beginning to look about him for a wife; and why not, to be sure? But he was prudent for all that, and didn't wish to bring a wife and small family into poverty and hardship without means to support them, as too many do.

"It was one fine, frosty, moonlight night—the sky was without a cloud, and the stars all blinking that it would delight anybody's heart to look at them, when Jack was crassing a bog that lay a few fields beyant his own cabin. He was just crooning the '*Humors of Glynn*' to himself and thinking that it was a very hard case that he couldn't save anything at all, at all, to help him to the wife, when, on coming down a bank in the middle of the bog, he saw a dark-looking man leaning against a clamp of turf, and a black dog, with a pipe of tobacky in his mouth, sitting at his ase beside him, and he smoking as sober as a judge. Jack, however, had a stout heart, bekase his conscience was clear, and, barring being a little daunted, he wasn't very much afeard. 'Who is this coming down towardst us?' said the black-favored man, as he saw Jack approaching them. 'It's Jack Magennis,' says the dog, making answer, and taking the pipe out of his mouth with his right paw; and after puffing away the smoke, and rubbing the end of it against his left leg, exactly as a Christian (this day's Friday, the Lord stand betune us and harm) would do against his sleeve, giving it at the same time to his comrade—'It's Jack Magennis,' says the dog, 'honest Widow Magennis's dacent son.' 'The very man,' says the other, back to him, 'that I'd wish to sarve out of a thousand. Arrah, Jack Magennis, how is every tether-length of you?' says the old fellow, putting the *furrawn** on him—'and how is every bone in your body, Jack, my darling? I'll hould a thousand guineas,' says he, pointing to a great big bag that lay beside him, 'and that's only the tenth part of what's in this bag, Jack, that you're just going to be in luck to-night above all the nights in the year.'

"'And may worse never happen you, Jack, my bouchal,' says the dog, putting in *his* tongue, then wagging his tail, and *houlding* out his paw to shake hands with Jack.

"'Gintlemen,' says Jack, never minding to give the dog his hand, bekase he heard it wasn't safe to touch the likes of him—'Gintlemen,' says he, 'ye're sitting far from the fire this frosty night.'

"'Why, that's true, Jack,' answers the old fellow; 'but if we're sitting far from the fire, we're sitting very near the makins of it, man alive.' So, with this, he pulls the bag of goold over to him, that Jack might know, by the jingle of the shiners, what was in it.

"'Jack,' says dark-face, 'there's some born with a silver ladle in their mouth, and others with a wooden spoon; and if you'll just sit down on the one end of this clamp with me, and take a hand at the *five and ten*,' pulling out, as he spoke, a *deck* of cards, 'you may be a made man for the remainder of your life.'

"'Sir,' says Jack, 'with submission, both

* The straits to which the poor Irish are put for what is termed *kitchen*—that is some liquid that enables them to dilute and swallow the dry potato—are grievous to think of. An Irishman in his miserable cabin will often feel glad to have salt and water in which to dip it, but that alluded to in the text is absolute comfort. Egg milk is made as follows:—A measure of water is put down suited to the number of the family; the poor woman then takes the proper number of eggs, which she beats up, and, when the water is boiling, pours it in, stirring it well for a couple of minutes. It is then made, and handed round in wooden noggins, every one salting for themselves. In color it resembles milk, which accounts for its name.

Our readers must have heard of the old and well known luxury of "potatoes and point," which, humorous as it is, scarcely falls short of the truth. An Irish family, of the cabin class, bangs up in the chimney a herring, or "small taste" of bacon, and as the national imagination is said to be strong, each individual points the potato he is going to eat at it, upon the principle, I suppose, of *credo et habeo*. It is generally said that the act communicates the flavor of the herring or bacon, as the case may be, to the potato; and this is called "potatoes and point."

† This proverb, which is always used as above, but without being confined in its application, to only one sex, is a general one in Ireland. In delicacy and beauty I think it inimitable.

‡ Accidents—future calamity—or old age.

* That frank, cordial manner of address which brings strangers suddenly to intimacy.

yourself and this cur—I mane,' says he, not wishing to give the dog offence, 'both yourself and this dacint gintleman with the tail and claws upon him, have the advantage of me, in respect of knowing my name; for, if I don't mistake,' says he, putting his hand to his caubeen, 'I never had the pleasure of seeing either of ye before.'

"'Never mind that,' says the dog, taking back the pipe from the other, and clapping it in his mouth; 'we're both your well-wishers, anyhow, and it's now your own fault if you're not a rich man.'

"Jack, by this time, was beginning to think that they might be afther wishing to throw luck in his way; for he had often heard of men being made up entirely by the fairies, till there was no end to their wealth.

"'Jack,' says the black man, 'you had better be led by us for this bout—upon the honor of a gintleman we wish you well: however, if you don't choose to take the ball at the right hop, another may; and you're welcome to toil all your life, and die a beggar after.'

"'Upon my reputation, what he says is true, Jack,' says the dog, in his turn, 'the lucky minute of your life is come: let it pass without doing what them that wishes your mother's son well desire you, and you'll die in a ditch.'

"'And what am I to do,' says Jack, 'that's to make me so rich all of a sudden?'

"'Why only to sit down, and take a game of cards with myself,' says black-brow, 'that's all, and I'm sure its not much.'

"'And what is it to be for?' Jack inquires; 'for I have no money—tare-nation to the rap itself's in my company.'

"'Well, you have yourself,' says the dog, putting up his fore-claw along his nose, and winking at Jack; 'you have yourself, man—don't be faint-hearted: he'll bet the contents of this bag;' and with that the ould thief gave it another great big shake, to make the guineas jingle again. 'It's ten thousand guineas in hard goold; if he wins, you're to sarve him for a year and a day; and if he loses, you're to have the bag.'

"'And the money that's in it?' says Jack, wishing, you see, to make a sure bargain, anyhow.

"'Ev'ry penny,' answered the ould chap, 'if you win it; and there's fifty to one in your favor.'

"By this time the dog had gone into a great fit of laughing at Jack's sharpness about the money. 'The money that's in it, Jack!' says he; and he took the pipe out of his mouth, and laughed till he brought on a hard fit of coughing. 'O, by this and by that,' says he, 'but that bates Bannagher! And you're to get ev'ry penny, you thief o' the world, if you win it!' but for all that he seemed to be laughing at something that Jack wasn't up to.'

"At any rate, surely, they palavered Jack betune them until he sot down and consinted. 'Well,' says he, scratching his head, 'why, worse nor lose I can't, so here goes for one trial at the shiners, any how!'

"'Now,' says the obscure gintleman, just whin the first card was in his hand, ready to be laid down, 'you're to sarve me for a year and a day, if I win; and if I lose, you shall have all the money in the bag.'

"'Exactly,' said Jack, and, just as he said the word, he saw the dog putting the pipe in his pocket, and turning his head away, for fraid Jack would see him breaking his sides laughing. At last, when he got his face sobered, he looks at Jack, and says, 'Surely, Jack, if you win, you must get all the money in the bag; and, upon my reputation, you may build castles in the air with it, you'll be so rich."

"This plucked up Jack's courage a little, and to work they went; and how could it end otherwise than Jack to lose betune two such knowing schamers as they soon turned out to be? For, what do you think? but, as Jack was beginning the game, the dog tips him a wink—laying his fore-claw along his nose as before, as much as to say, 'Watch me, and you'll win'—turning round, at the same time, and showing Jack a nate little looking-glass, that was set in his oxther, in which Jack saw, dark as it was, the spots of all the other fellow's cards, as he thought, so that he was cock-sure of bating him. But they were a pair of downright knaves any how; for Jack, by playing to the cards that he saw in the looking-glass, instead of to them the other held in his hand, lost the game and the money. In short, he saw that he was blarnied and chated by them both; and when the game was up, he plainly tould them as much.

"'What?—you scoundrel!' says the black fellow, starting up and catching him by the collar; 'dare you go for to impache my honor?'

"'Leather him, if he says a word,' says the dog, running over on his hind-legs, and laying his shut paw upon Jack's nose. 'Say another word, you rascal!' says he, 'and I'll *down* you;' with this, the ould fellow gives him another shake.

"'I don't blame *you* so much,' says Jack to him; 'it was the looking-glass that desaved me. That cur's nothing but a *black-leg!*'

"'What looking-glass?—you knave you!' says dark-face, giving him a fresh haul.

"'Why, the one I saw under the dog's oxther,' replied Jack.

"'Under my oxther, you swindling rascal!' replied the dog, giving him a pull by the other side of the collar; 'did ever any honest pair of gintlemen hear the like?—but he only wants to break through the agreement: so let us turn him at once into anass, and then he'll break no more bargains, nor strive to take in honest men and win their money. Me a black-leg!' So the dark fellow drew his two hands over Jack's jaws, and in a twinkling there was a pair of ass's ears growing up out of his head. When Jack found this, he knew that he wasn't in good hands: so he thought it best to get himself as well out of the scrape as possible.

"'Gintlemen, be aisy,' says he, 'and let us understand one another: I'm very willing to sarve you for a year and a day; but I've one requist to ax, and it's this: I've a helpless ould mother at home, and if I go with you now, she'll break her heart with grief first, and starve afterwards. Now, if your honor will give me a year to work hard, and lay in provision to support her while I'm away, I'll serve you with all the veins of my heart—for a bargain's a bargain.'

"With this, the dog gave his companion a pluck by the skirt, and, after some chat together that Jack didn't hear, they came back and said that they would comply with his wishes that far: 'So, on to-morrow twelvemonth, Jack,' says the dark fellow, 'the dog here will come to your mother's, and if you follow him he'll bring you safe to my castle.'

"'Very well, your honor,' says Jack; 'but as dogs resemble one another so much, how will I know him when he comes?'

"'Why,' answers the other, 'he'll have a green ribbon and a spy-glass about his neck, and a pair of Wellington boots on his hind legs.'

"'That's enough, sir,' says Jack, 'I can't mistake him in that dress, so I'll be ready; but, jintlemen, if it would be plasing to you both I'd every bit as soon not go home with these,' and he handled the brave pair of ears he had got, as he spoke. 'The truth is, jintlemen, I'm deluding enough without them; and as I'm so modest, you persave, why if you'd take them away, you'd oblige me!'

"To this they had no objection, and durthat year Jack wrought night and day, that he might be able to lave as much provision with his poor mother as would support her in his absence; and when the morning came that he was to bid her farewell, he went down on his two knees and got her blessing. He then left her with tears in his eyes, and promised to come back the very minute his time would be up. 'Mother,' says he, 'be kind to your little family here, and feed them well, as they are all you'll have to keep you company till you see me again.'

"His mother then stuffed his pockets with bread, till they stuck out behind him, and gave him a crooked six-pence for luck; after which, he got his staff, and was just ready to tramp, when, sure enough, he spies his ould friend the dog, with the green ribbon about his neck, and the Wellington boots upon his hind legs. He didn't go in, but waited on the outside till Jack came out. They then set off, but no one knows how far they travelled, till they reached the dark gintleman's castle, who appeared very glad to see Jack, and gave him a hearty welcome.

"The next day, in consequence of his long journey, he was axed to do nothing; but in the coorse of the evening, the dark chap brought him into a long, frightful room, where there were three hundred and sixty-five hooks sticking out of the wall, and on every hook but one a man's head. When Jack saw this agreeable sight, his dinner began to quake within him; but he felt himself still worse, when his master pointed to the empty hook, saying, 'Now, Jack, your business to-morrow is to clane out a stable that wasn't claned for the last seven years, and if you don't have it finished before dusk—do you see that hook?'

"'Ye—yes,' replied Jack, hardly able to spake.

"'Well, if you don't have it finished before dusk, your head will be hanging on that hook as soon as the sun sets.'

"'Very well, your honor,' replied Jack; scarcely knowing what he said, or he wouldn't have said 'very well' to such a bloody-minded intention, any how—'Very well,' says he, 'I'll do my best, and all the world knows that the best can do no more.'

"Whilst this discoorse was passing betune them, Jack happened to look at the upper end of the room, and there he saw one of the beautifullest faces that ever was seen on a woman, looking at him through a little panel that was in the wall. She had a white, snowy forehead—such eyes, and cheeks, and teeth, that there's no coming up to them; and the clusters of dark hair that hung about her beautiful temples!—by the laws, I'm afeard of falling in love with her myself, so I'll say no more about her, only that she would charm the heart of a wheel-barrow. At any rate, in spite of all the ould fellow could say—heads and hooks, and all, Jack couldn't help throwing an eye, now and then, to the panel; and to tell the truth, if he had been born to riches and honor, it would be hard to fellow him, for a good face and a good figure.

"'Now, Jack,' says his master, 'go and get your supper, and I hope you'll be able to perform your task—if not, off goes your head.'

"'Very well, your honor,' says Jack, again scratching it in the hoith of perplexity, 'I must only do what I can.'

"The next morning Jack was up with the sun, if not before him, and hard at his task; but before breakfast time he lost all heart, and little wonder he should, poor fellow, bekase for every one shovelful he'd throw out, there would come three more in: so that instead of making his task less, according as he got on, it became greater. He was now in the greatest dilemmy, and didn't know how to manage, so he was driven at last to such an amplush, that he had no other shift for employment, only to sing *Paddeen O'Rafferty* out of mere vexation, and dance the hornpipe trebling step to it, cracking his fingers, half mad, through the stable. Just in the middle of this tantrum, who comes to the door to call him to his breakfast, but the beautiful crathur he saw the evening before peeping at him through the panel. At this minute, Jack had so hated himself by the dancing, that his handsome face was in a fine glow, entirely.

"'I think,' said she to Jack, with one of her own sweet smiles, 'that this is an odd way of performing your task.'

"'Och, thin, 'tis you that may say that,' replies Jack; 'but it's myself that's willing to have my head hung up any day, just for one sight of you, you darling.'

"'Where did you come from?' asked the lady, with another smile that bate the first all to nothing.

"'Where did I come from, is it?' answered Jack; 'why, death-alive! did you never hear of ould Ireland, my jewel!—hem—I mane, plase your ladyship's honor.'

"'No,' she answered; 'where is that country?'

"'Och, by the honor of an Irishman,' says Jack, 'that takes the shine!—not heard of Erin—the Imerald Isle—the Jim of the ocean, where all the men are brave and honorable, and all the women—hem—I mane the ladies—chaste and beautiful?'

"'No,' said she; 'not a word: but if I stay longer I may get you blame—come in to your breakfast, and I'm sorry to find that you have done so little at your task. Your master's a man that always acts up to what he threatens: and, if you have not this stable cleared out before dusk, your head will be taken of your shoulders this night.'

"'Why, thin,' says Jack, 'my beautiful darl—plase your honor's ladyship—if he bangs it up, will you do me the favor, *acushla machree*, to turn my head *toardst* that same panel where I saw a sartin fair face that I won't mintion: and if you do, let me alone for watching a sartin purty face I'm acquainted with.'

"'What means *cushla machree?*' inquired the lady, as she turned to go away.

"'It manes that you're the pulse of my heart, avourneen, plase your ladyship's Reverence,' says Jack.

"'Well,' said the lovely crathur, 'any time you speak to me in future, I would rather you would omit terms of honor, and just call me after the manner of your own country; instead, for instance, of calling me your ladyship, I would be better pleased if you called me *cushla*—something—' '*Cushla machree, ma vourneen*—the pulse of my heart—my darling,' said Jack, consthering it (the thief) for her, for fraid she wouldn't know it well enough.

"'Yes,' she replied, '*cushla machree;* well, as I can pronounce it, *acushla machree*, will you come in to your breakfast?' said the darling, giving Jack a smile that would be enough, any day, to do up the heart of an Irishman. Jack, accordingly, went after her, thinking of nothing except herself; but on going in he could see no sign of her, so he sat down to his breakfast, though a single ounce, barring a couple of pounds of beef, the poor fellow couldn't ate, at that bout, for thinking of her.

"Well, he went again to his work, and thought he'd have better luck; but it was still the ould game—three shovelfuls would come in for ev'ry one he'd throw out; and now he began, in earnest, to feel something about his heart that he didn't like, bekase he couldn't, for the life of him, help thinking of the three hundred and sixty-four heads and the empty hook. At last he gave up the work entirely, and took it into his head to *make himself scarce* from about the old fellow's castle, altogether; and without more to do, he set off, never saying as much as 'good-bye' to his master: but he hadn't got as far as the lower end of the yard, when his ould friend, the dog, steps out of a kennel, and meets him full but in the teeth.

"'So, Jack,' says he, 'you're going to give us leg bail, I see; but walk back with yourself, you spalpeen, this minute, and join your work, or if you don't,' says he, 'it'll be worse for your health. I'm not so much your enemy now as I was, bekase you have a friend in coort that you know nothing about; so just do whatever you are bid, and keep never minding.'

"Jack went back with a heavy heart, as you may be sure, knowing that, whenever the black cur began to blarney him, there

was no good to come in his way. He accordingly went into the stable, but consuming to the hand's turn he did, knowing it would be only useless; for, instead of clearing it out, he'd be only filling it.

"It was near dinner-time, and Jack was very sad and sorrowful, as how could he be otherwise, poor fellow, with such a bloody-minded ould chap to dale with? when up comes the darling of the world again, to call him to his dinner.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, with her white arms so beautiful, and her dark clusters tossed about by the motion of her walk—'how are you coming on at your task?' 'How am I coming on, is it? Och, thin,' says Jack, giving a good-humored smile through the frown that was on his face, 'phase your lady—*a cushla machree*—it's all over with me; for I've still the same story to tell, and off goes my head, as sure as it's on my shoulders, this blessed night.'

"'That would be a pity, Jack,' says she, 'for there are worse heads on worse shoulders; but will you give *me* the shovel?' 'Will I give *you* the shovel, is it?—Och thin, wouldn't I be a right big baste to do the likes of that, any how?' says Jack; 'what! *avourneen dheelish!* to stand up with myself, and let this hard shovel into them beautiful, soft, white hands of your own! Faix, my jewel, if you knew but all, my mother's son's not the man to do such a disgraceful turn, as to let a lady like you take the shovel out of his hand, and he standing with his mouth under his nose, looking at you—not myself *avourneen!* we have no such ungenteel manners as that in *our* country.' 'Take my advice, Jack,' says she, pleased in her heart at what Jack said, for all she didn't purtend it—'give me the shovel, and depend upon it, I'll do more in a short time to clear the stable than you would for years.' 'Why, thin, *avourneen*, it goes to my heart to refuse you; but, for all that, may I never see yesterday, if a taste of it will go into your purty, white fingers,' says the thief, praising her to her face all the time—'my head may go off, any day, and welcome, but death before dishonor. Say no more, darling; but tell your father I'll be to my dinner immediately.'

"Notwithstanding all this, by jingo, the lady would not be put off; like a ra-al woman, she'd have her own way; so on telling Jack that she didn't intend to work with the shovel, at all, at all, but only to take it for a minute in her hand, at long last he gave it to her; she then struck it three times on the threshel of the door, and, giving it back into his hand, tould him to try what he could do. Well, sure enough, now there was a change; for, instead of three shovelfuls coming in, as before, when he threw one out, there went nine more along with it. Jack, in coorse, couldn't do less than thank the lovely crathur for her assistance; but when he raised his head to speak to her, she was gone. I needn't say, howsomever, that he went in to his dinner with a light heart and a murdhering appetite; and when the ould fellow axed him how he was coming on, Jack tould him he was doing gloriously. 'Remember the empty hook, Jack,' said he. 'Never fear, your honor,' answered Jack, 'if I don't finish my task, you may bob my head off any time.'

"Jack now went out, and was a short time getting through his job, for before the sun set it was finished, and he came into the kitchen, ate his supper, and, sitting down before the fire, sung 'Love among the Roses,' and the 'Black Joke,' to vex the ould fellow.

"This was one task over, and his head was safe for that bout; but that night, before he went to bed, his master called him upstairs, brought him into the bloody room, and gave him his orders for the next day. 'Jack,' says he, 'I have a wild filly that has never been caught, and you must go to my demesne to-morrow, and catch her, or if you don't—look there,' says the big blackguard, 'on that hook it hangs, before to-morrow, if you havn't her at sunset in the stable that you cleaned yesterday.' 'Very well, your honor,' said Jack, carelessly, 'I'll do every thing in my power, and if I fail, I can't help it.'

"The next morning, Jack was out with a bridle in his hand, going to catch the filly. As soon as he got into the domain, sure enough, there she was in the middle of a green field, grazing quite at her ease. When Jack saw this he went over towards her, houlding out his hat as if it was full of oats; but he kept the hand that had the bridle in it behind his back, for fraid she'd see it and make off. Well, my dear, on he went till he was almost within grip of her, cock sure that he had nothing more to do than slip the bridle over her neck and secure her; but he made a bit of a mistake in his reckoning, for though she smelt and snooked about him, just as if she didn't care a feed of oats whether he caught her or not, yet when he boulted over to hould her fast, she was off like a shot with her tail cocked, to the far end of the demesne, and Jack had to set off hot foot after here. All, however, was to no purpose; he couldn't come next or near her for the rest of the day, and there she kept coorsing him about from one field to another, till he hadn't a blast of breath in his body.

"In this state was Jack when the beautiful crathur came out to call him home to his breakfast, walking with the pretty small feet and light steps of her own upon the green

fields, so bright and beautiful, scarcely bending the flowers and the grass as she went along, the darling.

"'Jack,' says she, 'I fear you have as difficult a task to-day as you had yesterday.

"'Why, and it's you that may say that with your own purty mouth,' says Jack, says he; for out of breath and all as he was, he couldn't help giving her a bit of blarney, the rogue.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, 'take my advice, and don't tire yourself any longer by attempting to catch her; truth's best—I tell you, you could never do it; come home to your breakfast, and when you return again, just amuse yourself as well as you can until dinner-time.'

"'Och, och!' says Jack, striving to look, the sly thief, as if she had promised to help him—'I only wish I was a king, and, by the powers, I know who would be my queen, any how; for it's your own sweet lady—*savourneen dheelish*—I say, amn't I bound to you for a year and a day longer, for promising to give me a lift, as well as for what you done yesterday?'

"'Take care, Jack,' says she, smiling, however, at his ingenuity in striving to trap her into a promise, 'I don't think I made any promise of assistance.'

"'You didn't,' says Jack, wiping his face with the skirt of his coat, 'cause why?—you see pocket-handkerchiefs weren't invented in them times: 'why, thin, may I never live to see yesterday, if there's not as much rale beauty in that smile that's diverting itself about them sweet-breathing lips of yours, and in them two eyes of light that's breaking both their hearts laughing at me, this minute, as would encourage any poor fellow to expect a good turn from you—that is, whin you could do it, without hurting or harming yourself; for it's he would be the right rascal that could take it, if it would injure a silken hair of your head.'

"'Well,' said the lady, with a mighty roguish smile, 'I shall call you home to your dinner, at all events.'

"When Jack went back from his breakfast, he didn't slave himself after the filly any more, but walked about to view the demesne, and the avenues, and the green walks, and nice temples, and fish-ponds, and rookeries, and everything, in short, that was worth seeing. Towards dinner-time, however, he began to have an eye to the way the sweet crathur was to come, and sure enough it's she that wasn't one minute late.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, 'I'll keep you no longer in doubt:' for the tender-hearted crathur saw that Jack, although he didn't wish to let an to her, was fretting every now and then about the odd hook and the bloody room—'So, Jack,' says she, 'although I didn't promise, yet I'll perform;' and with that she pulled a small ivory whistle out of her pocket, and gave three blasts on it that brought the wild filly up to her very hand, as quick as the wind. She then took the bridle, and threw it over the baste's neck, giving her up, at the same time, to Jack. 'You needn't fear now, Jack,' says she, 'you'll find her as quiet as a lumb, and as tame as you wish; as proof of it, just walk before her, and you will see she will follow you to any part of the field.'

"Jack, you may be sure, paid her as many and as sweet compliments as he could, and never heed one from his country for being able to say something toothsome to the ladies. At any rate, if he laid it on thick the day before, he gave two or three additional coats this time, and the innocent soul went away smiling, as usual.

"When Jack brought the filly home, the dark fellow, his master, if dark before, was a perfect tunder-cloud this night: bedad, he was nothing less than near bursting with vexation, bekaise the thieving ould sinner intended to have Jack's head upon the hook, but he fell short in his reckoning now as well as before. Jack sung 'Love among the Roses,' and the 'Black Joke,' to help him into better timper.

"'Jack,' says he, striving to make himself speak pleasant to him, 'you've got two difficult tasks over you; but you know the third time's the charm—take care of the next.'

"'No matter about that,' says Jack, speaking up to him stiff and stout, bekase, as the dog tould him, he knew he had a friend in coort—'let's hear what it is, any how.'

"'To-morrow, then,' says the other, 'you're to rob a crane's nest, on the top of a beech-tree which grows in the middle of a little island in the lake that you saw yesterday in my demesne; you're to have neither boat, nor oar, nor any kind of conveyance, but just as you stand; and if you fail to bring me the eggs, or if you break one of them,—look here!' says he, again pointing to the odd hook, for all this discoorse took place in the bloody room.

"'Good again,' says Jack; 'if I fail I know my doom.'

"'No, you don't, you spalpeen,' says the other, getting vexed with him entirely, 'for I'll roast you till you're half dead, and ate my dinner off you after; and, what is more than that, you blackguard, you must sing the 'Black Joke' all the time for my amusement.'

"'Div'l fly away with you,' thought Jack, 'but you're fond of music, you vagabone.'

"The next morning Jack was going round and round the lake, trying about the edge of it, if he could find any place shallow enough to wade in; but he might as well go to wade the *say*, and what was worst of all, if he attempted to swim, it would be like a tailor's goose, straight to the bottom; so he kept himself safe on dry land, still expecting a visit from the 'lovely crathur,' but, bedad, his good luck failed him for *wanst*, for instead of seeing her coming over to him, so mild and sweet, who does he obsarve steering at a dog's trot, but his ould friend the smoking cur. 'Confusion to that cur,' says Jack to himself, 'I know now there's some bad fortune before me, or he wouldn't be coming acrass me.'

"'Come home to your breakfast, Jack, says the dog, walking up to him, 'it's breakfast time.'

"'Ay,' says Jack, scratching his head, 'it's no matter whether I do or not, for I bleeve my head's hardly worth a flat-dutch cabbage at the present speaking.'

"'Why, man, it was never worth so much,' says the baste, pulling out his pipe and putting it in his mouth, when it lit at once.

"'Take care of yourself,' says Jack, quite desperate,—for he thought he was near the end of his tether,—'take carc of yourself, you dirty cur, or maybe I might take a gintleman's toe from your tail.'

"'You had better keep a straight tongue in your head,' says four-legs, 'while it's on your shoulders, or I'll break every bone in your skin—Jack, you're a fool,' says he, checking himself, and speaking kindly to him—'you're a fool; didn't I tell you the other day to do what you were bid, and keep never minding?'

"'Well,' thought Jack to himself, 'there's no use in making him any more my enemy than he is—particularly as I'm in such a hobble.'

"'You lie,' says the dog, as if Jack had spoken *out* to him, wherein he only thought the words to himself, 'you lie,' says he, 'I'm not, nor never was, your enemy, if you knew but all.'

"'I beg your honor's pardon,' answers Jack, 'for being so smart with your honor, but, bedad, if you were in my case,—if you expected your master to roast you alive,—eat his dinner of your body,—make you sing the 'Black Joke,' by way of music for him; and, to crown all, know that your head was to be stuck upon a hook after—maybe you would be a little short in your temper, as well as your neighbors.'

"'Take heart, Jack,' says the other, laying his fore claw as knowingly as ever along his nose, and winking slyly at Jack, 'didn't I tell you that you had a friend in coort?—the day's not past yet, so cheer up, who knows but there is luck before you still?'

"'Why, thin,' says Jack, getting a little cheerful, and wishing to crack a joke with him, 'but your honor's very foud of the pipe!' 'Oh! don't you know, Jack,' says he, 'that that's the fashion at present among my tribe; sure all my brother puppies smoke now, and a man might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion, you know.'

"When they drew near home, they got quite thick entirely; 'Now,' says Jack, in a good-humored way, 'if you can give me a lift in robbing this crane's nest, do; at any rate, I'm sure your honor won't be my enemy. I know you have too much good nature in your face to be one that wouldn't help a lame dog over a style—that is,' says he, taking himself up for fear of offending the other,—'I'm sure you'd be always inclined to help the weak side.'

"'Thank you for the compliment,' says the dog; 'but didn't I tell you that you have a friend in coort?'

"When Jack went back to the lake, he could only sit and look sorrowfully at the tree, or walk about the edge of it, without being able to do anything else. He spent the whole day this way, till dinner-time, when what would you have of it, but he sees the darlin' coming out to him, as fair and as blooming as an angel. His heart, you may be sure, got up to his mouth, for he knew she would be apt to take him out of his difficulties. When she came up—

"'Now, Jack,' says she, 'there is not a minute to be lost, for I'm watch'd; and if it's discovered that I gave you any assistance, we will both be destroyed.'

"'Oh, murder sheery!'* says Jack, 'fly back, avourneen machree—for rather than anything should happen *you*, I'd lose fifty lives.'

"'No,' says she, 'I think I'll be able to get you over this, as well as the rest; so have a good heart, and be faithful.' 'That's it,' replied Jack, 'that's it, acushla—my own *correcthur* to a shaving; I've a heart worth its weight in bank notes, and a more faithful boy isn't alive this day nor I'm to yez all, ye darlings of the world.'

"She then pulled a small white wand out of her pocket, struck the lake, and there was the prettiest green ridge across it to the foot of the tree that ever eye beheld. 'Now,' says she, turning her back to Jack, and stooping down to do something that he couldn't see, 'Take these,' giving him her ten toes, 'put them against the tree, and you will have

* Murder everlasting.

steps to carry you to the top, but be sure, for *your* life and mine, not to forget any of them. If you do, my life will be taken to-morrow morning, for your master puts on my slippers with his own hands.'

"Jack was now going to swear that he would give up the whole thing and surrender his head at once; but when he looked at her feet, and saw no appearance of blood, he went over without more to do, and robbed the nest, taking down the eggs one by one, that he mighn't brake them. There was no end to his joy, as he secured the last egg; he instantly took down the toes, one after another, save and except the little one of the left foot, which in his joy and hurry he forgot entirely. He then returned by *the green ridge to the shore, and accordingly as he went along, it melted away into water behind him.*

"'Jack,' says the charmer, 'I hope you forgot none of my toes.'

"'Is it me?' says Jack, quite sure that he had them all—'arrah, catch any one from my country making a blunder of that kind.'

"'Well,' says she, 'let us see;' so, taking the toes, she placed them on again, just as if they had never been off. But, lo and behold! on coming to the last of the left foot, it wasn't forthcoming. 'Oh! Jack, Jack,' says she, 'you have destroyed me; to-morrow morning your master will notice the want of this toe, and that instant I'll be put to death.'

"'Lave that to me,' says Jack; 'by the powers, you won't lose a drop of your darling blood for it. Have you got a pen-knife about you? and I'll soon show you how you won't.'

"'What do you want with the knife?' she inquired.

"'What do I want with it?—Why to give you the best toe on both my feet, for the one I lost on you; do you think I'd suffer you to want a toe, and I having ten thumping ones at your service?—I'm not the man, you beauty you, for such a shabby trick as that comes to.'

"'But you forget,' says the lady, who was a little cooler than Jack, 'that none of yours would fit me.'

"'And must you die to-morrow, *acushla?*' asked Jack, in desperation.

"'As sure as the sun rises,' answered the lady; 'for your master would know at once that it was by *my* toes the nest was robbed.'

"'By the powers,' observed Jack, 'he's one of the greatest ould vag—I mane, isn't he a terrible man, out and out, for a father?'

"'Father!' says the darling,—'he's not my father, Jack, he only wishes to marry me, and if I'm not able to outdo him before three days more, it's decreed that he must have me.'

"When Jack heard this, surely the Irishman must come out; there he stood, and began to wipe his eyes with the skirt of his coat, making out as if he was crying, the thief of the world. 'What's the matter with you?' she asked.

"'Ah!' says Jack, 'you darling, I couldn't find it in my heart to desave you; for I have no way at home to keep a lady like you, in proper style, at all at all; I would only bring you into poverty, and since you wish to know what ails me, I'm vexed that I'm not rich for your sake; and next, that that thieving ould villain's to have you; and, by the powers, I'm crying for both these misfortunes together.'

"The lady could not help being touched and plaised with Jack's tinderness and ginerosity; so, says she, 'Don't be cast down, Jack, come or go what will, I won't marry him—I'd die first. Do you go home as usual; but take care and don't sleep at all this night. Saddle the wild filly—meet me under the whitethorn bush at the end of the lawn, and we'll both leave him for ever. If you're willin' to marry me, don't let poverty distress you, for I have more money than we'll know what to do with.'

"Jack's voice now began to tremble in airnest, with downright love and tinderness, as good right it had; so he promised to do everything just as she bid him, and then went home with a dacint appetite enough to his supper.

"You may be sure the ould fellow looked darker and grimmer than ever at Jack: but what could he do? Jack had done his duty? so he sat before the fire, and sung 'Love among the Roses,' and the 'Black Joke,' with a stouter and a lighter heart than ever, while the black chap could have seen him skivered.

"When midnight came, Jack, who kept a hawk's eye to the night, was at the hawthorn with the wild filly, saddled and all—more betoken, she wasn't a bit wild then, but as tame as a dog. Off they set, like Erin-go-bragh, Jack and the lady, and never pulled bridle till it was one o'clock next day, when they stopped at an inn, and had some refreshment. They then took to the road again, full speed; however, they hadn't gone far, when they heard a great noise behind them, and the tramp of horses galloping like mad. 'Jack,' says the darling, on hearing the hubbub, 'look behind you, and see what's this.'

"'Och! by the elevens,' says Jack, 'we're done at last; it's the dark fellow, and half the country after us.' 'Put your hand,' says she, 'in the filly's right ear, and tell me what you find in it.' 'Nothing at all,' says

Jack, "but a weeshy bit of a dry stick.' 'Throw it over your left shoulder,' says she, 'and see what will happen.'

"Jack did so at once, and there was a great grove of thick trees growing so close to one another, that a dandy could scarcely get his arm betwixt them. 'Now,' said she, 'we are safe for another day.' 'Well,' said Jack, as he pushed on the filly, 'you're the jewel of the world, sure enough; and maybe it's you that won't live happy when we get to the Jim of the Ocean.'

"As soon as dark-face saw what happened, he was obliged to scour the country for hatchets and hand-saws, and all kinds of sharp instruments, to hew himself and his men a passage through the grove. As the saying goes, many hands make light work, and sure enough, it wasn't long till they had cleared a way for themselves, thick as it was, and set off with double speed after Jack and the lady.

"The next day, about one o'clock, he and she were after taking another small refreshment of roast-beef and porther, and pushing on, as before, when they heard the same tramping behind them, only it was ten times louder.

"'Here they are again,' says Jack; 'and I'm afeard they'll come up with us at last.'

"'If they do,' says she, 'they'll put us to death on the spot; but we must try somehow to stop them another day, if we can; search the filly's right ear again, and let me know what you find in it.'

"Jack pulled out a little three-cornered pebble, telling her that it was all he got; 'well,' says she, 'throw it over your left shoulder like the stick.'

"No sooner said than done; and there was a great chain of high, sharp rocks in the way of divel-face and all his clan. 'Now,' says she, 'we have gained another day.' 'Tundher-and-turf!' says Jack, 'what's this for, at all, at all?—but wait till I get you in the Immerald Isle, for this, and if you don't enjoy happy days any how, why I'm not sitting before you on this horse, by the same token that it's not a horse at all, but a filly though; if you don't get the hoith of good aiting and drinking—lashings of the best wine and whisky that the land can afford, my name's not Jack. We'll build a castle, and you'll have upstairs and downstairs—a coach and six to ride in—lots of sarvints to attend on you, and full and plinty of everything; not to mintion—hem!—not to mintion that you'll have a husband that the fairest lady in the land might be proud of,' says he, stretching himself up in the saddle, and giving the filly a jag of the spurs, to show off a bit; although the coaxing rogue knew that the money which was to do all this was her own. At any rate, they spent the remainder of this day pleasantly enough, still moving on, though, as fast as they could. Jack, every now and then, would throw an eye behind, as if to watch their pursuers, wherein, if the truth was known, it was to get a peep at the beautiful glowing face and warm lips that were breathing all kinds of *fragrancies* about him. I'll warrant he didn't envy the king upon his throne, when he felt the honeysuckle of her breath, like the smell of Father Ned's orchard there, of a May morning.

"When *Fardorougha** found the great chain of rocks before him, you may set it down that he was likely to blow up with vexation; but, for all that, the first thing he blew up was the rocks—and that he might lose little or no time in doing it, he collected all the gunpowder and crowbars, spades, and pick-axes, that could be found for miles about him, and set to it, working as if it was with inch of candle. For half a day there was nothing but boring and splitting, and driving of iron wedges, and blowing up pieces of rocks as big as little houses, until, by hard labor, they made a passage for themselves sufficient to carry them over. They then set off again, full speed; and great advantage they had over the poor filly that Jack and the lady rode on, for their horses were well rested, and hadn't to carry double, like Jack's. The next day they spied Jack and his beautiful companion, just about a quarter of a mile before them.

"'Now,' says dark-brow, 'I'll make any man's fortune forever that will bring me them two, either living or dead, but, if possible, alive: so, spur on, for whoever secures them, man, woman, or child, is a made man, but, above all, make no noise.'

"It was now divil take the hindmost among the bloody pack—every spur was red with blood, and every horse smoking. Jack and the lady were jogging on *across* a green field, not suspecting that the rest were so near them, and talking over the pleasant days they would *spind* together in Ireland, when they *hears* the hue-and-cry once more at their very heels.

"'Quick as lightning, Jack,' says she, 'or we're lost—the right ear and the left shoulder, like thought—they're not three lengths of the filly from us!'

"But Jack knew his business; for just as a long, grim-looking villain, with a great rusty rapier in his hand, was within a single leap of them, and quite sure of either killing or making prisoners of them both, Jack flings

* The dark man.

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"THROW IT OVER YOUR LEFT SHOULDER," SAYS SHE, "AND SEE WHAT WILL HAPPEN,"

The Three Tusks, p. 676, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

a little drop of green water that he got in the filly's ear, over his left shoulder, and in an instant there was a deep, dark gulf, filled with black, pitchy-looking water between them. The lady now desired Jack to pull up the filly a bit, that they might see what would become of the dark fellow; but just as they turned round, the ould nagur set spurs to his horse, and, in a fit of desperation, plunged himself, horse and all, into the gulf, and was never seen or heard of more. The rest that were with him went home, and began to quarrel about his wealth, and kept murdering and killing one another, until a single vagabond of them wasn't left alive to enjoy it.

"When Jack saw what happened, and that the blood-thirsty ould villain got what he desarved so richly, he was as happy as a prince, and ten times happier than most of them as the world goes, and she was every bit as delighted. 'We have nothing more to fear,' said the darling that put them all down so cleverly, seeing that she was but a woman; but, bedad, it's she was the right sort of a woman—'all our dangers are now over, at least, all yours are; regarding myself,' says she, 'there's a trial before me yet, and that trial, Jack, depends upon your faithfulness and constancy.'

"'On me, is it?—Och, then, murder! isn't it a poor case entirely, that I have no way of showing you that you may depind your life upon me, only by telling you so?'

"'I do depend upon you,' says she—'and now, as you love me, do not, when the trial comes, forget her that saved you out of so many troubles, and made you such a great and wealthy man.'

"The foregoing part of this Jack could well understand, but the last part of it, making *collusion* to the wealth, was a little dark, as he thought, bekase, he hadn't fingered any of it at the time: still, he knew she was truth to the back-bone, and wouldn't *desave* him. They hadn't travelled much farther, when Jack snaps his fingers with a 'Whoo! by the powers, there it is, my darling—there it is, at long last!'

"'There is what, Jack?' said she, surprised, as well she might, at his mirth and happiness—'There is what?' says she.

"'Cheer up!' says Jack; 'there it is, my darling,—the Shannon!—as soon as we get to the other side of it, we'll be in ould Ireland once more.'

"There was no end to Jack's good humor, when he crossed the Shannon; and she was not a bit displeased to see him so happy. They had now no enemies to fear, were in a civilized country, and among green fields and well-bred people. In this way they travelled at their ase, till they came within a few miles of the town of Knockimdowny, near which Jack's mother lived.

"'Now, Jack,' says she, 'I told you that I would make you rich. You know the rock beside your mother's cabin; in the east end of that rock there is a loose stone, covered over with gray moss, just two feet below the cleft out of which the hanging rowan-tree grows—pull that stone out, and you will find more goold than would make a duke. Neither speak to any person, nor let any living thing touch your lips till you come back to me, or you'll forget that you ever saw me, and I'll be left poor and friendless in a strange country.'

"'Why, thin, *manim asthee hu*,* says Jack, 'but the best way to guard against that, is to touch your own sweet lips at the present time,' says he, giving her a smack that you'd hear, of a calm evening, across a couple of fields. Jack set off to touch the money, with such speed that when he fell he scarcely waited to rise again; he was soon at the rock, any how, and without either doubt or disparagement, there was a cleft of ra-al goolden guineas, as fresh as daisies. The first thing he did, after he had filled his pockets with them, was to look if his mother's cabin was to the fore; and there surely it was, as snug as ever, with the same dacent column of smoke rowling from the chimbley.

"'Well,' thought he, 'I'll just stale over to the door-cheek, and peep in to get one sight of my poor mother; then I'll throw her in a handful of these guineas, and take to my scrapers.'

"Accordingly, he stole up at a half bend to the door, and was just going to take a peep in, when out comes the little dog Trig, and begins to leap and fawn upon him, as if it would eat him. The mother, too, came running out to see what was the matter, when the dog made another spring up about Jack's neck, and gave his lips the slightest lick in the world with its tongue, the crathur was so glad to see him: the next minute, Jack forgot the lady, as *clane* as if he had never seen her; but if he forgot her, catch him at forgetting the money—not he, *avick!*—that stuck to him like pitch.

"When the mother saw who it was, she flew to him, and, clasping her arms about his neck, hugged him till she wasn't worth three halfpence. After Jack *sot* a while, he made a trial to let her know what had happened him, but he *disremembered* it all, except having the money in the rock, so he up and tould her that, and a glad woman she was to hear of his good fortune. Still he kept the place where the goold was to him-

* My soul's within you.

self, having been often forbid by her ever to trust a woman with a sacret when he could avoid it.

"Now everybody knows what changes the money makes, and Jack was no exception to this ould saying. In a few years he built himself a fine castle, with three hundred and sixty-four *windies* in it, and he would have added another, to make one for every day in the year, only that would be equal to the number in the King's palace, and the Lord of the Black Rod would be sent to take his head off, it being high *thrason* for a subject to have as many windies in his house as the king.* However, Jack, at any rate, had enough of them; and he that couldn't be happy with three hundred and sixty-four, wouldn't desarve to have three hundred and sixty-five. Along with all this, he bought coaches and carriages, and didn't get proud like many another beggarly upstart, but took especial good care of his mother, whom he dressed in silks and satins, and gave her nice nourishing food, that was fit for an ould woman in her condition. He also got great tachers, men of great larning, from Dublin, acquainted with all subjects; and as his own abilities were bright, he soon became a very great scholar, entirely, and was able, in the long run, to outdo all his tutherers.

"In this way he lived for some years—was now a man of great larning himself—could spake the seven *langidges*, and it would delight your ears to hear how high-flown and Englified he could talk. All the world wondered where he got his wealth; but as he was kind and charitable to every one that stood in need of assistance, the people said that wherever he got it it couldn't be in better hands. At last he began to look about him for a wife, and the only one in that part of the country that would be at all fit for him, was the Honorable Miss Bandbox, the daughter of a nobleman in the neighborhood. She indeed flogged all the world for beauty; but it was said that she was proud and fond of wealth, though, God he knows, she had enough of that any how. Jack, however, saw none of this; for she was cunning enough to smile, and simper, and look pleasant, whenever he'd come to her father's. Well, begad, from one thing, and one word, to another, Jack thought it was best to make up to her at *wanst*, and try if she'd accept of him for a husband; accordingly he put the word to her like a man, and she, making as if she was blushing, put her fan before her face and made no answer. Jack, however, wasn't to be daunted; for he knew two things worth knowing, when a man goes to look for a wife: the first is—that 'faint heart never won fair lady,' and the second—that 'silence gives consint;' he, therefore, spoke up to her in fine English, for it's he that knew how to speak now, and after a little more fanning and blushing, by jingo, she consinted. Jack then broke the matter to her father, who was as fond of money as the daughter, and only wanted to grab at him for the wealth.

"When the match was a making, says ould Bandbox to Jack, 'Mr. Magennis,' says he, (for nobody called him Jack now but his mother)—'these two things you must comply with, if you marry my daughter, Miss Gripsy:—you must send away your mother from about you, and pull down the cabin in which you and she used to live; Gripsy says that they would jog her memory consarning your low birth and former poverty; she's nervous and high-spirited, Mr. Magennis, and declares upon her honor that she couldn't bear the thoughts of having the delicacy of her feeling offinded by these things.'

"'Good morning to you both,' says Jack, like an honest fellow as he was, 'if she doesn't marry me except on these conditions, give her my compliments, and tell her our courtship is at an end.'

"But it wasn't long till they soon came out with another story, for before a week passed they were very glad to get him on his own conditions. Jack was now as happy as the day was long—all things appointed for the wedding, and nothing a wanting to make everything to his heart's content but the wife, and her he was to have in less than no time. For a day or two before the wedding, there never was seen such grand preparations: bullocks, and hogs, and sheep were roasted whole—kegs of whiskey, both Roscrea and Innishowen, barrels of ale and beer were there in dozens. All descriptions of niceties and wild-fowl, and fish from the *say;* and the dearest wine that could be bought with money, was got for the gentry and grand folks. Fiddlers, and pipers, and harpers, in short all kinds of music and musicianers, played in shoals. Lords and ladies, and squares of high degree were present—and, to crown the thing, there was open house to all comers.

"At length the wedding-day arrived; there was nothing but roasting and boiling; servants dressed in rich liveries ran about with joy and delight in their countenances, and white gloves and wedding favors on their hats and hands. To make a long story short, they were all seated in Jack's castle at the wedding breakfast, ready for the priest to marry them when they'd be done; for in them times people were never married until they had laid in a good foundation to carry

* Such is the popular opinion.

them through the ceremony. Well, they were all seated round the table, the men dressed in the best of broadcloth, and the ladies rustling in their silks and satins—their heads, necks, and arms hung round with jewels both rich and rare; but of all that were there that day, there wasn't the likes of the bride and bridegroom. As for him, nobody could think, at all at all, that he was ever any thing else than a born gintleman; and what was more to his credit, he had his kind *ould* mother sitting beside the bride, to tache her that an honest person, though poorly born, is company for the king. As soon as the breakfast was served up, they all set to, and maybe the *various* kinds of eatables did not pay for it; and among all this cutting and thrusting, no doubt but it was remarked, that the bride herself was behindhand *wid* none of them—that she took her *dalin-trick* without flinching, and made nothing less than a right fog meal of it; and small blame to her for that same, you persave.

"When the breakfast was over, up gets Father Flannagan—out with his book, and on with his stole, to marry them. The bride and bridegroom went up to the end of the room, attended by their friends, and the rest of the company stood on each side of it, for you see they were too high bred, and knew their manners too well, to stand in a crowd like spalpeens. For all that, there was many a sly look from the ladies to their bachelors, and many a titter among them, grand as they were; for, to tell the truth, the best of them likes to see fun in the way, particularly of that sort. The priest himself was in as great a glee as any of them, only he kept it under, and well he might, for sure enough this marriage was nothing less than a rale windfall to him and the parson that was to marry them after him—bekase you persave a Protestant and Catholic must be married by both, otherwise it does not hould good in law. The parson was as grave as a mustard-pot, and Father Flannagan called the bride and bridegroom his childher, which was a big bounce for him to say the likes of, more betoken that neither of them was a drop's blood to him.

"However, he pulled out the book, and was just beginning to buckle them when in comes Jack's ould acquaintance, the smoking cur, as grave as ever. The priest had just got through two or three words of Latin, when the dog gives him a pluck by the sleeve; Father Flannagan, of coorse, turned round to see who it was that *nudged* him: 'Behave yourself,' says the dog to him, just as he peeped over his shoulder—'behave yourself,' says he; and with that he sat him down on *his hunkers* beside the priest, and pulling a cigar instead of a pipe out of his pocket, he put it in his mouth, and began to smoke for the bare life of him. And, by my own word, it's he that could smoke: at times he would shoot the smoke in a slender stream like a knitting-needle, with a round curl at the one end of it, ever so far out of the *right* side of his mouth; then he would shoot it out of the *left*, and sometimes make it swirl out so beautiful from the middle of his lips!—why, then, it's he that must have been the well-bred puppy all out, as far as smoking went. Father Flannagan and they all were tundherstruck.

"'In the name of St. Anthony, and of that holy nun, St. Teresa,' said his Reverence to him, 'who and what are you, at all at all?'

"'Never mind that,' says the dog, taking the cigar for a minute between his claws; 'but if you wish particularly to know, I'm a thirty-second cousin of your own by the mother's side.'

"'I command you in the name of all the saints,' says Father Flannagan, believing him to be the devil, 'to disappear from among us, and never become visible to any one in this house again.'

"'The sorra a budge, at the present time, will I budge,' says the dog to him, 'until I see all sides rightified, and the rogues disappointed.'

"Now one would be apt to think the appearance of a *spaking* dog might be after fright'ning the ladies; but doesn't all the world know that *spaking* puppies are their greatest favorites? Instead of that, you see, there was half a dozen fierce-looking whiskered fellows, and three or four half-pay officers, that were nearer making off than the ladies. But, besides the cigar, the dog had his beautiful eye-glass, and through it, while he was *spaking* to Father Flannigan, he ogled all the ladies, one after another, and when his eye would light upon any that pleased him, he would kiss his paw to her and wag his tail with the greatest politeness.

"'John,' says Father Flannagan, to one of the servants, 'bring me salt and water, till I consecrate them* to banish the divil, for he has appeared to us all during broad daylight in the shape of a dog.'

"'You had better behave yourself, I say again,' says the dog, 'or if you make me speak, by my honor as a gintleman I'll expose you: I say you won't marry the same two, neither this nor any other day, and I'll give

* Salt and water consecrated by a particular form is Holy Water.

you my raisons presently; but I *repate* it, Father Flannagan, if you compel me to speak, I'll make you look nine ways at once.'

"'I defy you, Satan,' says the priest; 'and if you don't take yourself away before the holy wather's made, I'll send you off in a flame of fire.'

"'Oh! yes, I'm trimbling,' says the dog: 'plenty of *spirits* you laid in your day, but it was in a place that's nearer to us than the Red Sea, you did it: listen to me though, for I don't wish to expose you, as I said;' so he gets on his hind legs, puts his nose to the priest's ear, and whispers something that none of the rest could hear—all before the priest had time to know where he was. At any rate, whatever he said seemed to make his Reverence look *double*, though, faix, that wasn't hard to do, for he was as big as *two* common men. When the dog was done speaking, and had put his cigar in his mouth, the priest seemed tundherstruck, crossed himself, and was, no doubt of it, in great perplexity.

"'I say it's false,' says Father Flannagan, plucking up his courage; 'but you know you're a liar, and the father of liars.'

"'As thrue as gospel, this bout, I tell you,' says the dog.

"'Wait till I make my holy wather,' says the priest, 'and if I don't cork you in a thumb-bottle for this,* I'm not here.'

"Just at this minute, the whole company sees a gintleman galloping for the bare life of him, up to the hall-door, and he dressed like an officer. In three jiffeys he was down off his horse, and in among the company. The dog, as soon as he made his appearance, laid his claw as usual on his nose, and gave the bridegroom a wink, as much as to say, 'watch what'll happen.'

"Now it was very odd that Jack, during all this time, remembered the dog very well, but could never once think of the darling that did so much for him. As soon, however, as the officer made his appearance, the bride seemed as if she would sink outright; and when he walked up to her, to ax what was the meaning of what he saw, why, down she drops at once—fainted clane. The gintleman then went up to Jack, and says, 'Sir, was this lady about to be married to you?'

"'Sartinly,' says Jack, 'we were going to be yoked in the blessed and holy tackle of mathrimony;' or some high-flown words of that kind.

"'Well, sir,' says the other back to him, 'I can only say that she is most solemniously sworn never to marry another man but me at a time; that oath she *tuck* when I was joining my regiment before it went abroad; and if the ceremony of your marriage be performed, you will sleep with a perjured bride.'

"Begad, he did plump before all their faces. Jack, of coorse, was struck all of a hape at this; but as he had the bride in his arms, giving her a little sup of whiskey to bring her to, *you persave*, he couldn't make him an answer. However, she soon came to herself, and, on opening her eyes, 'Oh, hide me, hide me,' says she, 'for I can't bear to look on him!'

"'He says you are his sworn bride, my darling,' says Jack.

"'I am—I am,' says she, covering her eyes, and crying away at the rate of a wedding: 'I can't deny it; and, by tare-an-ounty!' says she, 'I'm unworthy to be either his wife or yours; for, except I marry you both, I dunna how to settle this affair between you at all;—oh, murther sheery! but I'm the misfortunate crathur, entirely.'

"'Well,' says Jack to the officer, 'nobody can do more than be sorry for a wrong turn; small blame to her for taking a fancy to your humble servant, Mr. Officer,'—and he stood as tall as possible to show himself off: 'you see the fair lady is sorrowful for her folly, so as it's not yet too late, and as you came in the nick of time, in the name of Providence take my place, and let the marriage go an.'

"'No,' says she, 'never; I'm not worthy of him, at all, at all; tundher-an-age, but I'm the unlucky thief!'

"While this was going forward, the officer looked closely at Jack, and seeing him such a fine, handsome fellow, and having heard before of his riches, he began to think that, all things considhered, she wasn't so much to be *blempt*. Then, when he saw how sorry she was for having forgot him, he steps *forrid*.

"'Well,' says he, 'I'm still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel *conthrition*——'"

"He should have said contrition, confession, and satisfaction," observed Father Peter.

"Pether, will you keep your theology to yourself," replied Father Ned, "and let us come to the plot without interruption."

"Plot!" exclaimed Father Peter; "I'm sure it's no rebellion that there should be a plot in it, any way!"

"*Tace*," said Father Ned—"*tace*, and that's Latin for a candle."

"I deny that," said the curate; "*tace* is

* According to the superstitious belief of the Irish, a priest, when banishing a spirit, puts it into a thumb-bottle, which he either buries deep in the earth, or in some lake.

the imperative mood from *taceo*, to keep silent. *Taceo, taces, tacui, tacere, tacendi, tacendo tac*——"

"Ned, go on with your story, and never mind that deep larning of his—he's almost cracked with it," said the superior: "go on, and never mind him."

"'Well,' says he, 'I'm still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel *contrition* for what you were going to do.' So, with this, they all *gother* about her, and, as the officer was a fine fellow himself, prevailed upon her to let the marriage be performed, and they were accordingly spliced as fast as his Reverence could make them.

"'Now, Jack,' says the dog, 'I want to spake with you for a minute—it's a word for your own ear;' so up he stands on his two hind legs, and purtinded to be whisp'ring something to him; but what do you think?—he gives him the slightest touch on the lips with his paw, and that instant Jack remimbered the lady and everything that happened betune them.

"'Tell me, this instant,' says Jack, seizing him by the throat, 'where's the darling, at all, at all, or by this and by that you'll hang on the next tree!'

"Jack spoke finer nor this, to be sure, but as I can't give his tall English, the sorra one of me will bother myself striving to do it.

"'Behave yourself,' says the dog, 'just say nothing, only follow me.'

"Accordingly, Jack went out with the dog, and in a few minutes comes in again, *leading* along with him, *on the one side*, the loveliest lady that ever eye beheld, and the dog, that was her brother, *metamurphied* into a beautiful, illegant gintleman, on the other.

"'Father Flannagan,' says Jack, 'you thought a little while ago you'd have no marriage, but instead of that you'll have a brace of them;' up and telling the company, at the same time, all that had happened to him, and how the beautiful crathur that he had brought in with him had done so much for him.

"Whin the gintlemen heard this, as they were all Irishmen, you may be sure there was nothing but huzzaing and throwing up of hats from them, and waving of hankerchers from the ladies. Well, my dear, the wedding dinner was ate in great style; the nobleman proved himself no disgrace to his rank at the trencher; and so, to make a long story short, such faisting and banquetteering was never seen since or before. At last, night came; and, among ourselves, not a doubt of it, but Jack thought himself a happy man; and maybe, if all was known, the bride was much of the same opinion: be that as it may, night came—the bride, all blushing, beautiful, and modest as your own sweetheart, was getting tired after the dancing; Jack, too, though much stouter, wished for a trifle of repose, and many thought it was near time to throw the stocking, as is proper, of coorse, on every occasion of the kind. Well, he was just on his way up stairs, and had reached the first landing, when he hears a voice at his ear, shouting, 'Jack—Jack—Jack Magennis!' Jack could have *spitted* anybody for coming to disturb him at such a criticality. 'Jack Magennis!' says the voice. Jack looked about to see who it was that called him, and there he found himself lying on the green *Rath*, a little above his mother's cabin, of a fine, calm summer's evening, in the month of June. His mother was stooping over him, with her mouth at his ear, striving to waken him, by shouting and shaking him out of his sleep.

"'Oh! by this and by that, mother,' says Jack, 'what did you waken me for?'

"'Jack, avourneen,' says the mother, 'sure and you war lying grunting, and groaning, and sniffthering there, for all the world as if you had the cholic, and I only nudged you for fraid you war in pain.'

"'I wouldn't for a thousand guineas,' says Jack, 'that ever you wakened me, at all, at all; but whisht, mother, go into the house, and I'll be afther you in less than no time.'

"The mother went in, and the first thing Jack did was to try the rock; and, sure enough, there he found as much money as made him the richest man that ever was in the country. And what was to his credit, when he did grow rich, he wouldn't let his cabin be thrown down, but built a fine castle on a spot near it, where he could always have it under his eye, to prevent him from getting proud. In the coorse of time, a harper, hearing the story, composed a tune upon it, which every body knows is called the 'Little House under the Hill' to this day, beginning with—

> 'Hi for it, ho for it, hi for it still;
> Och, and whoo! your sowl—hi for the little house under the hill!'

"So you see that was the way the great Magennisses first came by their wealth, and all because Jack was industrious, and an obadient, dutiful, and tindher son to his helpless ould mother, and well he deserved what he got, *ershi misha*.* Your healths, Father Ned—Father Pether—all kinds of happiness to us; and there's my story."

"Well," said Father Peter, "I think that dog was nothing more or less than a down-

* Say I.

right cur, that deserved the lash nine times a day, if it was only for his want of respect to the clergy; if he had given me such insolence, I solemnly declare I would have bate the devil out of him with a hazel cudgel, if I failed to exorcise him with a prayer."

Father Ned looked at the simple and credulous curate with an expression of humor and astonishment.

"Paddy," said he to the servant, "will you let us know what the night's doing?"

Paddy looked out. "Why, your Rev'rence, it's a fine night, all out, and cleared up it is bravely."

At this moment the stranger awoke.

"Sir," said Father Ned, "you missed an amusing story, in consequence of your somnolency."

"Though I missed the story," replied the stranger, "I was happy enough to hear your friend's critique upon the dog."

Father Ned seemed embarrassed; the curate, on the contrary, exclaimed with triumph—"but wasn't *I* right, sir?"

"Perfectly," said the stranger; "the moral you applied was excellent."

"Good-night, boys," said Father Ned—"good-night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus!"

"Good-night, boys," said Father Peter, imitating Father Ned, whom he looked upon as a perfect model of courtesy—"Good-night, boys—good night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus."

"Good-night," replied the stranger—"good-night, Doctor *Edward* Deleery; and good-night, Doctor Peter M'Clatchaghan—good-night."

When the clergymen were gone, the circle about the fire, excepting the members of Ned's family and the stranger, dispersed to their respective homes; and thus ended the amusement of that evening.

After they had separated, Ned, whose curiosity respecting the stranger was by no means satisfied, began to sift him in his own peculiar manner, as they both sat at the fire.

"Well, sir," said Ned, "barring the long play-acther that tumbles upon the big stage in the street of our market-town, here below, I haven't seen so long a man this many a day; and, barring your big whiskers, the sorra one of your honor's unlike him. A fine portly vagabone he is, indeed—a big man, and a bigger rogue, they say, for he pays nobody."

"Have you got such a company in your neighborhood?" inquired the stranger, with indifference.

"We have, sir," said Ned, "but, plase goodness, they'll soon be lashed like hounds from the place—the town boys are preparing to give them a chivey some fine morning out of the country."

"Indeed!—he—hem! that will be very spirited of the town boys," said the stranger dryly.

"That's a smart looking horse your honor rides," observed Ned; "did he carry you far to-day, with submission?"

"Not far," replied his companion—"only fourteen miles; but, I suppose, the fact is, you wish to know who and what I am, where I came from and whither I am going. Well, you shall know this. In the first place, I am agent to Lord Non Resident's estate, if you ever heard of that nobleman, and am on my way from Castle Ruin, the seat of his Lordship's Incumbrances, to Dublin. My name you have already heard. Are you now satisfied?"

"Parfitly, your honor," replied Ned, "and I am much obliged to you, sir."

"I trust you are an honest man," said the stranger, "because for this night I am about to place great confidence in you."

"Well, sir," said his landlord, "if I turn out dishonest to you, it's more nor I did in my whole life to any body else, barring to Nancy."

"Here, then," said the stranger, drawing out a large packet, inclosed in a roll of black leather—"here is the half year's rent of the estate, together with my own property: keep it secure till morning, when I shall demand it, and, of course, it will be safe?"

"As if it was five *fadom* under ground," replied Ned. "I will put it along with our own trifle of silver; and after that, let Nancy alone for keeping it *safe*, so long as it's *there*;" saying which, Ned secured the packet, and showed the stranger his bed.

About five o'clock the next morning their guest was up, and ordered a snack in all haste; "Being a military man," said he, "and accustomed to timely hours, I shall ride down to the town, and put a letter into the post-office in time for the Dublin mail, after which you may expect me to breakfast. But, in the meantime, I am not to go with empty pockets," he added, when mounting his horse at the door—"bring me some silver, landlord, and be quick."

"How much, plase your honor?"

"Twenty or thirty shillings; but, harkee, produce my packet, that I may be quite certain my property is safe."

"Here it is, your honor, safe and sound," replied Ned, returning from within; "and Nancy, sir, has sent you all the silver she has, which was One Pound Five; but I'd take it as a favor if your honor would be contint with twenty shillings, and lave me the odd five, for you see the case is this, sir, plase

your honor, *she*," and Ned, with a shrewd, humorous nod, pointed with his thumb over his shoulder, as he spoke—"she wears the ——what you know, sir."

"Ay, I thought so," replied the stranger; "but a man of your size to be henpecked must be a great knave, otherwise your wife would allow you more liberty. Go in, man; you deserve no compassion in such an age of freedom as this. I shan't give you a farthing till after my return, and only then if it be agreeable to your wife."*

"Murdher!" said Ned, astonished, "I beg your honor's pardon; but murdher alive, sir, where's your whiskers?"

The stranger put his hand hastily to his face, and smiled—"Where are my whiskers? Why, shaved off, to be sure," he replied; and setting spurs to his horse, was soon out of sight and hearing.

It was nearly a month after that, when Ned and Nancy, in presence of Father Deleery, opened the packet, and discovered, not the half-year's rent of Lord Non-Resident's estate, but a large sheaf of play-bills packed up together—their guest having been the identical person to whom Ned affirmed he bore so strong a resemblance.

* Ned M'Keown was certainly a very remarkable individual, and became, in consequence of his appearance in these pages, a person of considerable notoriety during the latter years of his life. His general character, and the nature of his unsuccessful speculations, I have drawn with great truth. There is only one point alone in which I have done him injustice, and that is in depicting him as a henpecked husband. The truth is, I had a kind of good-humored pique *in* against Ned, and for the following reasons:—The cross-roads at which he lived formed a central point for all the youngsters of the neighborhood to assemble for the purpose of practising athletic exercises, of which I, in my youth, was excessively fond. Now Ned never would suffer me to join my young acquaintances in these harmless and healthful sports, but on every occasion, whenever he saw me, he would run out with a rod or cudgel and chase me from the scene of amusement. This, to a boy so enthusiastically devoted to such diversions as I was, often occasioned me to give him many a hearty malediction when at a safe distance. In fact, he continued this practice until I became too much of a man to run away, after which he durst only growl and mutter abuse, whilst I snapped my fingers at him. For this reason, then, and remembering all the vexatious privations of my favorite sports which he occasioned me, I resolved to turn the laugh against him, which I did effectually, by bringing him out in the character of a hen-pecked husband, which was indeed very decidedly opposed to his real one. My triumph was complete, and Ned, on hearing himself read of "in a book," waxed indignant and wrathful. In speaking of me he could not for the life of him express any other idea of my age and person than that by which he last remembered me. "What do you think?" he would exclaim, "there's that *young* Carleton has put me in a book, and made Nancy leather *me!*" Ned survived Nancy several years, and married another wife, whom I never saw. About twenty-five years ago he went to America, where he undertook to act as a tanner, and nearly ruined his employer. After some time he returned home, and was forced to mend roads. Towards the close of his life, however, he contrived to get an ass and cart, and became egg-merchant, but I believe with his usual success. In this last capacity, I think about two years ago, he withdrew from all his cares and speculations, and left behind him the character of an honest, hospitable, good-humored man, whom everybody knew and everybody liked, and whose harmless eccentricities many will long remember with good-humor and regret.

SHANE FADH'S WEDDING.

On the following evening, the neighbors were soon assembled about Ned's hearth in the same manner as on the night preceding:—

And we may observe, by the way, that although there was a due admixture of opposite creeds and conflicting principles, yet even then, and the time is not so far back, such was their cordiality of heart and simplicity of manners when contrasted with the bitter and rancorous spirit of the present day, that the very remembrance of the harmony in which they lived is at once pleasing and melancholy.

After some preliminary chat, "Well Shane," said Andy Morrow, addressing Shane Fadh, "will you give us an account of your wedding? I'm tould it was the greatest letout that ever was in the country, before or since."

"And you may say that, Mr. Morrow," said Shane, "I was at many a wedding myself, but never at the likes of my own, barring Tim Lannigan's, that married Father Corrigan's niece."

"I believe," said Andy, "that, too, was a dashing one; however, it's your own we want. Come, Nancy, fill these measures again, and let us be comfortable, at all events, and give Shane a double one, for talking's druthy work:—I'll stand this round."

When the liquor was got in, Shane, after taking a draught, laid down his pint, pulled out his steel tobacco-box, and, after twisting off a chew between his teeth, closed the

box, and commenced the story of his wedding.

"When I was a Brine-Oge,"* said Shane, "I was as wild as an unbroken cowlt—no divilment was too hard for me; and so sign's on it, for there wasn't a piece of mischief done in the parish, but was laid at my door—and the dear knows I had enough of my own to answer for, let alone to be set down for that of other people; but, any way, there was many a thing done in my name, when I knew neither act nor part about it. One of them I'll mintion: Dick Cuillenan, father to Paddy, that lives at the crass-roads, beyant Gunpowdher Lodge, was over head and ears in love with Jemmy Finigan's eldest daughter, Mary, then, sure enough, as purty a girl as you'd meet in a fair—indeed, I think I'm looking at her, with her fair flaxen ringlets hanging over her shoulders, as she used to pass our house, going to mass of a Sunday. God rest her sowl, she's now in glory—that was before she was my wife. Many a happy day we passed together; and I could take it to my death, that an ill word, let alone to rise our hands to one another, never passed between us—only one day, that a word or two happened about the dinner, in the middle of Lent, being a little too late, so that the horses were kept nigh half an hour out of the plough; and I wouldn't have valued that so much, only that it was *Beal Cam*† Doherty that joined‡ me in ploughing that year—and I was vexed not to take all I could out of him, for he was a raal Turk himself.

"I disremember now what passed between us as to words—but I know I had a duck-egg in my hand, and when she spoke, I raised my arm, and nailed—poor Larry Tracy, our servant boy, between the two eyes with it, although the crathur was ating his dinner quietly fornent me, not saying a word.

"Well, as I tould you, Dick was ever after her, although her father and mother would rather see her *under boord** than joined to any of that connection; and as for herself, she couldn't bear the sight of him, he was sich an upsetting, conceited puppy, that thought himself too good for every girl. At any rate, he tried often and often, in fair and market, to get striking up with her; and both coming from and going to mass, 'twas the same way, for ever after and about her, till the state he was in spread over the parish like wild fire. Still, all he could do was of no use; except to bid him the time of day, she never entered into discoorse with him at all at all. But there was no putting the likes of him off; so he got a quart of spirits in his pocket, one night, and without saying a word to mortal, off he sets full speed to her father's, in order to brake the thing to the family.

"Mary might be about seventeen at this time, and her mother looked almost as young and fresh as if she hadn't been married at all. When Dick came in, you may be sure they were all surprised at the sight of him; but they were civil people—and the mother wiped a chair, and put it over near the fire for him to sit down upon, waiting to hear what he'd say, or what he wanted, although they could give a purty good guess as to that—but they only wished to put him off with as little offince as possible. When Dick *sot* a while, talking about what the price of hay and oats would be in the following summer, and other subjects that he thought would show his knowledge of farming and cattle, he pulls out his bottle, encouraged to by their civil way of talking,—and telling the ould couple, that as he came over on his *kailyee*,† he had brought a drop in his pocket to sweeten the discoorse, axing Susy Finigan, the mother, for a glass to send it round with—at the

* A young man full of fun and frolic. The word literally signifies Young Brian. Such phrases originate thus:—A young man remarkable for one or more qualities of a particular nature becomes so famous for them that his name, in the course of time, is applied to others, as conveying the same character.

‡ Crooked mouth.

‡ In Ireland, small farmers who cannot afford to keep more than one horse are in the habit of "joining," as it is termed—that is, of putting their horses together so as to form a yoke, when they plough each other's farms, working alternately, sometimes, by the week, half-week, or day; that is, I plough this day, or this week, and you the next day, or week, until our crops are got down. In this case, each is anxious to take as much out of the horses as he can, especially where the farms are unequal. For instance, where one farm is larger than another the difference must be paid by the owner of the larger one in horse-labor, man-labor, or money; but that he may have as little to pay as possible, he ploughs as much for himself, by the day, as he can, and often strives to get the other to do as little per day, on the other side, in order to diminish what will remain due to his partner. There is, consequently, a ludicrous undercurrent of petty jealousy running between them, which explains the passage in question.

* In that part of the country where the scene of Shane Fadh's Wedding is laid, the bodies of those who die are not stretched out on a bed, and the face exposed; on the contary, they are placed generally on the ground, or in a bed, but with a board resting upon two stools or chairs over them. This is covered with a clean sheet, generally borrowed from some wealthier neighbor; so that the person of the deceased is altogether concealed. Over the sheet, upon the board, are placed plates of cut tobacco, pipes, snuff, &c. This is what is meant by being "undher boord."

† Kailyee—a friendly evening visit.

same time drawing over his chair close to Mary, who was knitting her stocken up beside her little brother Michael, and chatting to the gorsoon, for fraid that Cuillenan might think she paid *him* any attention.

"When Dick got alongside of her, he began, of coorse, to pull out her needles and spoil her knitting, as is customary before the young people come to close spaking. Mary, howsomever, had no welcome for him; so, says she, 'You ought to know, Dick Cuillenan, who you spake to, before you make the freedom you do.'

"'But you don't know,' says Dick, 'that I'm a great hand at spoiling the girls' knitting,—it's a fashion I've got,' says he.

"'It's a fashion, then,' says Mary, 'that'll be apt to get you a broken mouth, some time.'*

"'Then,' says Dick, 'whoever does that must marry me.'

"'And them that gets you, will have a prize to brag of,' says she; 'stop yourself, Cuillenan—single your freedom, and double your distance, if you plase; I'll cut my coat off no such cloth.'

"'Well, Mary,' says he, 'maybe, if *you* don't, as good will; but you won't be so cruel as all that comes to—the worst side of you is out, I think.'

"He was now beginning to make greater freedom; but Mary rises from her seat, and whisks away with herself, her cheek as red as a rose with vexation at the fellow's impearance. 'Very well,' says Dick, 'off you go; but there's as good fish in the *say* as ever was catched.—I'm sorry to see, Susy,' says he to her mother, 'that Mary's no friend of mine, and I'd be mighty glad to find it otherwise; for, to tell the truth, I'd wish to become connected with the family. In the mane time, hadn't you better get us a glass, till we drink one bottle on the head of it, anyway.'

"'Why, then, Dick Cuillenan,' says the mother, 'I don't wish you anything else than good luck and happiness; but, as to Mary, she's not *for* you herself, nor would it be a good match between the families at all. Mary is to have her grandfather's sixty guineas; and the two *moulleens*† that her uncle Jack left her four years ago has brought her a good stock for any farm. Now if she married you, Dick, where's the farm to bring her to?—surely it's not upon them seven acres of stone and bent, upon the long Esker,* that I'd let my daughter go to live. So, Dick, put up your bottle, and in the name of God, go home, boy, and mind your business; but, above all, when you want a wife, go to them that you may have a right to expect, and not to a girl like Mary Finigan, that could lay down guineas where you could hardly find shillings.'

"'Very well, Susy,' says Dick, nettled enough, as he well might, 'I say to you, just as I say to your daughter, if you be proud there's no force.'"

"But what has this to do with you, Shane?" asked Andy Morrow; "sure we wanted to hear an account of *your* wedding, but instead of that, it's Dick Cuillenan's history you're giving us."

"That's just it," said Shane; "sure, only for this same Dick, I'd never got Mary Finigan for a wife. Dick took Susy's advice, bekase, after all, the undacent drop was in him, or he'd never have brought the bottle out of the house at all; but, faith he riz up, put the whiskey in his pocket, and went home with a face on him as black as my hat with venom. Well, things passed on till the Christmas following, when one night, after the Finigans had all gone to bed, there comes a crowd of fellows to the door, thumping at it with great violence, and swearing that if the people within wouldn't open it immediately, it would be smashed into smithereens. The family, of coorse, were all alarmed; but somehow or other, Susy herself got suspicious that it might be something about Mary, so up she gets, and sends the daughter to her own bed, and lies down herself in the daughter's.

"In the mane time, Finigan got up, and after lighting a candle, opened the door at once. 'Come, Finigan,' says a strange voice. 'put out the candle, except you wish us to make a candlestick of the thatch,' says he—'or to give you a prod of a bagnet under the ribs,' says he.

"It was a folly for one man to go to bell-the-cat with a whole crowd; so he blew the candle out, and next minute they rushed in, and went as straight as a rule to Mary's bed. The mother all the time lay close, and never said a word. At any rate, what could be expected, only that, do what she could, at the long-run she must go? So according, after a very hard battle on her side, being a powerful woman, she was obliged to travel—but

* It is no unusual thing in Ireland for a country girl to repulse a fellow whom she thinks beneath her, if not by a flat at least by a flattening refusal; nor is it seldom that the "argumentum fistycuffium" is resorted to on such occasions. I have more than once seen a disagreeable lover receive, from the fair hand which he sought, so masterly a blow, that a bleeding nose rewarded his ambition, and silenced for a time his importunity.

† Cows without horns.

* Esker; a high ridge of land, generally barren and unproductive, when upon a small scale. It is also a ridge height that runs for many miles through a country.

not till she had left many of them marks to remimber her by; among the rest, Dick himself got his nose split on his face, with the stroke of a churn-staff, so that he carried half a nose on each cheek till the day of his death. Still there was very little spoke, for they didn't wish to betray themselves on any side. The only thing that Finigan could hear, was my name repeated several times, as if the whole thing was going on under my direction; for Dick thought, that if there was any one in the parish likely to be set down for it, it was me.

"When Susy found they were for putting her behind one of them, on a horse, she rebelled again, and it took near a dozen of boys to hoist her up; but one vagabone of them, that had a rusty broad-sword in his hand, gave her a skelp with the flat side of it, that subdued her at once, and off they went. Now, above all nights in the year, who should be dead but my own full cousin, Denis Fadh—God be good to him!—and I, and Jack, and Dan, his brothers, while bringing home whiskey for the wake and berrin, met them on the road. At first we thought them distant relations coming to the wake, but when I saw only one woman among the set, and she mounted on a horse, I began to suspect that all wasn't right. I accordingly turned back a bit, and walked near enough without their seeing me to hear the discoorse, and discover the whole business. In less than no time I was back at the wake-house, so I up and tould them what I saw, and off we set, about forty of us, with good cudgels, scythe-sneds, and flails, fully bent to bring her back from them, come or go what would. And troth, sure enough, we did it; and I was the man myself, that rode afore the mother on the same horse that carried her off.

"From this out, when and wherever I got an opportunity, I whispered the soft nonsense, Nancy, into poor Mary's ear, until I put my *comedher** on her, and she couldn't live at all without me. But I was something for a woman to look at then, any how, standing six feet two in my stocking soles, which, you know, made them call me Shane *Fadh.*† At that time I had a decent farm of fourteen acres in Crocknagooran—the same that my son, Ned, has at the present time; and though, as to wealth, by no manner of manes fit to compare with the Finigans, yet, upon the whole, she might have made a worse match. The father, however, wasn't for me; but the mother was: so after drinking a bottle or two with the mother, Sarah Traynor, her cousin, and Mary, along with Jack Donnellan on my part, in their own barn, unknown to the father, we agreed to make a runaway match of it, and appointed my uncle Brian Slevin's as the house we'd go to. The next Sunday was the day appointed; so I had my uncle's family prepared, and sent two gallons of whiskey, to be there before us, knowing that neither the Finigans nor my own friends liked stinginess.

"Well, well, after all, the world is a strange thing—it's myself hardly knows what to make of it. It's I that did doat night and day upon that girl; and indeed there was them that could have seen me in Jimmaiky for her sake, for she was the beauty of the country, not to say of the parish, for a girl in her station. For my part, I could neither ate nor sleep, for thinking that she was so soon to be my own married wife, and to live under my roof. And when I'd think of it, how my heart would bounce to my throat, with downright joy and delight! The mother had made us promise not to meet till Sunday, for fraid of the father becoming suspicious: but if I was to be shot for it, I couldn't hinder myself from going every night to the great flowering whitethorn that was behind their garden; and although she knew I hadn't promised to come, yet there she still was; something, she said, tould her I *would* come.

"The next Sunday we met at *Althadhavan* wood, and I'll never forget what I felt when I was going to the green at St. Patrick's Chair, where the boys and girls meet on Sunday: but there she was—the bright eyes dancing with joy in her head to see me. We spent the evening in the wood, till it was dusk—I bating them all leaping, dancing, and throwing the stone; for, by my song, I thought I had the action of ten men in me; she looking on, and smiling like an angel, when I'd lave them miles behind me. As it grew dusk, they all went home, except herself and me, and a few more who, maybe, had something of the same kind on hands.

"'Well Mary,' says I, 'acushla machree, it's dark enough for us to go; and, in the name of God, let us be off."

"The crathur looked into my face, and got pale—for she was very young then: 'Shane,' says she, and she thrimbled like an aspen lafe, 'I'm going to trust myself with you for ever—for ever, Shane, avourneen,'—and her sweet voice broke into purty murmurs as she spoke; 'whether for happiness or sorrow God he only knows. I can bear poverty and distress, sickness and want with you, but I can't bear to think that you should

* Comedher—come hither—alluding to the burden of an old love-charm which is still used by the young of both sexes on May-morning. It is a literal translation of the Irish word "gutsho."

† Fadh is tall, or long.

ever forget to love me as you do now; or that your heart should ever cool to me: but I'm sure,' says she, 'you'll never forget this night, and the solemn promises you made me, before God and the blessed skies above us.'

"We were sitting at the time under the shade of a rowan-tree, and I had only one answer to make—I pulled her to my breast, where she laid her head and cried like a child, with her cheek against mine. My own eyes weren't dry, although I felt no sorrow, but—but—I never forgot that night—and I never will."

He now paused a few minutes, being too much affected to proceed.

"Poor Shane," said Nancy, in a whisper to Andy Morrow, "night and day he's thinking about that woman; she's now dead going on a year, and you would think by him, although he bears up very well before company, that she died only yesterday—but indeed it's he that was always the kind-hearted, affectionate man; and a better husband never broke bread."

"Well," said Shane, resuming the story, and clearing his voice, "it's great consolation to me, now that she's gone, to think that I never broke the promise I made her that night; for as I tould you, except in regard to the duck-egg, a bitther word never passed between us. I was in a passion then, for a wonder, and bent upon showing her that I was a dangerous man to provoke; so just to give her a *spice* of what I could do, I made *Larry* feel it—and may God forgive me for raising my hand even then to her. But sure he would be a brute that would beat such a woman except by proxy. When it was clear dark we set off, and after crossing the country for two miles, reached my uncle's, where a great many of my friends were expecting us. As soon as we came to the door I struck it two or three times, for that was the sign, and my aunt came out, and taking Mary in her arms, kissed her, and, with a thousand welcomes, brought us both in.

"You all know that the best of eating and drinking is provided when a runaway couple *is* expected; and indeed there was *galore** of both there. My uncle and all that were within welcomed us again; and many a good song and hearty jug of punch was sent round that night. The next morning my uncle went to her father's, and broke the business to him at once: indeed it wasn't very hard to do, for I believe it reached him afore he saw my uncle at all; so she was brought home † that day, and, on the Thursday night after, I, my father, uncle, and several other friends, went there and made the match. She had sixty guineas, that her grandfather left her, thirteen head of cattle, two feather- and two chaff-beds, with sheeting, quilts, and blankets; three pieces of bleached linen, and a flock of geese of her own rearing—upon the whole, among ourselves, it wasn't aisy to get such a fortune.

"Well, the match was made, and the wedding day appointed; but there was one thing still to be managed, and that was how to get over *standing* at mass on Sunday, to make satisfaction for the scandal we gave the church by running away with one another—but that's all stuff, for who cares a pin about standing, when three halves of the parish are married in the same way! The only thing that vexed me was, that it would keep back the wedding-day. However, her father and my uncle went to the priest, and spoke to him, trying, of coorse, to get us off it, but he knew we were fat geese, and was in for giving us a plucking.—Hut, tut!—he wouldn't hear of it at all, not he; for although he would ride fifty miles to sarve either of us, he couldn't break the new orders that he had got only a few days before that from the bishop. No; we must *stand**—for it would be setting a bad example to the parish; and if he would let *us* pass, how could he punish the rest of his flock, when they'd be guilty of the same thing?

"'Well, well, your Reverence,' says my uncle, winking at her father, 'if that's the case, it can't be helped, any how—they must only stand, as many a dacent father and mother's child has done before them, and will again, plase God—your Reverence is right in doing your duty.'

"'True for you, Brian,' says his Reverence, 'and yet, God knows, there's no man in the parish would be sorrier to see such a dacent,

* Galore—more than enough—great abundance.

† One-half, at least, of the marriages in a great portion of Ireland are effected in this manner. They are termed "runaway matches," and are attended with no disgrace. When the parents of the girl come to understand that she has "gone off," they bring her home in a day or two; the friends of the parties then meet, and the arrangements for the marriage are made as described in the tale.

* Matches made in this manner are discountenanced by the Roman Catholic clergy, as being liable to abuse; and, for this reason, the parties, by way of punishment, are sometimes, but not always, made to stand up at mass for one or three Sundays; but, as Shane expresses it, the punishment is so common that it completely loses its effect. To "stand," in the sense meant here, is this: the priest, when the whole congregation are on their knees, calls the young man and woman by name, who stand up and remain under the gazé of the congregation, whilst he rebukes them for the scandal they gave to the church, after which they kneel down. In general it is looked upon more as fun than punishment. Sometimes, however, the wealthier class compromise the matter with the priest, as described above.

comely young couple put upon a level with all the scrubs of the parish; and I know, Jemmy Finigan, it would go hard with your young, bashful daughter to get through with it, having the eyes of the whole congregation staring on her.'

"'Why, then, your Reverence, as to that,' says my uncle, who was just as stiff as the other was stout, 'the bashfulest of them will do more nor that to get a husband.'

"'But you tell me,' says the priest, 'that the wedding-day is fixed upon; how will you manage there?'

"'Why, put it off for three Sundays longer, to be sure,' says the uncle.

"'But you forget this, Brian,' says the priest, 'that good luck or prosperity never attends the putting off of a wedding.'

"Now here, you see, is where the priest had them; for they knew that as well as his Reverence himself—so they were in a puzzle again.

"'It's a disagreeable business,' says the priest, 'but the truth is, I could get them off with the bishop, only for one thing—I owe him five guineas of altar-money, and I am so far back in dues that I'm not able to pay him. If I could inclose this to him in a letter, I would get them off at once, although it would be bringing myself into trouble with the parish afterwards; but, at all events,' says he, 'I wouldn't make every one of you both—so, to prove that I wish to sarve you, I'll sell the best cow in my byre, and pay him myself, rather than their wedding day should be put off, poor things, or themselves brought to any bad luck—the Lord keep them from it!'

"While he was speaking, he stamped his foot two or three times on the flure, and the housekeeper came in.—'Katty,' says he, 'bring us in a bottle of whiskey; at all events, I can't let you away,' says he, 'without tasting something, and drinking luck to the young folks.'

"'In troth,' says Jemmy Finigan, 'and begging your Reverence's pardon, the sorra cow you'll sell this bout, any how, on account of me or my childhre, bekase I'll lay down on the nail what'll clear you wid the bishop; and in the name of goodness, as the day *is* fixed and all, let the crathurs not be disappointed.'

"'Jemmy,' says my uncle, 'if you go to that, you'll pay but your share, for I insist upon laying down one-half, at laste.'

"At any rate they came down with the cash, and after drinking a bottle between them, went home in choice spirits entirely at their good luck in so easily getting us off. When they had left the house a bit, the priest sent after them—'Jemmy,' says he to Finigan, 'I forgot a circumstance, and that is, to tell you that I will go and marry them at your own house, and bring Father James, my curate, with me.' 'Oh, wurrah, no,' said both, 'don't mention *that*, your Reverence, except you wish to break their hearts, out and out! why, that would be a thousand times worse nor making them stand to do penance: doesn't your Reverence know that if they hadn't the pleasure of *running for the bottle*, the whole wedding wouldn't be worth three half-pence?' 'Indeed, I forgot that, Jemmy.' 'But sure,' says my uncle, 'your Reverence and Father James must be at it, whether or not—for that we intended from the first.' 'Tell them I'll run for the bottle, too,' says the priest, laughing, 'and will make some of them look sharp, never fear.'

"Well, by my song, so far all was right; and may be it's we that weren't glad—maning Mary and myself—that there was nothing more in the way to put off the wedding-day. So, as the bridegroom's share of the expense always is to provide the whiskey, I'm sure, for the honor and glory of taking the blooming young crathur from the great lot of bachelors that were all breaking their hearts about her, I couldn't do less nor finish the thing dacintly; knowing, besides, the high doings that the Finigans would have of it—for they were always looked upon as a family that never had their heart in a trifle, when it would come to the push. So, you see, I and my brother Mickey, my cousin Tom, and Dom'nick Nulty, went up into the mountains to Tim Cassidy's still-house, where we spent a glorious day, and bought fifteen gallons of stuff, that one drop of it would bring the tear, if possible, to a young widdy's eye that had berrid a bad husband. Indeed, this was at my father's bidding, who wasn't a bit behindhand with any of them in cutting a dash. 'Shane,' says he to me, 'you know the Finigans of ould, that they won't be contint with what would do another, and that, except they go beyant the thing, entirely, they won't be satisfied. They'll have the whole countryside at the wedding, and we must let them see that we have a spirit and a faction of our own,' says he, 'that we needn't be ashamed of. They've got all kinds of ateables in cart-loads, and as we're to get the drinkables, we must see and give as good as they'll bring. I myself, and your mother, will go round and invite all we can think of, and let you and Mickey go up the hills to Tim Cassidy, and get fifteen gallons of whiskey, for I don't think less will do us.'

"This we accordingly complied with, as I said, and surely better stuff never went down

the *red lane** than the same whiskey; for the people knew nothing about watering it then, at all at all. The next thing I did was to get a fine shop cloth coat, a pair of top boots, and buckskin breeches fit for a squire; along with a new Caroline hat that would throw off the wet like a duck. Mat Kavanagh, the schoolmaster from Findramore bridge, lent me his watch for the occasion, after my spending near two days learning from him to know what o'clock it was. At last, somehow, I masthered that point so well, that, in a quarter of an hour at least, I could give a dacent guess at the time upon it.

"Well, at last the day came. The wedding morning, or the bride's part of it,† as they say, was beautiful. It was then the month of July. The evening before my father and my brother went over to Jemmy Finigan's, to make the regulations for the wedding. We, that is my party, were to be at the bride's house about ten o'clock, and we were then to proceed, all on horseback, to the priest's, to be married. We were then, after drinking something at Tom Hance's public-house, to come back as far as the Dumbhill, where we were to start and run for the bottle. That morning we were all up at the shriek of day. From six o'clock my own faction, friends and neighbors, began to come, all mounted; and about eight o'clock there was a whole regiment of them, some on horses, some on mules, others on raheries‡ and asses; and, by my word, I believe little Dick Snudaghan, the tailor's apprentice, that had a hand in making my wedding-clothes, was mounted upon a buck goat, with a bridle of salvages tied to his horns. Anything at all to keep their feet from the ground; for nobody would be allowed to go with the wedding that hadn't some animal between them and the earth.

"To make a long story short, so large a bridegroom's party was never seen in that country before, save and except Tim Lannigan's, that I mentioned just now. It would make you split your face laughing to see the figure they cut; some of them had saddles and bridles—others had saddles and halthers; some had back-suggawns of straw, with hay stirrups to them, but good bridles; others had sacks filled up as like saddles as they could make them, girthed with hay-ropes five or six times tied round the horse's body. When one or two of the horses wouldn't carry double, except the hind rider sat strideways, the women had to be put foremost, and the men behind them. Some had dacent pillions enough, but most of them had none at all, and the women were obliged to sit where the pillion ought to be—and a hard card they had to play to keep their seats even when the horses walked asy, so what must it be when they came to a gallop! but that same was nothing at all to a trot.

"From the time they began to come that morning, you may be sartain that the glass was no cripple, any how—although, for fear of accidents, we took care not to go too deep. At eight o'clock we sat down to a rousing breakfast, for we thought it best to eat a trifle at home, lest they might think that what we were to get at the bride's breakfast might be thought any novelty. As for my part, I was in such a state, that I couldn't let a morsel cross my throat, nor did I know what end of me was uppermost. After breakfast they all got their cattle, and I my hat and whip, and was ready to mount, when my uncle whispered to me that I must kneel down and ax my father and mother's blessing, and forgiveness for all my disobedience and offinces towards them—and also to requist the blessing of my brothers and sisters. Well, in a short time I was down; and my goodness! such a hullabaloo of crying as there was in a minute's time! 'Oh, Shane Fadh—Shane Fadh, acushla machree!' says my poor mother in Irish, 'you're going to break up the ring about your father's hearth and mine—going to have us, avourneen, for ever, and we to hear your light foot and sweet voice, morning, noon, and night, no more! Oh!' says she, 'it's you that was the good son all out; and the good brother, too: kind and cheerful was your voice, and full of love and affection was your heart! Shane, avourneen dheelish, if ever I was harsh to you, forgive your poor mother, that will never see you more on her flure as one of her own family.'

"Even my father, that wasn't much given to crying, couldn't speak, but went over to a corner and cried till the neighbors stopped him. As for my brothers and sisters, they were all in an uproar; and I myself cried like a Trojan, merely bekase I *see* them at it. My father and mother both kissed me, and gave me their blessing; and my brothers and sisters did the same, while you'd think all their hearts would break. 'Come, come,' says my uncle, 'I'll have none of this: what a hubbub you make, and your son going to be well married—going to be joined to a girl that your betters would be proud to get into connection with. You should have more

* Humorous periphrasis for throat.

† The morning, or early part of the day, on which an Irish couple are married, up until noon, is called the bride's part, which, if the fortunes of the pair are to be happy, is expected to be fair—rain or storm being considered indicative of future calamity.

‡ A small, shaggy pony, so called from being found in great numbers on the Island of that name.

sense, Rose Campbell—you ought to thank God that he had the luck to come across such a colleen for a wife; and that it's not going to his grave, instead of into the arms of a purty girl—and what's better, a good girl. So quit your blubbering, Rose; and you, Jack,' says he to my father, 'that ought to have more sense, stop this instant. Clear off, every one of you, out of this, and let the young boy go to his horse. Clear out, I say, or by the powers I'll—look at them three stags of huzzies; by the hand of my body they're blubbering bekase it's not their own story this blessed day. Move—bounce!—and you, Rose Oge, if you're not behind Dudley Fulton in less than no time, by the hole of my coat, I'll marry a wife myself, and then where will the twenty guineas be that I'm to leave you?'

"God rest his soul, and yet there was a tear in his eye all the while—even in spite of his joking!

"Any how, it's easy knowing that there wasn't sorrow at the bottom of their grief: for they were all now laughing at my uncle's jokes, even while their eyes were red with the tears: my mother herself couldn't but be in a good humor, and join her smile with the rest.

"My uncle now drove us all out before him; not, however, till my mother had sprinkled a drop of holy water on each of us, and given me and my brothers and sisters a small taste of blessed candle, to prevent us from sudden death and accidents.* My father and she didn't come with us then, but they went over to the bride's while we were all gone to the priest's house. At last we set off in great style and spirits—I well mounted on a good horse of my own, and my brother on one that he had borrowed from Peter Dannellon, fully bent on winning the bottle. I would have borrowed him myself, but I thought it dacenter to ride my own horse manfully, even though he never won a side of mutton or a saddle, like Dannellon's. But the man that was most likely to come in for the bottle was little Billy Cormick, the tailor, who rode a blood-racer that young John Little had wickedly lent him for the special purpose; he was a tall bay animal, with long small legs, a switch tail, and didn't know how to trot. Maybe we didn't cut a dash—and might have taken a town before us. Out we set about nine o'clock, and went across the country: but I'll not stop to mention what happened some of them, even before we got to the bride's house. It's enough to say here, that sometimes one in crassing a stile or ditch would drop into the *shough*;* sometimes another would find himself head foremost on the ground; a woman would be capsized here in crassing a ridgy field, bringing her fore-rider to the ground along with her; another would be hanging like a broken arch, ready to come down, till some one would ride up and fix her on the seat. But as all this happened in going over the fields, we expected that when we'd get out on the king's highway there would be less danger, as we would have no ditches or drains to crass. When we came in sight of the house, there was a general shout of welcome from the bride's party, who were on the watch for us: we couldn't do less nor give them back the chorus; but we had better have let that alone, for some of the young horses took the *stadh*,† others of them capered about; the asses—the sorra choke them—that were along with us should begin to bray, as if it was the king's birthday—and a mule of Jack Urwin's took it into his head to stand stock still. This brought another dozen of them to the ground; so that, between one thing or another, we were near half an hour before we got on the march again. When the blood-horse that the tailor rode saw the crowd and heard the shouting, he cocked his ears, and set off with himself full speed; but before he had got far he was without a rider, and went galloping up to the bride's house, the bridle hangin' about his feet. Billy, however, having taken a glass or two, wasn't to be cowed: so he came up in great blood, and swore he would ride him to America, sooner than let the bottle be won from the bridegroom's party.

"When we arrived, there was nothing but shaking hands and kissing, and all kinds of *slewsthering*—men kissing men—women kissing women—and after that men and women all through other. Another breakfast was ready for us; and here we all sat down; myself and my next relations in the bride's house, and the others in the barn and garden; for one house wouldn't hold the half of us. Eating, however, was all only talk: of coorse we took some of the poteen again, and in a short time afterwards set off along the paved road to the priest's house, to be tied as fast as he could make us, and that was fast enough. Before we went out to mount our horses though, there was just such a hullabaloo with the bride and her friends as there was with myself: but my uncle soon put a stop to it, and in five minutes had them breaking their hearts laughing.

* In many parishes of Ireland a number of small wax candles are blessed by the priest upon Ash-Wednesday, and these are constantly worn about the person until that day twelve months, for the purposes mentioned above.

* Dyke or drain. † Became restive.

"Bless my heart, what doings! what roasting and boiling!—and what tribes of beggars and shulers, and vagabonds of all sorts and sizes, were sunning themselves about the doors—wishing us a thousand times long life and happiness. There was a fiddler and piper: the piper was to stop in my father-in-law's while we were going to be married, to keep the neighbors that were met there shaking their toes while we were at the priest's; and the fiddler was to come with ourselves, in order, you know, to have a dance at the priest's house, and to play for us coming and going; for there's nothing like a taste of music when one's *on* for sport. As we were setting off, ould Mary M'Quade from Kilnahushogue, who was sent for bekase she understood charms, and had the name of being lucky, tuck myself aside: 'Shane Fadh,' says she, 'you're a young man well to look upon; may God bless you and keep you so; and there's not a doubt but there's them here that wishes you ill—that would rather be in your shoes this blessed day, with your young *colleen bawn*,* that 'ill be your wife before the sun sets, plase the heavens. There's ould Fanny Barton, the wrinkled thief of a hag, that the Finigans axed here for the sake of her decent son-in-law, who ran away with her daughter Betty, that was the great beauty some years ago: her breath's not good, Shane, and many a strange thing's said of her. Well, maybe, I know more about *that* nor I'm not going to mintion, any how: more betoken that it's not for nothing the white hare haunts the shrubbery behind her house.'

"'But what harm could she do me, Sonsy Mary?' says I—for she was called Sonsy—'we have often sarved her one way or other.'

"'Ax me no questions about her, Shane,' says she, 'don't I know what she did to Ned Donnelly, that was to be pitied, if ever a man was to be pitied, for as good as seven months after his marriage, until I relieved him; 'twas gone to a thread he was, and didn't they pay me decently for my throuble!'

'Well, and what am I to do, Mary?' says I, knowing very well that what she *sed* was thrue enough, although I didn't wish her to see that I was afeard.

"'Why,' says she, 'you must first exchange money with me, an dthen, if you do as I bid you, you may lave the rest to myself.'

"I then took out, begad, a daicent lot of silver—say a crown or so—for my blood was up and the money was flush—and gave it to her, for which I got a *cronagh-bawn*† halfpenny in exchange.

"'Now,' says she, 'Shane, you must keep this in your company, and for your life and sowl, don't part wid it for nine days after your marriage; but there's more to be done,' says she—'hould out your right knee;' so with this she unbuttoned three buttons of my buckskins, and made me loose the knot of my garther on the right leg. 'Now,' says she, 'if you keep them loose till after the priest says the words, and won't let the money I gave you go out of your company for nine days, along with something else I'll do that you're to know nothing about, there's no fear of all their *pisthroges*.'* She then pulled off her right shoe, and threw it after us for luck.

"We were now all in motion once more—the bride riding behind my man, and the bridesmaid behind myself—a fine bouncing girl she was, but not to be mintioned in the one year with my own darlin'—in troth, it wouldn't be aisy getting such a couple as we were the same day, though it's myself that says it. Mary, dressed in a black castor hat, like a man's, a white muslin coat, with a scarlet silk handkercher about her neck, with a silver buckle and a blue ribbon, for luck, round her waist; her fine hair wasn't turned up, at all at all, but hung down in beautiful curls on her shoulders; her eyes, you would think, were all light; her lips as plump and as ripe as cherries—and maybe it's myself that wasn't to that time o' day without tasting them, any how; and her teeth, so even, and as white as a burned bone. The day bate all for beauty; I don't know whether it was from the lightness of my own spirit it came, but, I think, that such a day I never saw from that to this; indeed, I thought everything was dancing and smiling about me, and sartinly every one said, that such a couple hadn't been married, nor such a wedding seen in the parish for many a long year before.

"All the time, as we went along, we had the music; but then at first we were mightily puzzled what to do with the fiddler. To put him as a hind rider it would prevent him from playing, bekase how could he keep the fiddle before him and another so close to him? To put him foremost was as bad, for

* Fair girl.

† So called from Cronebane, in the county of Wicklow, where there is a copper mine.

* Charms of an evil nature. These are ceremonies used by such women, and believed to be of efficacy by the people. It is an undoubted fact that the woman here named—and truly named—was called in by honest Ned Donnelly, who, I believe, is alive, and could confirm the truth of it. I remember her well, as I do the occasion on which she was called in by Ned or his friends. I also remember that a neighbor of ours, a tailor named Cormick M'Elroy—father, by the way, to little Billy Cormick, who figures so conspicuously at the wedding—called her in to cure, by the force of charms, some cows he had that were sick.

he couldn't play and hould the bridle together; so at last my uncle proposed that he should get behind himself, turn his face to the horse's tail, and saw away like a Trojan.

"It might be about four miles or so to the priest's house, and, as the day was fine, we got on gloriously. One thing, however, became troublesome; you see there was a cursed set of ups and downs on the road, and as the riding *coutrements* were so bad with a great many of the weddiners, those that had no saddles, going down steep places, would work onward bit by bit, in spite of all they could do, till they'd be fairly on the horse's neck, and the women behind them would be on the animal's shoulders; and it required nice managing to balance themselves, for they might as well sit on the edge of a dale board. Many of them got tosses this way, though it all passed in good humor. But no two among the whole set were more puzzled by this than my uncle and the fiddler—I think I see my uncle this minute with his knees sticking into the horse's shoulders, and his two hands upon his neck, keeping himself back, with a *cruiht** upon him, and the fiddler with his heels away, towards the horse's tail, and he stretched back against my uncle, for all the world like two bricks laid against one another, and one of them falling. 'Twas the same thing going up a hill; whoever was behind, would be hanging over the horse's tail, with the arm about the fore-rider's neck or body, and the other houlding the baste by the mane, to keep them both from sliding off backwards. Many a come-down there was among them—but, as I said, it was all in good humor; and, accordingly, as regularly as they fell, they were sure to get a cheer.

"When we got to the priest's house, there was a hearty welcome for us all. The bride and I, with our next kindred and friends, went into the parlor; along with these, there was a set of young fellows, who had been bachelors of the bride's, that got in with an intention of getting the first kiss,† and, in course, of bating myself out of it. I got a whisper of this; so by my song, I was determined to cut them all out in that, as well as I did in getting herself; but you know, I couldn't be angry, even if they had got the foreway of me in it, bekase it's an ould custom. While the priest was going over the business, I kept my eye about me, and sure enough, there were seven or eight fellows all waiting to snap at her. When the ceremony drew near a close, I got up on one leg, so that I could bounce to my feet like lightning, and when it was finished, I got her in my arm, before you could say Jack Robinson, and swinging her behind the priest, gave her the husband's first kiss. The next minute there was a rush after her; but, as I had got the first, it was but fair that they should come in according as they could, I thought, bekase, you know, it was all in the coorse of practice; but, hould, there were two words to be said to that, for what does Father Dollard do but shoves them off, and a fine stout shoulder he had—shoves them off, like childre, and getting his arms about Mary, gives her half a dozen smacks at least—oh, consuming to the one less—tha' mine was only a *cracker** to. The rest, then, all kissed her, one after another, according as they could come in to get one. We then went straight to his Reverence's barn, which had been cleared out for us the day before, by his own directions, where we danced for an hour or two, his Reverence and his Curate along with us.

"When this was over we mounted again, the fiddler taking his ould situation behind my uncle. You know it is usual, after getting the knot tied, to go to a public-house or *shebeen*, to get some refreshment after the journey; so, accordingly, we went to little lame Larry Spooney's—grandfather to him that was transported the other day for staling Bob Beaty's sheep; he was called Spooney himself, for his sheep-stealing, ever since Paddy Keenan made the song upon him, ending with 'his house never wants a good ram-horn spoon;' so that let people say what they will, these things run in the blood—well, we went to his shebeen house, but the tithe of us couldn't get into it; so we sot on the green before the door, and, by my song, we *took*† dacently with *him*, any how; and, only for my uncle, it's odds but we would have been all fuddled.

"It was now that I began to notish a kind of coolness between my party and the bride's, and for some time I didn't know what to make of it—I wasn't long so, however; for my uncle, who still had his eye about him,

* The hump, which constitutes a round-shouldered man. If the reader has ever seen Hogarth's Illustrations of Hudibras, and remembers the redoubtable hero as he sits on horseback, he will be at no loss in comprehending what a *cruiht* means. *Cruiht* is the Irish for harp, and the simile is taken from the projection between the shoulders of the harper which was caused by carrying that instrument.

† There is always a struggle for this at an Irish wedding, where every man is at liberty—even the priest himself—to anticipate the bridegroom if he can.

* Cracker is the small, hard cord which is tied to a rustic whip, in order to make it crack. When a man is considered to be inferior to another in anything, the people say, "he wouldn't make a cracker to his whip."

† Drank.

"HOW ME KEPT HIS SATS SO LONG HAS PUZZLED ME FROM THAT DAY TO THIS."—*Shane Fadh's Wedding*, p. 693, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

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comes over to me, and says, 'Shane, I doubt there will be bad work amongst these people, particularly betwixt the Dorans and the Flannagans—the truth is, that the old business of the law-shoot will break out, except they're kept from drink, take my word for it, there will be blood spilled. The running for the bottle will be a good excuse,' says he, 'so I think we had better move home before they go too far in the drink.'

"Well, any way, there was truth in this; so, accordingly, the reckoning was *ped*, and, as this was the thrate of the weddiners to the bride and bridegroom, every one of the men clubbed his share, but neither I nor the girls anything. Ha—ha—ha! Am I alive at all? I never—ha—ha—ha—!—I never laughed so much in one day as I did in that, and I can't help laughing at it yet. Well, well! when we all got on the top of our horses, and sich other iligant cattle as we had—the crowning of a king was nothing to it. We were now purty well I thank you, as to liquor; and, as the knot was tied, and all safe, there was no end to our good spirits; so, when we took the road, the men were in high blood, particnlarly Billy Cormick, the tailor, who had a pair of long cavalry spurs upon him, that he was scarcely able to walk in—and he not more nor four feet high. The women, too, were in blood, having faces upon them, with the hate of the day and the liquor, as full as trumpeters.

"There was now a great jealousy among thim that were bint for winning the bottle; and when one horseman would cross another, striving to have the whip hand of him when they'd set off, why you see, his horse would get a cut of the whip itself for his pains. My uncle and I, however, did all we could to pacify them; and their own bad horsemanship, and the screeching of the women, prevented any strokes at that time. Some of them were ripping up ould sores against one another as they went along; others, particularly the youngsters, with their sweethearts behind them, coorting away for the life of them, and some might be heard miles off, singing and laughing; and yon may be sure the fiddler behind my uncle wasn't idle, no more nor another. In this way we dashed on gloriously, till we came in sight of the Dumb-hill, where we were to start for the bottle. And now you might see the men fixing themselves on their saddles, sacks and suggans; and the women tying kerchiefs and shawls about their caps and bonnets, to keep them from flying off, and then gripping their fore-riders hard and fast by the bosoms. When we got to the Dumb-hill, there were five or six fellows that didn't come with us to the priest's, but met us with cudgels in their hands, to prevent any of them from starting before the others, and to show fair play.

"Well, when they were all in a lump,—horses, mules, raheries, and asses—some, as I said, with saddles, some with none; and all jist as I tould you before;—the word was given and off they scoured, myself along with the rest; and divil be off me, if ever I saw such another sight but itself before or since. Off they skelped through thick and thin, in a cloud of dust like a mist about us; but it was a mercy that the life wasn't trampled out of some of us; for before we had gone fifty perches, the one-third of them were sprawling a-top of one another on the road. As for the women, they went down right and left—sometimes bringing the horsemen with them; and many of the boys getting black eyes and bloody noses on the stones. Some of them, being half blind with the motion of the whiskey, turned off the wrong way, and galloped on, thinking they had completely distanced the crowd; and it wasn't until they cooled a bit that they found out their mistake.

"But the best sport of all was, when they came to the *Lazy Corner*, just at Jack Gallagher's *flush*,* where the water came out a good way across the road; being in such a flight, they either forgot or didn't know how to turn the angle properly, and plash went above thirty of them, coming down right on the top of one another, souse in the pool. By this time there was about a dozen of the best horsemen a good distance before the rest, cutting one another up for the bottle: among these were the Dorans and Flanagans; but they, you see, wisely enough, dropped their women at the beginning, and only rode single. I myself didn't mind the bottle, but kept close to Mary, for fraid that among sich a divil's pack of half-mad fellows, anything might happen her. At any rate, I was next the first batch: but where do you think the tailor was all this time? Why away off like lightning, miles before them—flying like a swallow: and how he kept his sate so long has puzzled me from that day to this; but, any how, truth's best—there he was topping the hill ever so far before them. After all, the unlucky crathur nearly missed the bottle; for when he turned to the bride's house, instead of pulling up as he ought to do—why, to show his horsemanship to the crowd that was out looking at them, he should begin to cut up the horse right and left, until he made him take the garden ditch in full flight,

* Flush is a pool of water that spreads nearly across a road. It is usually fed by a small mountain stream, and in consequence of rising and falling rapidly, it is called "Flush."

landing him among the cabbages. About four yards or five from the spot where the horse lodged himself was a well, and a purty deep one, by my word; but not a sowl present could tell what become of the tailor, until Owen Smith chanced to look into the well, and saw his long spurs just above the water; so he was pulled up in a purty pickle, not worth the washing; but what did he care? although he had a small body, the sorra one of him but had a sowl big enough for Golias or Sampson the Great.

"As soon as he got his eyes clear, right or wrong, he insisted on getting the bottle: but he was late, poor fellow, for before he got out of the garden, two of them comes up—Paddy Doran and Peter Flanagan—cutting one another to pieces, and not the length of your nail between them. Well, well, that was a terrible day, sure enough. In the twinkling of an eye they were both off the horses, the blood streaming from their bare heads, struggling to take the bottle from my father, who didn't know which of them to give it to. He knew if he'd hand it to one, the other would take offince, and then he was in a great puzzle, striving to raison with them; but long Paddy Doran caught it while he was spaking to Flanagan, and the next instant Flanagan measured him with a heavy loaded whip, and left him stretched upon the stones.—And now the work began: for by this time the friends of both parties came up and joined them. Such knocking down, such roaring among the men, and screeching and clapping of hands and wiping of heads among the women, when a brother, or a son, or a husband would get his gruel! Indeed, out of a fair, I never saw anything to come up to it. But during all this work, the busiest man among the whole set was the tailor, and what was worst of all for the poor creature, he should single himself out against both parties, bekase you see he thought they were cutting him out of his right to the bottle.

They had now broken up the garden gate for weapons, all except one of the posts, and fought into the garden; when nothing should serve Billy, but to take up the large heavy post, as if he could destroy the whole faction on each side. Accordingly he came up to big Matthew Flanagan, and was rising it just as if he'd fell him, when Matt, catching him by the nape of the neck, and the waistband of the breeches, went over very quietly, and dropped him a second time, heels up, into the well; where he might have been yet, only for my mother-in-law, who dragged him out with a great deal to do: for the well was too narrow to give him room to turn.

"As for myself and all my friends, as it happened to be my own wedding, and at our own place, we couldn't take part with either of them; but we endeavored all in our power to *red** them, and a tough task we had of it, until we saw a pair of whips going hard and fast among them, belonging to Father Corrigan and Father James, his curate. Well, its wonderful how soon a priest can clear up a quarrel! In five minutes there wasn't a hand up—instead of that they were ready to run into mice-holes:—

"'What, you murderers,' says his Reverence, 'are you bint to have each other's blood upon your heads; ye vile infidels, ye cursed unchristian Autherntarians? † are ye going to get yourself hanged like sheep-stalers? down with your sticks, I command you: do you know—will you give yourselves time to see who's spaking to you—you bloodthirsty set of Episcopalians? I command you, in the name of the Catholic Church and the Blessed Virgin Mary, to stop this instant, if you don't wish me,' says he, 'to turn you into stocks and stones where you stand, and make world's wonders of you as long as you live.—Doran, if you rise your hand more, I'll strike it dead on your body, and to your mouth you'll never carry it while you have breath in your carcass,' says he.—'Clear off, you Flanagans, you butchers you—or by St. Dornick I'll turn the heads round upon your bodies, in the twinkling of an eye, so that you'll not be able to look a quiet Christian in the face again. Pretty respect you have for the decent couple at whose house you have kicked up such a hubbub. Is this the way people are to be deprived of their dinners on your accounts, you fungaleering thieves!'

"'Why then, plase your Riverence, by the—hem—I say Father Corrigan, it wasn't my fault, but that villain Flanagan's, for he knows I fairly won the bottle—and would have distanced him, only that when I was far before him, the vagabone, he galloped across me on the way, thinking to thrip up the horse.'

"'You lying scoundrel,' says the priest, 'how dare you tell me a falsity,' says he, 'to my face? how could he gallop across you if you were far before him? Not a word more, or I'll leave you without a mouth to your face, which will be a double share of provision and bacon saved any way. And, Flanagan, *you* were as much to blame as he, and must be chastised for your raggamuffianly conduct,' says he, 'and so must you both, and all your party, particularly you

* Separate, or pacify.

† Antitrinitarians; the peasantry are often extremely fond of hard and long words, which they call *tall English*.

and he, as the ringleaders. Right well I know it's the grudge upon the lawsuit you had, and not the bottle, that occasioned it: but by St. Peter, to Loughderg both of you must tramp for this.'

"'Ay, and by St. Pether, they both desarve it as well as a thief does the gallows,' said a little blustering voice belonging to the tailor, who came forward in a terrible passion, looking for all the world like a drowned rat. 'Ho, by St. Pether, they do, the vagabones; for it was myself that won the bottle, your Reverence; and by this and by that,' says he, 'the bottle I'll have, or some of their crowns will crack for it: blood or whiskey I'll have, your Reverence, and I hope that you'll assist me.'

"'Why, Billy, are you here?' says Father Corrigan, smiling down upon the figure the little fellow cut, with his long spurs and his big whip; 'what in the world tempted *you* to get on horseback, Billy?'

"'By the powers, I was miles before them,' says Billy; 'and after this day, your Reverence, let no man say that I couldn't ride a steeplechase across Crocknagooram.'

"'Why, Billy, how did you stick on at all, at all?' says his Reverence.

"'How do I know how I stuck on?' says Billy, 'nor whether I stuck on at all or not; all I know is, that I was on horseback leaving the Dumb-hill, and that I found them pulling me by the heels out of the well in the corner of the garden—and that, your Reverence, when the first was only topping the hill there below, as Lanty Magowran tells me who was looking on.'

"'Well, Billy,' says Father Corrigan, 'you must get the bottle; and as for you Dorans and Flanagans, I'll make examples of you for this day's work—that you may reckon on. You are a disgrace to the parish, and, what's more, a disgrace to your priest. How can luck or grace attind the marriage of any young couple that there's such work at? Before you leave this, you must all shake hands, and promise never to quarrel with each other while grass grows or water runs; and if you don't, by the blessed St. Dominick, I'll *exkimmicate** ye both, and all belonging to you into the bargain; so that ye'll be the pitiful examples and shows to all that look upon you.'

"'Well, well, your Reverence,' says my father-in-law, 'let all by-gones be by-gones; and please God, they will, before they go, be better friends than ever they were. Go now and clane yourselves, take the blood from about your faces, for the dinner's ready an hour agone; but if you all respect the place you're in, you'll show it, in regard of the young crathurs that's going, in the name of God, to face the world together, and of coorse wishes that this day at laste should pass in pace and quietness: little did I think there was any friend or neighbor here that would make so little of the place or people, as was done for nothing at all, in the face of the country.'

"'God he sees,' says my mother-in-law, 'that there's them here this day we didn't desarve this from, to rise such a *norration*, as if the house was a shebeen or a public-house! It's myself didn't think either me or my poor coolleen here, not to mention the dacent people she's joined to, would be made so little of, as to have our place turned into a play-acthur—for a play-acthur couldn't be worse.'

"'Well,' says my uncle, 'there's no help for spilt milk, I tell you, nor for spilt blood either; tare-an-ounty, sure we're all Irishmen, relations, and Catholics through other, and we oughtn't to be this way. Come away to the dinner—by the powers, we'll duck the first man that says a loud word for the remainder of the day. Come, Father Corrigan, and carve the goose, or the geese, for us—for, by my sannies, I bleeve there's a baker's dozen of them; but we've plenty of *Latin* for them, and your Reverence and Father James here understands that langidge, any how—larned enough there, I think, gintlemen.'

"'That's right, Brian,' shouts the tailor—'that's right; there must be no fighting: by the powers, the first man attempts it, I'll brain him—fell him to the earth like an ox, if all belonging to him was in my way.'

"This threat from the tailor went farther, I think, in putting them into good humor nor even what the priest said. They then washed and claned themselves, and accordingly went to their dinners.—Billy himself marched with his terrible whip in his hand, and his long cavalry spurs sticking near ten inches behind him, draggled to the tail like a bantling cock after a shower. But, maybe, there was more draggled tails and bloody noses nor poor Billy's, or even nor was occasioned by the fight; for after Father Corrigan had come, several of them dodged up, some with broken shins and heads and wet clothes, that they'd got on the way by the mischances of the race, particularly at the *Flush*. But I don't know how it was; somehow the people in them days didn't value these things a straw. They were far hardier then nor they are now, and never went to law at all at all. Why, I've often known skulls to be broken, and the people to die afterwards, and there would be nothing more

* Excommunicate. It is generally pronounced as above by the people.

about it, except to brake another skull or two for it; but neither *crowner's quest*, nor judge, nor jury, was ever troubled at all about it. And so sign's on it, people were then innocent, and not up to law and counsellors as they are now. If a person happened to be killed in a fight at a fair or market, why he had only to appear after his death to one of his friends, and get a number of masses offered up for his sowl, and all was right; but now the times are clane altered, and there's nothing but hanging and transporting for such things; although that won't bring the people to life again."

"I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "you had a famous dinner, Shane?"

"'Tis you that may say that, Mr. Morrow," replied Shane: "but the house, you see, wasn't able to hould one-half of us; so there was a dozen or two tables borrowed from the neighbors and laid one after another in two rows, on the green, beside the river that ran along the garden-hedge, side by side. At one end Father Corrigan sat, with Mary and myself, and Father James at the other. There were three five-gallon kegs of whiskey, and I ordered my brother to take charge of them; and there he sat beside them, and filled the bottles as they were wanted—bekase, if he had left that job to strangers, many a spalpeen there would make away with lots of it. Mavrone, such a sight as the dinner was! I didn't lay my eye on the fellow of it since, sure enough, and I'm now an ould man, though I was then a young one. Why there was a pudding boiled in the end of a sack; and troth it was a thumper, only for the straws—for you see, when they were making it, they had to draw long straws acrass in order to keep it from falling asunder—a fine plan it is, too. Jack M'Kenna, the carpenther, carved it with a hand-saw, and if he didn't curse the same straws, I'm not here. 'Draw them out, Jack,' said Father Corrigan—'draw them out.—It's asy known, Jack, you never ate a polite dinner, you poor awkward spalpeen, or you'd have pulled out the straws the first thing you did, man alive.'

"Such kishins of corned beef, and rounds of beef, and legs of mutton, and bacon—turkeys and geese, and barn-door fowls, young and fat. They may talk as they will, but commend me to a piece of good ould bacon, ate with crock butther, and phaties, and cabbage. Sure enough, they leathered away at everything, but this and the pudding were the favorites. Father Corrigan gave up the carving in less than no time, for it would take him half a day to serve them all, and he wanted to provide for number one. After helping himself, he set my uncle to it, and maybe he didn't slash away right and left. There was half a dozen gorsoons carrying about the beer in cans, with froth upon it like barm—but that was beer in airnest, Nancy—I'll say no more."

"When the dinner was over, you would think there was as much left as would serve a regiment; and sure enough, a right hungry ragged regiment was there to take care of it—though, to tell the truth, there was as much taken into Finigan's as would be sure to give us all a rousing supper. Why, there was such a troop of beggars—men, women, and childher, sitting over on the sunny side of the ditch, as would make short work of the whole dinner, had they got it. Along with Father Corrigan and me, was my father and mother, and Mary's parents; my uncle, cousins, and nearest relations on both sides. Oh, it's Father Corrigan, God rest his sowl, he's *now* in glory, and so he was *then*, also—how he did crow and laugh! 'Well, Matthew Finigan,' says he, 'I can't say but I'm happy that your *Colleen Bawn** here has lit upon a husband that's no discredit to the family—and it is herself didn't drive her pigs to a bad market,' says he. 'Why, in troth, Father avourneen,' says my mother-in law, 'they'd be hard to plase that couldn't be satisfied with them she got; not saying but she had her pick and choice of many a good offer, and might have got richer matches; but Shane Fadh M'Cawell, although you're sitting there beside my daughter, I'm prouder to see you on my own flure, the husband of my child, nor if she'd got a man with four times your substance.'

"'Never heed the girls for knowing where to choose,' says his Reverence, slyly enough: 'but, upon my word, only she gave us all the slip, to tell the truth, I had another husband than Shane in my eye for her, and that was my own nevvy, Father James's brother here.'

"'And I'd be proud of the connection,' says my father-in-law, 'but you see, these girls won't look much to what you or I'll say, in choosin' a husband for themselves. How-and-iver, not making little of your nevvy, Father Michael, I say he's not to be compared with that same bouchal sitting beside Mary there.'

"'No, nor by the powdhers-o-war, never will,' says Billy M'Cormick the tailor, who had come over and slipped in on the other side betune Father Corrigan and the bride—'by the powdhers-o' war, he'll never be fit to be compared with me, I tell you, till yesterday comes back again.'

"'Why, Billy,' says the priest, 'you're every place.' 'But where I ought to be!'

* Fair girl.

says Billy; 'and that's hard and fast tackled to Mary Bane, the bride here, instead of that steeple of a fellow she has got,' says the little cock.

"'Billy, I thought you were married,' said Father Corrigan.

"'Not I, your Reverence,' says Billy; 'but I'll soon do something, Father Michael—I have been threatening this long time, but I'll do it at last.'

"'He's not exactly married, Sir,' says my uncle, 'but there's a colleen present' (looking at the bridesmaid) 'that will soon have his name upon her.'

"'Very good, Billy,' says the priest, 'I hope you will give us a rousing wedding—equal, at least, to Shane Fadh's.'

"'Why then, your Reverence, except I get sich a darling as Molly Bane, here—and by this and that, it's you that *is* the darling Molly asthore—what come over me, at all at all, that I didn't think of you,' says the little man, drawing close to her, and poor Mary smiling good-naturedly at his spirit.

"'Well, and what if you *did* get such a darling as Molly Bane, there?' says his Reverence.

"'Why, except I get the likes of her for a wife—upon second thoughts, I don't like marriage, any way,' said Billy, winking against the priest—'I lade such a life as your Reverence; and by the powdhers, it's a thousand pities that I wasn't made into a priest, instead of a tailor. For, you see, if I had,' says he, giving a verse of an old song—

'For you see, if I had,
It's I'd be the lad
That would show all my people such larning;
And when they'd do wrong,
Why, instead of a song,
I'd give them a lump of a sarmin.'

"'Billy,' says my father-in-law, 'why don't you make a hearty dinner, man alive? go back to your sate and finish your male—you're aiting nothing to signify.' 'Me!' says Billy—'why, I'd scorn to ate a hearty dinner; and, I'd have you to know, Matt Finigan, that it wasn't for the sake of your dinner I came here, but in regard to your family, and bekase I wished him well that's sitting beside your daughter: and it ill becomes your father's son to cast up your dinner in my face, or any one of my family; but a blessed minute longer I'll not stay among you. Give me your hand, Shane Fadh, and you, Mary—may goodness grant you pace and happiness every night and day you both rise out of your beds. I made that coat your husband has on his back beside you—and a betther fit was never made; but I didn't think it would come to my turn to have my dinner cast up this a-way, as if I was aiting it for charity.'

"'Hut, Billy,' says I, 'sure it was all out of kindness; he didn't mane to offind you.'

"'It's no matter,' says Billy, beginning to cry, 'he *did* offend me; and it's low days with me to bear an affront from him, or the likes of him; but by the powdhers-o'-war,' says he, getting into a great rage, 'I *won't* bear it,—only as you're an old man yourself, I'll not rise my hand to you; but, let any man now that has the heart to take up your quarrel, come out and stand before me on the sod here.'

"Well, by this time, you'd tie all that were present with three straws, to see Billy stripping himself, and his two wrists not thicker than drumsticks. While the tailor was raging, for he was pretty well up with what he had taken, another person made his appearance at the far end of the *boreen* * that led to the green where we sot. He was mounted upon the top of a sack that was upon the top of a sober-looking baste enough God knows; he jogging along at his ease, his legs dangling down from the sack on each side, and the long skirts of his coat hanging down behind him. Billy was now getting pacified, bekase they gave way to him a little; so the fun went round, and they sang, roared, danced, and coorted, right and left.

"When the stranger came as far as the skirt of the green, he turned the horse over quite nathural to the wedding; and, sure enough, when he jogged up, it was Friar Rooney himself, with a sack of oats, for he had been *questin*.† Well, sure the ould people couldn't do less nor all go over to put the *failtah* ‡ on him. 'Why, then,' says my father and mother-in-law, 'tis yourself, Friar Rooney, that's as welcome as the flowers of May; and see who's here before you—Father Corrigan, and Father Dollard.'

"'Thank you, thank you, Molshy—thank you, Matthew—troth, I know that 'tis I am welcome.'

"'Ay, and you're welcome again, Father Rooney,' said *my* father, going down and shaking hands with him, 'and I'm proud to see you here. Sit down, your Reverence—here's everything that's good, and plinty of it, and if you don't make much of yourself, never say an ill fellow dealt with you.'

"The friar stood while my father was speaking, with a pleasant, contented face upon him, only a little roguish and droll.

* A small pathway or bridle road leading to a farm-house.

† Questin—When an Irish priest or friar collects corn or money from the people in a gratuitous manner, the act is called "questin."

‡ Welcome.

"'Hah! Shane Fadh,' says he, smiling dryly at me, 'you *did* them all, I see. You have her there, the flower of the parish, blooming beside you; but I knew as much six months ago, ever since I saw you bid her good-night at the hawthorn. Who looked back so often, Mary, eh? Ay, laugh and blush—do—throth, 'twas I that caught you, but you didn't see me, though. Well, a colleen, and if you did, too, you needn't be ashamed of your bargain, any how. You see, the way I came to persave yez that evening was this—but I'll tell it, by and by. In the mane time,' says he, sitting down and attacking a fine piece of corn-beef and greens, 'I'll take care of a certain acquaintance of mine,' says he. 'How are you, reverend gintlemen of the *Secularity?* You'll permit a poor friar to sit and ate his dinner, in your presence, I humbly hope.'

"'Frank,' says Father Corrigan, 'lay your hand upon your conscience, or upon your stomach, which is the same thing, and tell us honestly, how many dinners you eat on your travels among *my* parishioners this day.'

"'As I'm a sinner, Michael, this is the only thing to be called a *dinner* I eat this day;—Shane Fadh—Mary, both your healths, and God grant you all kinds of luck and happiness, both here and hereafter! All your healths in gineral! gintlemen *seculars!*'

"'Thank you, Frank,' said Father Corrigan; how did you speed to-day?'

"'How can any man speed, that comes after you?' says the Friar; 'I'm after travelling the half of the parish for that poor bag of oats that you see standing against the ditch.'

"'In other words, Frank,' says the Priest, 'you took *Althadhawan* in your way, and in about half a dozen houses filled your sack, and then turned your horse's head towards the good cheer, by way of *accident* only.'

"'And was it by way of accident, Mr. *Secular*, that I got you and that illoquent young gintleman, your curate, here before me? Do you feel that, man of the world? Father James, your health, though—you're a good young man as far as saying nothing goes; but it's better to sit still than to rise up and fall, so I commend you for your *discretion*,' says he; 'but I'm afeared your master there won't make you much fitter for the kingdom of heaven any how.'

"'I believe, Father Corrigan,' says my uncle, who loved to see the priest and the friar at it, 'that you've met with your match—I think Father Rooney's able for you.'

"'Oh, sure,' says Father Corrigan, 'he was joker to the college of the *Sorebones* * in Paris; he got as much education as enabled him to say mass in Latin, and to beg oats in English, for his jokes.'

"'Troth, and,' says the friar, 'if you were to get your larning on the same terms, you'd be guilty of very little knowledge; why, Michael, I never knew you to attempt a joke but once, and I was near shedding tears, there was something so very sorrowful in it.'

"This brought the laugh against the priest—'Your health, Molshy,' says he, winking at my mother-in-law, and then giving my uncle, who sat beside him, a *nudge;* 'I believe, Brian, I'm giving it to him.' 'Tis yourself that is,' says my uncle; 'give him a wipe or two more.' 'Wait till he answers the last,' says the friar.

"'He's always joking,' says Father James, 'when he thinks he'll make any thing by it.'

"'Ah!' says the friar, 'then God help you both if you were left to your jokes for your feeding; for a poorer pair of gentlemen wouldn't be found in Christendom.'

"'And I believe,' says Father Corrigan, 'if you depinded for your feeding upon your divinity instead of your jokes, you'd be as poor as a man in the last stage of a consumption.'

"This drew the laugh against the friar, who smiled himself; but he was a dry man that never laughed much.

"'Sure,' says the friar, who was seldom at a loss, 'I have yourself and your nephew for examples that it's possible to live and be well fed without divinity.'

"'At any rate,' says my uncle, putting in *his* tongue, 'I think you're both very well able to make divinity a joke betune you,' says he.

"'Well done, Brian,' says the friar, 'and so they are, for I believe it is the only subject they can joke upon! and I beg your pardon, Michael, for not excepting it before; on that subject I allow you to be humorsome.'

"'If that be the case, then,' says Father Corrigan, 'I must give up your company, Frank, in order to avoid the force of bad example; for you're so much in the habit of joking on everything else, that you're not able to accept even divinity itself.'

"'You may aisily give *me* up,' says the friar, 'but how will you be able to forget Father Corrigan? I'm afeard you'll find *his* acquaintance as great a detriment to yourself, as it is to others in that respect.'

"'What makes you say,' says Father James, who was more in airnest than the rest, 'that my uncle won't make me fit for the kingdom of heaven?'

* Sorbonne.

"'I had a pair of rasons for it, Jemmy,' says the friar; 'one is, that he doesn't understand the subject himself; another is, that you haven't capacity for it, even if he did. You've a want of natural parts—a *whackuum* here,' pointing to his forehead.

"'I beg your pardon, Frank,' says Father James, 'I deny your premises, and I'll now argue in Latin with you, if you wish, upon any subject you please.'

"'Come, then,' says the friar,—'*Kid eat ivy mare eat hay.*'

"'Kid—what?' says the other.

"'*Kid eat ivy mare eat hay,*' answers the friar.

"'I don't know what you're at,' says Father James, 'but I'll argue in Latin with you as long as you wish.'

"'Tut man,' says Father Rooney, 'Latin's for school-boys; but come, now, I'll take you in another language—I'll try you in Greek—*In-mud-eel-is in-clay-none-is in-fir-tar-is in-oak-no ne-is.*'

"The curate looked at him, amazed, not knowing what answer to make. At last says he, 'I don't profess to know Greek, bekase I never larned it—but stick to the Latin, and I'm not afeard of you.'

"'Well, then,' says the friar, 'I'll give you a trial at that—*Affiat te canis ter—Forte dux fel flat in guttur.*'

"'A flat tay-canister—Forty ducks fell flat in the gutthers!' says Father James,—'why that's English!'

"'English!' says the friar, 'oh, good-bye to you, Mr. Secular; if that's your knowledge of Latin, you're an honor to your tachers and to your cloth.'

"Father Corrigan now laughed heartily at the puzzling the friar gave Father James. 'James,' says he, 'never heed him; he's only pesthering you with bog-Latin; but, at any rate, to do him justice, he's not a bad scholar, I can tell you that. . . . Your health, Frank, you droll crathur—your health. I have only one fault to find with you, and that is, that you fast and mortify yourself too much. Your fasting has reduced you from being formerly a friar of very genteel dimensions to a cut of corpulency that smacks strongly of penance—fifteen stone at least.'

"'Why,' says the friar, looking down quite plased, entirely, at the cut of his own waist, which, among ourselves, was no trifle, and giving a growl of a laugh—the most he ever gave: 'if what *you* pray here benefits you in the *next life* as much as what *I fast* does me *in this*, it will be well for the world in general, Michael.'

"'How can *you* say, Frank,' says Father James, 'with such a carkage as that, that you're a *poor* friar? Upon my credit, when you die, I think the angels will have a job of it in wafting you upwards.'

"'Jemmy, man, was it *you* that said it?—why, my light's beginning to shine upon you, or you never could have got out so much,' says Father Rooney, putting his hands over his brows, and looking up toardst him; 'but if you ever read scripthur, which I suppose you're not overburdened with, you would know that it says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," but not blessed are the poor in flesh—now, mine is spiritual poverty.'

"'Very true, Frank,' says Father Corrigan, 'I believe there's a great dearth and poverty of spirituality about you, sure enough. But of all kinds of poverty, commend me to a friar's. Voluntary poverty's something, but it's the divil entirely for a man to be poor against his will. You friars boast of this voluntary poverty; but if there's a fat bit in any part of the parish, we, that are the lawful clargy, can't eat it, but you're sure to drop in, just in the nick of time, with your voluntary poverty.'

"'I'm sure, if we do,' says the friar, 'it's nothing out of *your* pocket, Michael. I declare I believe you begrudge us the air we breathe. But don't you know very well that our ordhers are apostolic, and that, of coorse, we have a more primitive appearance than you have.'

"'No such thing,' says the other; 'you, and the parsons, and the fat bishops, are too far from the right place—the only difference between you is, that you are fat and lazy *by toleration*, whereas the others are fat and lazy *by authority*. *You* are fat and lazy on your ould horses, jogging about from house to house, and stuffing yourselves either at the table of other people's parishioners, or in your own convents in Dublin and elsewhere. *They* are rich, bloated gluttons, going about in their coaches, and wallying in wealth. Now, *we* are the golden mean, Frank, that live upon a little, and work hard for it.'

"'Why, you cormorant,' says the friar, a little nettled, for the dhrop was beginning to get up into his head, 'sure if we're fat *by toleration*, we're only *tolerably* fat, my worthy secular!'

"'You see,' says the friar, in a whisper to my uncle, 'how I sobered them in the larning, and they are good scholars for all that, but not near so deep read as myself.' 'Michael,' says he, 'now that I think on it—sure I'm to be at Denis O'Flaherty's *Month's mind* on Thursday next.'

"'Indeed I would not doubt you,' says Father Corrigan; 'you wouldn't be apt to miss it.'

"'Why, the widdy Flaherty asked me

yesterday, and I think that's proof enough that I'm not going unsent for.'

"By this time the company was hard and fast at the punch, the songs, and the dancing. The dinner had been cleared off, except what was before the friar, who held out wonderfully, and the beggars and shulers were clawing and scoulding one another about the divide. The dacentest of us went into the house for a while, taking the fiddler with us, and the rest, with the piper, staid on the green to dance, where they were soon joined by lots of the counthry people, so that in a short time there was a large number entirely. After sitting for some time within, Mary and I began, you may be sure, to get unasy, sitting palavering among a parcel of ould sober folks; so, at last, out we slipped, and the few other dacent young people that were with us, to join the dance, and shake our toe along with the rest of them. When we made our appearance, the flure was instantly cleared for us, and then she and I danced the *Humors of Glin*.

"Well, it's no matter—it's all past now, and she lies low; but I may say that it wasn't very often danced in better style since, I'd wager. Lord, bless us, what a drame the world is! The darling of my heart you war, avourneen machree. I think I see her with the modest smile upon her face, straight, and fair, and beautiful, and—hem—and when the dance was over, how she stood leaning upon me, and my heart within melting to her, and the look she'd give into my eyes and my heart, too, as much as to say, This is the happy day with me; and the blush still would fly acrass her face, when I'd press her, unknownst to the bystanders, against my beating heart. *A swilish machree*,* she is now gone from me—lies low, and it all appears like a drame to me; but—hem—God's will be done!—sure she's happy—och, och!!

"Many a shake hands did I get from the neighbors' sons, wishing me joy; and I'm sure I couldn't do less than thrate them to a glass, you know; and 'twas the same way with Mary: many a neighbors' daughter, that she didn't do more nor know by eyesight, maybe, would come up and wish her happiness in the same manner, and she would say to me, 'Shane, avourneen, that's such a man's daughter—they're a dacent friendly people, and we can't do less nor give her a glass.' I, of coorse, would go down and bring them over, after a little pulling—making, you see, as if they wouldn't come—to where my brother was handing out the native.

"In this way we passed the time till the evening came on, except that Mary and the bridesmaid were sent for to dance with the priests, who were within at the punch, in all their glory,—Friar Rooney along with them, as jolly as a prince. I and my man, on seeing this, were for staying with the company; but my mother, who 'twas that came for them, says, 'Never mind the boys, Shane; come in with the girls, I say. You're just wanted at the present time, both of you; follow me for an hour or two, till their Reverences within have a bit of a dance with the girls, in the back room; we don't want to gother a crowd about them.' Well, we went in, sure enough, for a while; but, I don't know how it was, I didn't at all feel comfortable with the priests; for, you see, I'd rather sport my day figure with the boys and girls upon the green: so I gives Jack *the hard word*,* and in we went, when, behold you, there was Father Corrigan planted upon the side of a *settle*, Mary along with him, waiting till they'd have the fling of a dance together, whilst the Curate was capering on the flure before the bridesmaid, who was a purty dark-haired girl, to the tune of 'Kiss my lady;' and the friar planted between my mother and my mother-in-law, one of his legs stretched out on a chair, he singing some funny song or other, that brought the tears to their eyes with laughing.

"Whilst Father James was dancing with the bridesmaid, I gave Mary the wink to come away from Father Corrigan, wishing, as I tould you, to get out amongst the youngsters once more; and Mary, herself, to tell the truth, although he was the priest, was very willing to do so. I went over to her, and says, 'Mary, asthore, there's a friend without that wishes to spake to you.'

"'Well,' says Father Corrigan, 'tell that friend that she's better employed, and that they must wait, whoever they are. I'm giving your wife, Shane,' says he, 'a little good advice that she won't be the worse for, and she can't go now.'

"Mary, in the meantime, had got up, and was coming away, when his Reverence wanted her to stay till they'd finished their dance. 'Father Corrigan,' says she, 'let me go now, sir, if you plase, for they would think it bad threatment of me not to go out to them.'

"'Troth, and you'll do no such thing, acushla,' says he, spaking so sweet to her; 'let them come in if they want you. Shane,' says his Reverence, winking at me, and spaking in a whisper, 'stay here, you and the girls, till we take a hate at the dancing—

* Light of my heart.

* A pass-word, sign, or brief intimation, touching something of which a man is ignorant, that he may act accordingly.

don't you know that the ould women here, and me, will have to talk over some things about the fortune; you'll maybe get more nor you expect. Here, Molshy,' says he to my mother-in-law, 'don't let the youngsters out of this.'

"'Musha, Shane, ahagur,' says the ould woman, 'why will yez go and lave the place; sure you needn't be dashed before them—they'll dance themselves.'

"Accordingly we stayed in the room; but just on the word, Mary gives one spring away, leaving his Reverence by himself on the *settle*. 'Come away,' says she, 'lave them there, and let us go to where I can have a dance with yourself, Shane.'

"Well, I always loved Mary, but at that minute, if it would save her, I think I could spill my heart's blood for her. 'Mary,' says I, full to the throat, 'Mary, *acushla agus asthore machree*,* I could lose my life for you.'

"She looked in my face, and the tears came into her eyes—'Shane, achora,' says she, 'amn't I *your happy* girl, at last?' She was leaning over against my breast; and what answer do you think I made?—I pressed her to my heart: I did more—*I took off my hat, and looking up to God, I thanked him with tears in my eyes, for giving me such a treasure.* 'Well, come now,' says she, 'to the green;' so we went—and it's she that was the girl, when she did go among them, that threw them all into the dark for beauty and figure; as fair as a lily itself did she look—so tall and illegant, that you wouldn't think she was a farmer's daughter at all; so we left the priests dancing away, for we could do no good before them.

"When we had danced an hour or so, them that the family had the greatest regard for were brought in unknown to the rest, to drink tay. Mary planted herself beside me, and would sit nowhere else; but the friar got beside the bridesmaid, and I surely observed that many a time she'd look over, likely to split, at Mary, and it's Mary herself that gave her many's a wink, to come to the other side; but, you know, out of manners, she was obliged to sit quietly, though among ourselves it's she that was like a hen on a hot griddle, beside the ould chap. It was now that the bride-cake was got. Ould Sonsy Mary marched over, and putting the bride on her feet, got up on a chair and broke it over her head, giving round a *fudge*† of it to every young person in the house, and they again to their acquaintances: but, lo and behold you, who should insist on getting a whang of it but the friar, which he rolled up in a piece of paper, and put it in his pocket. 'I'll have good fun,' says he, 'dividing this to-morrow among the *colleens* when I'm collecting my oats—the sorra one of me but 'ill make them give me the worth of it of something, if it was only a fat hen or a square of bacon.'

"After tay the ould folk got full of talk; the youngsters danced round them; the friar sung like a thrush, and told many a droll story. The tailor had got drunk a little too early, and had to be put to bed, but he was now as fresh as ever, and able to dance a horn-pipe, which he did on a door. The Dorans and the Flanagans had got quite thick after drubbing one another—Ned Doran began his courtship with Alley Flanagan on that day, and they were married soon after, so that the two factions joined, and never had another battle until the day of her berrial, when they were at it as fresh as ever. Several of those that were at the wedding were lying drunk about the ditches, or roaring, and swaggering, and singing about the place. And night falling, those that were dancing on the green removed to the barn. Father Corrigan and Father James weren't ill off; but as for the friar, although he was as pleasant as a lark, there was hardly any such thing as making him tipsy. Father Corrigan wanted him to dance—'What!' says he, 'would you have me to bring on an earthquake, Michael?—but who ever heard of a follower of St. Dominick, bound by his vow to voluntary poverty and mortification—young couple, your health—will anybody tell me who mixed this, for they've knowledge worth a folio of the fathers—poverty and mortification, going to shake his heel? By the bones of St. Dominick, I'd deserve to be suspinded if I did. Will no one tell me who mixed this, I say, for they had a jewel of a hand at it?—Och—

'Let parsons prache and pray—
Let priests to pray and prache, sir;
What's the rason they
Don't practise what they tache, sir?
Forral, orral, loll,
Forral, orral, laddy—

Sho da slainthah ma collenee agus ma bouchalee. Hoigh, oigh, oigh, healths all! gintlemen seculars! Molshy,' says the friar to my mother-in-law, 'send that *bocaun** to bed—poor fellow, he's almost off—rouse yourself, James! It's aisy to see that he's but young at it yet—that's right—he's sound asleep—just toss him into bed, and in an hour or so he'll be as fresh as a daisy.

* The very pulse and delight of my heart.
† A liberal portion torn off a thick cake.

* A soft, unsophisticated youth.

'Let parsons prache and pray—
—— Forral, orral, loll.'

"'For dear's sake, Father Rooney,' says my uncle, running in, in a great hurry, 'keep yourself quiet a little; here's the Squire and Master Francis coming over to fulfil their promise; he would have come up airlier, he says, but that he was away all day at the 'sizes.'

"'Very well,' says the friar, 'let him come—who's afeard—mind yourself, Michael.'

"In a minute or two they came in, and we all rose up of course to welcome them. The Squire *shuck* hands with the ould people, and afterwards with Mary and myself, wishing us all happiness, then with the two clergymen, and introduced Master Frank to them; and the friar made the young chap sit beside him. The masther then took a sate himself, and looked on while they were dancing, with a smile of good-humor on his face—while they, all the time, would give new touches and trebles, to show off all their steps before him. He was landlord both to my father and father-in-law; and it's he that was the good man, and the gintleman every inch of him. They may all talk as they will, but commend me, Mr. Morrow, to some of the ould squires of former times for a landlord. The priests, with all their larning, were nothing to him for good breeding—he appeared so free, and so much at his ase, and even so respectful, that I don't think there was one in the house but would put their two hands under his feet to do him a service.

"When he sat a while, my mother-in-law came over with a glass of nice punch that she had mixed, at least equal to what the friar praised so well, and making a low curtshy, begged pardon for using such freedom with his honor, but hoped that he would just taste a little to the happiness of the young couple. He then drank our healths, and shuck hands with us both a second time, saying—although I can't, at all at all, give it in anything like his own words—'I am glad,' says he, to Mary's parents, 'that your daughter has made such a good choice;'—throth he did—the Lord be merciful to his sowl—God forgive me for what I was going to say, and he a Protestant;—but if ever one of yez went to heaven, Mr. Morrow, he did;—'such a prudent choice; and I congr—con—grathulate you,' says he to my father, 'on your connection with so industrious and respectable a family. You are now beginning the world for yourselves,' says he to Mary and me, 'and I cannot propose a better example to you both than that of your respective parents. From this forrid,' says he, 'I'm to considher you my tenants; and I wish to take this opportunity of informing you both, that should you act up to the opinion I entertain of you, by an attentive coorse of industry and good management, you will find in me an encouraging and indulgent landlord. I know, Shane,' says he to me, smiling a little, knowingly enough too, 'that you have been a little wild or so, but that's past, I trust. You have now sarious duties to perform, which you cannot neglect—but you will not neglect them; and be assured, I say again, that I shall feel pleasure in rendhering you every assistance in my power in the *cultivation* and improvement of your farm.—'Go over, both of you,' says my father, 'and thank his honor, and promise to do everything he says.' Accordingly, we did so; I made my scrape as well as I could, and Mary blushed to the eyes, and dropp'd her curtshy.

"'Ah!' says the friar, 'see what it is to have a good landlord and a Christian gintleman to dale with. This is the feeling which should always bind a landlord and his tenants together. If I know your character, Squire Whitethorn, I believe you're not the man that would put a Protestant tenant over the head of a Catholic one, which shows, sir, your own good sense; for what is a difference of religion, when people do what they ought to do? Nothing but the name. I trust, sir, we shall meet in a better place than this—both Protestant and Catholic.'

"'I am happy, sir,' says the Squire, 'to hear such principles from a man who I thought was bound to hould different opinions.'

"'Ah, sir!' says the friar, 'you little know who you're talking to, if you think so. I happened to be collecting a taste of oats, with the permission of my friend Doctor Corrigan here, for I'm but a poor friar, sir, and dropped in *by mere accident;* but, you know the hospitality of our country, Squire; and that's enough—go they would not allow me, and I was mintioning to this young gintleman, your son, how we collected the oats, and he insisted on my calling—a generous, noble child! I hope, sir, you have got proper instructors for him?'

"'Yes,' said the Squire; 'I'm taking care of that point.'

"What do you think, sir, but he insists on my calling over to-morrow, that he may give me *his* share of oats, as I told him that I was a friar, and that he was a little parishioner of mine: but I added, that that wasn't right of him, without his papa's consent.'

"'Well, sir,' says the Squire, 'as he has promised, I will support him; so if you'll ride over to-morrow, you shall have a *sack* of oats—at all events I shall send you a sack in the course of the day.'

"'I humbly thank you, sir,' says Father Rooney: 'and I thank my noble little parishioner for his generosity to the poor ould friar—God mark you to grace, my dear; and, wherever you go, take the ould man's blessing along with you.'

"They then bid us good-night, and we all rose and saw them to the door.

"Father Corrigan now appeared to be getting sleepy. While this was going on, I looked about me, but couldn't see Mary. The tailor was just beginning to get a little hearty once more. Supper was talked of, but there was no one that could ate anything; even the friar was against it. The clergy now got their horses, the friar laving his oats behind him; for we promised to send them home, and something more along with them the next day. Father James was roused up, but could hardly stir with a *heddlick*. Father Corrigan was correct enough; but when the friar got up, he ran a little to the one side, upsetting Sonsy Mary that sat a little beyond him. He then called over my mother-in-law to the dresser, and after some *collogin*,* she slipped two fat fowl, that had never been touched, into one of his coat pockets, that was big enough to hould a leg of mutton. My father then called me over and said, 'Shane,' says he, 'hadn't you better slip Father Rooney a bottle or two of that whiskey; there's plenty of it there that wasn't touched, and you won't be a bit the poorer of it, may be, this day twelve months.' I accordingly dropped two bottles of it into the other pocket, so that his Reverence was well balanced any how.

"'Now,' said he, 'before I go, kneel down both of you, till I give you my benediction.'

"We accordingly knelt down, and he gave us his blessing in Latin before he bid us good-night!

"After they went, Mary threw the stocking—all the unmarried folks coming in the dark, to see who it would hit. Bless my sowl, but she was the droll Mary—for what did she do, only put a big brogue of her father's into it, that was near two pounds weight; and who should it hit on the bare sconce, but Billy Cormick, the tailor—who thought he was fairly shot, for it levelled the crathur at once; though that wasn't hard to do any how.

"This was the last ceremony: and Billy was well continted to get the knock, for you all know, whoever the stocking strikes upon is to be married first. After this, my mother and mother-in-law set them to the dancing—and 'twas themselves that kept it up till long after daylight the next morning—but first they called me into the next room where Mary was; and—and—so ends my wedding; by the same token that I'm as dry as a stick."

"Come, Nancy," says Andy Morrow, "replenish again for us all, with a double measure for Shane Fadh—because he well desarves it."

"Why, Shane," observed Alick, "you must have a terrible memory of your own, or you couldn't tell it all so exact."

"There's not a man in the four provinces has sich a memory," replied Shane. "I never hard that story yet, but I could repate it in fifty years afterwards. I could walk up any town in the kingdom, and let me look at the signs and I would give them to you agin jist exactly as they stood."

Thus ended the account of Shane Fadh's wedding; and, after finishing the porter, they all returned home, with an understanding that they were to meet the next night in the same place.

LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.

THE succeeding evening found them all assembled about Ned's fireside in the usual manner; where M'Roarkin, after a wheezy fit of coughing and a draught of Nancy's porter, commenced to give them an account of LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.

We have observed before, that M'Roarkin was desperately asthmatic, a circumstance which he felt to be rather an unpleasant impediment to the indulgence either of his mirth or sorrow. Every chuckle at his own jokes ended in a disastrous fit of coughing; and when he became pathetic, his sorrow was most ungraciously dissipated by the same cause; two facts which were highly relished by his audience.

"LARRY M'FARLAND, when a young man was considered the best laborer within a great ways of him; and no servant-man in the parish got within five shillings a quarter of his wages. Often and often, when his time would be near out, he'd have offers from the rich farmers and gintlemen about him, of higher terms; so that he was seldom with one masther more nor a year at the very most. He could handle a flail with e'er a

* Whispering.

man that ever stepped in black leather; and at spade-work there wasn't his aquil. Indeed, he had a brain for everything: he could thatch better nor many that airned their bread by it; could make a slide-car, straddle, or any other rough carpenter work, that it would surprise you to think of it; could work a kish or side creel beautifully; mow as much as any two men, and go down a ridge of corn almost as fast as you could walk; was a great hand at ditching, or draining meadows and bogs; but above all things he was famous for building hay-ricks and corn-stacks; and when Squire Farmer used to enter for the prize at the yearly plowing-match, he was sure to borrow the loan of Larry from whatever master he happened to be working with. Bad well he might, for the year out of four that he hadn't Larry he lost the prize: and every one knew that if Larry had been at the tail of his plough, they would have had a tighter job of it in beating him.

"Larry was a light, airy young man, that knew his own value; and was proud enough, God knows, of what he could do. He was, indeed, two much *up* to sport and diversion, and never knew his own mind for a week. It was against him that he never stayed long in one place; for when he got a house of his own afterwards, he had no one that cared anything in particular about him. Whenever any man would hire him, he'd take care to have Easter and Whiss'n Mondays to himself, and one or two of the Christmas *Maragh-mores*.* He was also a great dancer, fond of the dhrop—and used to dress above his station: going about with a shop-cloth coat, cassimoor small-clothes, and a Caroline hat; so that you would little think he was a poor sarvint-man, laboring for his wages. One way or other, the money never sted long with him; but he had light spirits, depended entirely on his good hands, and cared very little about the world, provided he could take his own fling out of it.

"In this way he went on from year to year, changing from one master to another; every man that would employ him thinking he might get him to stop with him for a constancy. But it was all useless; he'd be off after half a year, or sometimes a year at the most, for he was fond of roving; and that man would never give himself any trouble about him afterwards; though, maybe if he had continted himself with him, and been sober and careful, he would be willing to assist and befriend him, when he might stand in need of assistance.

"It's an ould proverb, that 'birds of a feather flock together,' and Larry was a good proof of this. There was in the same neighborhood a young woman name Sally Lowry, who was just the other end of himself,* for a pair of good hands, a love of dress and of dances. She was well-looking, too, and knew it; light and showy, but a tight and clane sarvint, any way. Larry and she, in short, began to coort, and were pulling a coard together for as good as five or six years. Sally, like Larry, always made a bargain, when hiring, to have the holly-days to herself; and on these occasions she and Larry would meet and sport their figure; going off with themselves, as soon as mass would be over, into Ballymavourneen, where he would collect a pack of fellows about him, and she a set of her own friends; and there they'd sit down and drink for the length of a day, laving themselves without a penny of whatever little airning the dress left behind it; for Larry was never right, except when he was giving a thrate to some one or other.

"After corrousing away till evening, they'd then set off to a dance; and when they'd stay there till it would be late, he should see her home, of coorse, never parting till they'd settle upon meeting another day.

"At last they got fairly tired of this, and resolved to take one another for better for worse. Indeed they would have done this long ago, only that they could never get as much together as would pay the priest. Howandever, Larry spoke to his brother, who was a sober, industrious boy, that had laid by his *scollops* for the windy day,† and tould him that Sally Lowry and himself were going to yoke for life. Tom was a well-hearted, friendly lad, and thinking that Sally, who bore a good name for being such a clane sarvint, would make a good wife, he lent Larry two guineas, which along with two more that Sally's aunt, who had no childhre of her own, gave her, enabled them to *over* their difficulties and get married. Shortly after this, his brother Tom followed his example; but as he had saved something, he made up to Val Slevin's daughter, that had a fortune of twenty guineas, a cow and a heifer, with two good chaff beds and bedding.

* Anglice—Big markets. There are three of these held before Christmas, and one or two before Easter, to enable the country folks to make their markets, and prepare for the more comfortably celebrating those great convivial festivals. They are almost as numerously attended as fairs; for which reason they are termed "big markets."

* Meaning his counterpart, as it were.

† In Irish the proverb is—"*Ha nehu la na guiha la na scuilipagh:*" that is, the windy or stormy day is not that on which the scollops should be cut. Scollops are osier twigs, sharpened at both ends, and inserted in the thatch, to bind it at the eave and rigging. The proverb inculcates preparation for future necessity.

"Soon after Tom's marriage, he comes to Larry one day, and says, 'Larry, you and I are now going to face the world; we're both young, healthy, and willin' to work—so are our wives; and it's bad if we can't make out bread for ourselves, I think.'

"'Thrue for you, Tom,' says Larry, 'and what's to hinder us? I only wish we had a farm, and you'd see we'd take good bread out of it: for my part there's not another *he* in the country I'd turn my back upon for managing a farm, if I had one.'

"'Well,' says the other, 'that's what I wanted to overhaul as we're together; Squire Dickson's steward was telling me yesterday, as I was coming up from my father-in-law's, that his master has a farm of fourteen acres to set at the present time; the one the Nultys held, that went last spring to America—'twould be a dacent little *take* between us.'

"'I know every inch of it,' says Larry, 'and good strong land it is, but it was never well wrought; the Nultys weren't fit for it at all; for one of them didn't know how to folly a plough. I'd engage to make that land turn out as good crops as e'er a farm within ten miles of it.'

"'I know that, Larry,' says Tom, 'and Squire Dickson knows that no man could handle it to more advantage. Now if you join me in it, whatever means I have will be as much yours as mine; there's two snug houses under the one roof, with out-houses and all, in good repair—and if Sally and Biddy will pull manfully along with us, I don't see, with the help of Almighty God, why we shouldn't get on dacently, and soon be well and comfortable to live.'

"'Comfortable!' says Larry, 'no, but wealthy itself, Tom: and let us *at* * it at wanst; Squire Dickson knows what I can do as well as any man in Europe; and I'll engage won't be hard upon us for the first year or two; our best plan is to go to-morrow, for fraid some other might get the foreway of us.'

"The Squire knew very well that two better boys weren't to be met with than the same M'Farlands, in the way of knowing how to manage land; and although he had his doubts as to Larry's light and careless ways, yet he had good dependance out of the brother, and thought, on the whole, that they might do very well together. Accordingly, he set them the farm at a reasonable rint, and in a short time they were both living on it with their two wives. They divided the fourteen acres into aquil parts; and for fraid there would be any grumbling between them about better or worse, Tom proposed that they should draw lots, which was agreed to by Larry; but, indeed, there was very little difference in the two halves; for Tom took care, by the way he divided them, that none of them should have any reason to complain. From the time they wint to live upon their farms, Tom was up early and down late, improving it—paid attention to nothing else; axed every man's opinion as to what crop would be best for such a spot, and to tell the truth he found very few, if any, able to instruct him so well as his own brother Larry. He was no such laborer, however, as Larry—but what he was short in, he made up by perseverance and care.

"In the coorse of two or three years you would hardly bleeve how he got on, and his wife was every bit aquil to him. She spun the yarn for the linen that made their own shirts and sheeting, bought an odd pound of wool now and then when she could get it chape, and put it past till she had a stone or so; she would then sit down and spin it—get it wove and dressed; and before one would know anything about it she'd have the making of a dacent comfortable coat for Tom, and a bit of heather-colored drugget for her own gown, along with a piece of striped red and blue for a petticoat—all at very little cost.

"It wasn't so with Larry. In the beginning, to be sure, while the fit was on him, he did very well; only that he would go off an odd time to a dance; or of a market or fair day, when he'd see the people pass by, dressed in their best clothes, he'd take the notion, and set off with himself, telling Sally that he'd just go in for a couple of hours, to see how the markets were going on.

"It's always an unpleasant thing for a body to go to a fair or market without anything in their pocket; accordingly, if money was in the house, he'd take some of it with him, for fraid that any friend or acquaintance might thrate him; and then it would be a poor, mane-spirited thing, he would say, to take another man's thrate, without giving one for it. He'd seldom have any notion, though, of breaking in upon or spinding the money, he only brought it to keep his pocket, jist to prevent him from being shamed, should he meet a friend.

"In the manetime, Sally, in his absence, would find herself lonely, and as she hadn't, may be, seen her aunt for some time before, she'd lock the door, and go over to spind a while with her; or take a trip as far as her ould mistress's place to see the family. Many a thing people will have to say to one another about the pleasant times they had together, or several other subjects best known to themselves, of coorse. Larry would come

* For an illustration of this phrase we must refer to THE DUKE—"Up, Guards, and *at* them."

home in her absence, and finding the door locked, would slip down to Squire Dickson's, to chat with the steward or gardener, or with the servints in the kitchen.

"You all reminber Tom Hance, that kept the public-house at Tullyvernon cross-roads, a little above the Squire's—at laste, most of you do—and ould Wilty Ratledge, the fiddler, that spint his time betwen Tom's and the big house—God be good to Wilty!—it's himself was the drell man entirely: he died of ating boiled banes, for a wager that the Squire laid on him agin ould Captain Flint, and dhrinking porter after them till he was swelled like a tun; but the Squire berried him at his own expense. Well, Larry's haunt, on finding Sally out when he came home, was either at the Squire's kitchen, or Tom Hance's; and as he was the *broth of a boy* at dancing, the servints, when he'd go down, would send for Wilty to Hance's, if he didn't happen to be with themselves at the time, and strike up a dance in the kitchen; and, along with all, may be Larry would have a sup in his head.

"When Sally would come home, in her barn, she'd not find Larry before her; but Larry's custom was to go in to Tom's wife, and say,—'Biddy, tell Sally, when she comes home, that I'm gone down awhile to the big house (or to Tom Hance's, as it might be), but I'll not be long.' Sally, after waiting awhile, would put on her cloak, and slip down to see what was keeping him. Of course, when finding the sport going on, and carrying a light heel at the dance herself, she'd throw off the cloak, and take a hand at it along with the rest. Larry and she would then go their ways home, find the fire out, light a sod of turf in Tom's, and feeling their own place very cowld and naked, after the blazing comfortable fire they had left behind them, go to bed, both in very middling spirits entirely.

"Larry, at other times, would quit his work early in the evening, to go down towards the Squire's, bekase he had only to begin work *earlier* the next day to make it up. He'd meet the Squire himself, may be, and, after putting his hand to his hat, and getting a 'how do you do, Larry,' from his honor, enter into discoorse with him about his honor's plan of stacking his corn. Now, Larry was famous at this.

"'Who's to build your stacks this sason, your honor?'

"'Tim Dillon, Larry.'

"'Is it he, your honor?—he knows as much about building a stack of corn as Masther George, here. He'll only botch them, sir, if you let him go about them.'

"'Yes; but what can I do, Larry? He's the only man I have that I could trust them to.'

"'Then it's your honor needn't say that, anyhow; for rather then see them spoiled, I'd come down myself and put them up for you.'

"'Oh, I couldn't expect that, Larry.'

"Why, then, I'll do it, your honor; and you may expect me down in the morning at six o'clock, phase God.'

"Larry would keep his word, though his own corn was drop-ripe; and havin' once undertaken the job, he couldn't give it up till he'd finish it off dacently. In the meantime, his own crop would go to destruction; sometimes a windy day would come, and not leave him every tenth grain; he'd then get some one to cut it down for him—*he* had to go to the big house, to build the master's corn; he was then all bustle—a great man entirely—there was *non* such; would be up with the first light, ordering and commanding, and directing the Squire's laborers, as if he was the king of the castle. Maybe, 'tis after he'd come from the big house, that he'd collect a few of the neighbors, and get a couple of cars and horses from the Squire, you see, to bring home his own oats to the hagyard with moonlight, after the dews would begin to fall; and in a week afterwards every stack would be heated, and all in a reek of froth and smoke. It's not aisy to do anything in a hurry, and especially it's not aisy to build a corn-stack after night, when a man cannot see how it goes on: so 'twas no wonder if Larry's stacks were supporting one another the next day—one laning north and another south.

"But, along with this, Larry and Sally were great people for going to the dances that Hance used to have at the crass-roads, bekase he wished to put money into his own pocket; and if a neighbor died, they were sure to be the first at the wake-house—for Sally was a great hand at washing down a corpse—and they would be the last home from the berril; for you know, they couldn't but be axed in to the dhrinking, after the friends would lave the churchyard, to take a sup to raise their spirits and drown sorrow, for grief is always drouthy.

"When the races, too, would come, they would be sure not to miss them; and if you'd go into a tint, it's odds but you'd find them among a knot of acquaintances, dhrinking and dancing, as if the world was no trouble to them. They were, indeed, the best nathured couple in Europe; they would lend you a spade or a hook in potato time or harvest, out of pure kindness, though their own corn, that was drop-ripe, should be uncut, or their potatoes, that were a tramping every

day with their own cows or those of the neighbors, should be undug—all for fraid of being thought unneighborly.

"In this way they went on for some years, not altogether so bad but that they were able just to keep the house over their heads. They had a small family of three children on their hands, and every likelihood of having enough of them. Whenever they got a young one christened, they'd be sure to have a whole lot of the neighbors at it; and surely some of the young ladies, or Master George, or John, or Frederick, from the big house, should stand gossip, and have the child called after them. They then should have tay enough to sarve them, and loaf-bread and punch; and though Larry should sell a sack of seed-oats or seed-potatoes to get it, no doubt but there should be a bottle of wine, to thrate the young ladies or gintlemen.

"When their childre grew up, little care was taken of them, bekase their parents minded other people's business more nor their own. They were always in the greatest poverty and distress; for Larry would be killing time about the Squire's, or doing some handy job for a neighbor who could get no other man to do it. They now fell behind entirely in the rint, and Larry got many hints from the Squire that if he didn't pay more attention to his business, he must look after his arrears, or as much of it as he could make up from the cattle and the crop. Larry promised well, as far as words went, and no doubt hoped to be able to perform; but he hadn't steadiness to go through with a thing. Thruth's best;—you see both himself and his wife neglected their business in the beginning, so that everything went at sixes and sevens. They then found themselves uncomfortable at their own hearth, and had no heart to labor: so that what would make a careful person work their fingers to the stumps to get out of poverty, only prevented *them* from working at all, or *druv* them to work for those that had more comfort, and could give them a better male's mate than they had themselves.

"Their tempers, now, soon began to get sour: Larry thought, bekase Sally wasn't as careful as she ought to be, that if he had taken any other young woman to his wife, he wouldn't be as he was;—*she* thought the very same thing of Larry. 'If he was like another,' she would say to his brother, 'that would be up airly and late at his own business, I would have spirits to work, by rason it would cheer my heart to see our little farm looking as warm and comfortable as another's; but, *fureer gairh*,* that's not the case, nor likely to be so, for he spinds his time from one place to another, working for them that laughs at him for his pains; but he'd rather go to his neck in wather than lay down a hand for himself, except when he can't help it.'

"Larry, again, had *his* complaint—'Sally's a lazy trollop,' he would say to his brother's wife, 'that never does one hand's turn that she can help, but sits over the fire from morning till night, making bird's nests in the ashes with her yallow heels, or going about from one neighbor's house to another, gosthering and palavering about what doesn't consarn her, instead of minding the house. How can I have heart to work, when I come in—expecting to find my dinner ready; but, instead of that, get her sitting upon her hunkers on the hearthstone, blowing at two or three green sticks with her apron, the pot hanging on the crook, without even the *white horses on it*.* She never puts a stitch in my clothes, nor in the childher's clothes, nor in her own, but lets them go to rags at once—the divil's luck to her! I wish I had never met with her, or that I had married a sober girl, that wasn't fond of dress and dancing. If she was a good sarvint, it was only because she liked to have a good name; for when she got a house and place of her own, see how she turned out!'

"From less to more, they went on squabbling and fighting, until at last you might see Sally one time with a black eye or a cut head, or another time going off with herself, crying, up to Tom Hance's or some other neighbor's house, to sit down and give a history of the *ruction* that he and she had on the head of some trifle or another that wasn't worth naming. Their childher were shows, running about without a single stitch upon them, except ould coats that some of the sarvints from the big house would throw them. In these they'd go sailing about, with the long skirts trailing on the ground behind them; and sometimes Larry would be mane enough to take the coat from the *gorsoon*, and ware it himself. As for giving them any schooling, 'twas what they never thought of; but even if they were inclined to it, there was no school in the neighborhood to send them to, for God knows it's the counthry that was in a neglected state as to schools in those days, as well as now.

"It's a thrue saying, that as the ould cock crows the young one larns; and this was

* Bitter misfortune.

* The *white horses* are produced by the extrication of air, which rises in white bubbles to the surface when the potatoes are beginning to boil; so that when the first symptoms of boiling commence, it is a usual phrase to say, the *white horses are on the pot*—sometimes the *white friars*.

thrue here, for the childher fought one another like so many divils, and swore like Trojans—Larry, along with everything else, when he was a Brine-oge, thought it was a manly thing to be a great swearer; and the childher, when they got able to swear, warn't worse nor their father. At first, when any of the little souls would thry at an oath, Larry would break his heart laughing at them; and so, from one thing to another, they got quite hardened in it, without being any way checked in wickedness. Things at last drew on to a bad state, entirely. Larry and Sally were now as ragged as Dives and Lazarus, and their childher the same. It was no strange sight, in summer, to see the young ones marching about the street as bare as my hand, with scarce a blessed stitch upon them that ever was seen, they dirt and ashes to the eyes, waddling after their uncle Tom's geese and ducks, through the green sink of rotten water that lay before their own door, just beside the dunghill: or the bigger ones running after the Squire's laborers, when bringing home the corn or the hay, wanting to get a ride as they went back with the empty cars.

"Larry and Sally would never be let into the Squire's kitchen now to eat or drink, or spend an evening with the sarvints; he might go out and in to his meal's mate along with the rest of the laborers, but there was no *grah** for him. Sally would go down with her jug to get some buttermilk, and have to stand among a set of beggars and cotters, she as ragged and as poor as any of them, for she wouldn't be let into the kitchen till her turn came, no more nor another, for the sarvints would turn up their noses with the greatest disdain possible at them both.

"It was hard to tell whether the inside or the outside of their house was worse;—within, it would amost turn your stomach to look at it—the flure was all dirt, for how could it be any other way, when at the end of every meal the *schrahag*† would be emptied down on it, and the pig, that was whining and grunting about the door, would brake into the hape of praty-skins that Sally would there throw down for it. You might reel Larry's shirt, or make a surveyor's chain of it; for, *bad cess*‡ to me, but I bleeve it would reach from this to the Rath. The blanket was in tatthers, and, like the shirt, would go round the house: their straw-beds were stocked with the *black militia*—the childer's heads were garrisoned with *Scotch greys*, and their heels and heads ornamented with all description of kibes. There wor only two stools in all the house, and a hassock of straw for the young child, and one of the stools wanted a leg, so that it was dangerous for a stranger to sit down upon it, except he knew of this failing. The flure was worn into large holes, that were mostly filled up with slop, where the childher used to daddle about, and amuse themselves by sailing egg-shells upon them, with bits of boiled praties in them, by way of a little faste. The dresser was as black as dirt could make it, and had on it only two or three wooden dishes, clasped with tin, and noggins without hoops, a beetle, and some crockery. There was an ould chest to hold their male, but it wanted the hinges; and the childher, when they'd get the mother out, would mix a sup of male and wather in a noggin, and stuff themselves with it, raw and all, for they were almost starved.

"Then, as the cow-house had never been kept in repair, the roof fell in, and the cow and pig had to stand in one end of the dwelling-house; and, except Larry did it, whatever dirt the same cow and pig, and the childher to the back of that, were the occasion of, might stand there till Saturday night, when, for dacency's sake, Sally herself would take a shovel, and out with it upon the hape that was beside the sink before the door. If a wet day came, there wasn't a spot you could stand in for *down-rain*; and wet or dry, Sally, Larry, and the childher were spotted like trouts with the soot-dhrops, made by the damp of the roof and the smoke. The house on the outside was all in ridges of black dirt, where the thatch had rotted, or covered over with chickenweed or blind-oats; but in the middle of all this misery they had a horseshoe nailed over the door-head for good luck.

"You know, that in telling this story, I needn't mintion everything just as it happened, laying down year after year, or day and date; so you may suppose, as I go on, that all this went forward in the coorse of time. They didn't get bad of a sudden, but by degrees, neglecting one thing after another, until they found themselves in the state I'm relating to you—then struggling and struggling, but never taking the right way to mend.

"But where's the use in saying much more about it?—things couldn't stand—they were terribly in arrears; but the landlord was a good kind of man, and, for the sake of the poor childher, didn't wish to turn them on the wide world, without house or shelter, bit or sup. Larry, too, had been, and still was, so ready to do difficult and nice jobs for him, and would resave no payment, that he

* Goodwill.

† A flat wicker basket, off which the potatoes are taten.

‡ Bad success.

couldn't think of taking his only cow from him, or prevent him from raising a bit of oats or a plat of potatoes, every year, out of the farm.—The farm itself was all run to waste by this time, and had a miserable look about it—sometimes you might see a piece of a field that had been ploughed, all overgrown with grass, because it had never been sowed or set with anything. The slaps were all broken down, or had only a piece of an ould beam, a thorn bush, or crazy car lying acrass, to keep the cattle out of them. His bit of corn was all eat away and cropped here and there by the cows, and his potatoes rooted up by the pigs.—The garden, indeed, had a few cabbages, and a ridge of early potatoes, but these were so choked with burdocks and nettles, that you could hardly see them.

"I tould you before that they led the divil's life, and that was nothing but God's truth; and according as they got into greater poverty it was worse. A day couldn't pass without a fight; if they'd be at their breakfast, maybe he'd make a potato hop off her skull, and she'd give him the contents of her noggin of buttermilk about the eyes; then he'd *flake* her, and the childher would be in an uproar, crying out, "Oh, daddy, daddy, don't kill my mammy!" When this would be over, he'd go off with himself to do something for the Squire, and would sing and laugh so pleasant, that you'd think he was the best-tempered man alive; and so he was, until neglecting his business, and minding dances, and fairs, and drink, destroyed him.

"It's the maxim of the world, that when a man is down, down with him; but when a man goes down through his own fault, he finds very little mercy from any one. Larry might go to fifty fairs before he'd meet any one now to thrate him; instead of that, when he'd make up to them, they'd turn away, or give him the *cowld shoulder*.* But that wouldn't satisfy him: for if he went to buy a slip of a pig, or a pair of brogues, and met an ould acquaintance that had got well to do in the world, he should bring him in, and give him a dram, merely to let the other see that he was still *able* to do it; then, when they'd sit down, one dram would bring on another from Larry, till the price of the pig or the brogues would be spint, and he'd go home again as he came, sure to have another battle with Sally.

"In this way things went on, when one day that Larry was preparing to sell some oats, a son of Nicholas Roe Sheridan's of the Broad-bog came in to him. 'Good-morrow, Larry,' says he. 'Good-morrow, kindly, Art,' says Larry—'how are you, ma bouchal?'

"'Why I've no rason to complain, thank God, and you,' says the other; 'how *is* yourself?'

"'Well, thank you, Art: how is the family?'

"'Faix, all stout except my father, that has got a touch of the toothache. When did you hear from the Slevins?'

"'Sally was down on Thursday last, and they're all well, your soul.'

"'Where's Sally now?'

"'She's just gone down to the big house for a pitcher of buttermilk; our cow won't calve these three weeks to come, and she gets a sup of *kitchen* for the childher till then; won't you take a sate, Art? but you had better have a care of yourself, for that stool wants a leg.'

"'I didn't care she was within, for I brought a sup of my own stuff in my pocket,' said Art.

"'Here, Hurrish' (he was called Horatio after one of the Square's sons), 'fly down to the Square's, and see what's keeping your mother; the divil's no match for her at staying out with herself wanst she's from under the roof.'

"'Let Dick go," says the little fellow, 'he's beither able to go nor I am; he has got a coat on him.'

"'Go yourself, when I bid you,' says the father.

"'Let *him* go,' says Hurrish, 'you have no right to bid me to go, when he has a coat upon him: you promised to ax one for me from Masther Francis, and you didn't do it; so the divil a toe I'll budge to-day,' says he, getting betune the father and the door.

"'Well, wait,' says Larry, 'faix, only the strange man's to the fore, and I don't like to raise a hubbub, I'd *pay* you for making me such an answer. Dick, agra, will *you* run down, like a good bouchal, to the big house, and tell your mother to come home, that there's a strange man here wants her?'

"'Twas Hurrish you bid,' says Dick—'and make *him*: that's the way he always thrates you—does nothing that you bid him.'

"'But you know, Dick,' says the father, 'that he hasn't a stitch to his back, and the crathur doesn't like to go out in the cowld, and he so naked.'

"'Well, you bid him go,' says Dick, 'an let him; the sorra yard I'll go—the shinburnt spalpeen, that's always the way with him; whatever he's bid to do, he throws it on me, bekase, indeed, he has no coat; but he'll folly Masther Thomas or Masther Francis through sleet and snow up the mountains,

* Cool reception.

when they're fowling or tracing; he doesn't care about a coat *then*.'

"'Hurrish, *you* must go down for your mother when I bid you,' says the weak man, turning again to the other boy.

"'I'll not,' says the little fellow; 'send Dick.'

"Larry said no more, but, laying down the child he had in his hands, upon the flure, makes at him; the lad, however, had the door of him, and was off beyant his reach like a shot. He then turned into the house, and meeting Dick, felled him with a blow of his fist at the dresser. 'Tundher-an-ages, Larry,' says Art, 'what has come over you at all at all? to knock down the gorsoon with such a blow! couldn't you take a rod or a switch to him?—*Dher manhim*,* man, but I bleeve you've killed him outright,' says he, lifting the boy, and striving to bring him to life. Just at this minit Sally came in.

"'Arrah, *sweet bad-luck to you*, you lazy vagabond you,' says Larry, 'what kept you away till this hour?'

"'The devil send you news, you nager you,' says Sally, 'what kept me—could I make the people churn sooner than they wished or were ready?'

"'Ho, by my song, I'll flake you as soon as the dacent young man leaves the house,' says Larry to her, aside.

"'You'll flake me, is it?' says Sally, speaking out loud—'in troth, that's no new thing for you to do, any how.'

"'Spake asy, you had betther.'

"'No, in troth, won't I spake asy; I've spoken asy too long, Larry, but the devil a taste of me will bear what I've suffered from you any longer, you mane-spirited blackguard you; for he is nothing else that would *rise* his hand to a woman, especially to one in my condition,' and she put her gown tail to her eyes. When she came in, Art turned his back to her, for fraid she'd see the state the gorsoon was in—but now she noticed it——'Oh, murdher, murdher,' says she, clapping her hands, and running over to him, 'what has happened my child? oh! murdher, murdher, this is *your* work, murdherer!' says she to Larry. 'Oh, you villain, are you bent on murdhering all of us——are you bent on destroying us out o' the face! Oh, wurrah sthrew! wurrah sthrew! what'll become of us! Dick, agra,' says she, crying, 'Dick, acushla machree, don't you hear me spaking to you!—don't you hear your poor broken-hearted mother spaking to you? Oh! wurrah! wurrah! amn't I the heart-brokenest crathur that's alive this day, to see the likes of such doings! but I knew it would come to this! My sowl to glory, but my child's murdhered by that man standing there!—by his own father—his own father! Which of us will you murther next, you villain!'

"'For heaven's sake, Sally,' says Art, 'don't exaggerate him more nor he is; the boy is only stunned—see, he's coming to: Dick, ma bouchal, rouse yourself, that's a man: hut! he's well enough—that's it, *alannah*;* here, take a slug out of this bottle, and it'll set all right—or stop, have you a glass within, Sally?' 'Och, musha, not a glass is under the roof wid me,' says Sally; 'the last we had was broke the night Barney was christened, and we hadn't one since—but I'll get you an egg-shell.'† 'It'll do as well as the best,' says Art. And to make a long story short, they sat down, and drank the bottle of whiskey among them. Larry and Sally made it up, and were as great friends as ever; and Dick was made drunk for the bating he got from his father.

"What Art wanted was to buy some oats that Larry had to sell, to run in a private Still, up in the mountains, of coorse, where every Still is kept. Sure enough, Larry sould him the oats, and was to bring them up to the still-house the next night after dark. According to appointment, Art came a short time after night-fall, with two or three young boys along with him. The corn was sacked and put on the horses; but before that was done, they had a dhrop, for Art's pocket and the bottle were ould acquaintances. They all then sat down in Larry's, or, at laste, as many as there were seats for, and fell to it. Larry, however, seemed to be in better humor this night, and more affectionate with Sally and the childher: he'd often look at them, and appear to feel as if *something was over him*;‡ but no one observed that till afterwards. Sally herself seemed kinder to him, and even went over and sat beside him on the stool, and putting her arm about his neck, kissed him in a joking way, wishing to make up, too, for what Art saw the night before—poor thing—but still as if it wasn't *all* a joke, for at times she looked sorrowful. Larry, too, got his arm about her, and looked often and often on her and the childher, in a way that he wasn't used to do, until the tears fairly came into his eyes.

* Dher manhim—By my soul.

* My child.

† The ready wit of the Irish is astonishing. It often happens that they have whiskey when neither glasses nor cups are at hand; in which case they are never at a loss. I have seen them use not only egg-shells, but pistol barrels, tobacco boxes, and scooped potatoes, in extreme cases.

‡ This is precisely tantamount to what the Scotch call "fey." It means that he felt as if some fatal doom were over him.

"'Sally, avourneen,' says he, looking at her, 'I saw you when you had another look from what you have this night; when it wasn't asy to fellow you *in* the parish or *out* of it;' and when he said this he could hardly spake.

"'Whist, Larry, acushla,' says she, 'don't be spaking that way—sure we may do very well yet, plase God: I know, Larry, there was a great dale of it—maybe, indeed, it was all—*my* fault; for I wasn't to you, in the way of care and kindness, what I ought to be.'

"'Well, well, aroon,' says Larry, 'say no more; you might have been all that, only it was my fault: but where's Dick, that I struck so terribly last night? Dick, come over to me, agra—come over, Dick, and sit down here beside me. Arrah, here, Art, ma bouchal, will you fill this egg-shell for him?—Poor gorsoon! God knows, Dick, you get far from fair play, acushla—far from the ating and drinking that other people's childher get, that hasn't as good a skin to put it in as you, ahannah! Kiss me, Dick, acushla—and God knows your face is pale, and that's not with good feeding, anyhow: Dick, agra, I'm sorry for what I done to you last night; forgive your father, Dick, for I think that my heart's breaking, acushla, and that you won't have me long with you.'

"Poor Dick, who was naturally a warm-hearted, affectionate gorsoon, kissed his father, and cried bitterly. Sally herself, seeing Larry so sorry for what he done, sobbed as if she would drop on the spot: but the rest began, and betwixt scoulding and cheering them up, all was as well as ever. Still Larry seemed as if there was something entirely very strange the matter with him, for as he was going out, he kissed all the childher, one after another; and even went over to the young baby that was asleep in the little cradle of boords that he himself had made for it, and kissed it two or three times, asily, for fraid of wakening it. He then met Sally at the door, and catching her hand when none of the rest saw him, squeezed it, and gave her a kiss, saying, 'Sally, darling!' says he.

"'What ails you, Larry, asthore?' says Sally.

"'I don't know,' says he; 'nothing, I bleeve—but Sally, acushla, I have thrated you badly, all along; I forgot, avourneen, how I loved you *once*, and now it breaks my heart that I have used you so ill.'

"'Larry,' she answered, 'don't be talking that way, bekase you make me sorrowful and unasy—don't, acushla: God above me knows I forgive you it all. Don't stay long,' says she, 'and I'll borry a lock of meal from Biddy, till we get home our own *meddhre*, and I'll have a dish of stirabout ready to make for you when you come home. Sure, Larry, who'd forgive you, if I, your own wife, wouldn't? But it's I that wants it from you, Larry; and in the presence of God and ourselves, I now beg your pardon, and ax your forgiveness for all the sin I done to you.' She dropped on her knees, and cried bitterly; but he raised her up, himself a choking at the time, and as the poor crathur got to her feet, she laid herself on his breast, and sobbed out, for she couldn't help it. They then went away, though Larry, to tell the thruth, wouldn't have gone with them at all, only that the sacks were borried from his brother, and he had to bring them home, in regard of Tom wanting them the very next day.

"The night was as dark as pitch—so dark, faiks, that they had to get long pieces of bog fir, which they lit, and held in their hand, like the lights that Ned there says the lamplighters have in Dublin to light the lamps with.

"At last, with a good dale of trouble, they got to the still-house; and, as they had all taken a drop before, you may be sure they were better inclined to take another now. They, accordingly, sat down about the fine rousing fire that was under the still, and had a right good jorum of strong whiskey that never seen a drop of water. They all were in very good spirits, not thinking of to-morrow, and caring at the time very little about the world as it went.

"When the night was far advanced, they thought of moving home; however, by that time they weren't able to stand: but it's one curse of being drunk, that a man doesn't know what he's about for the time, except some few, like that poaching ould fellow, Billy M'Kinny, that's cunninger when he's drunk than when he's sober; otherwise they would not have ventured out in the clouds of the night, when it was so dark and severe, and they in such a state.

"At last they staggered away together, for their road lay for a good distance in the same direction. The others got on, and reached home as well as they could; but, although Sally borried the dish of male from her sister-in-law, to have a warm pot of stirabout for Larry, and sat up till the night was more than half gone, waiting for him, yet no Larry made his appearance. The childher, too, all sat up, hoping he'd come home before they'd fall asleep and miss the supper: at last the crathurs, after running about, began to get sleepy, and one head would fall this way and another that way; so Sally thought it hard to let them go without getting their share.

and accordingly she put down the pot on a bright fire, and made a good lot of stirabout for them, covering up Larry's share in a red earthen dish before the fire.

"This roused them a littie; and they sat about the hearth with their mother, keeping her company with their little chat, till their father would come back.

"The night, for some time before this, got very stormy entirely. The wind *ris*, and the rain fell as if it came out of *methers*.* The house was very cowld, and the door was bad; for the wind came in very strong under the foot of it, where the ducks and hens, and the pig when it was little, used to squeeze themselves in when the family was absent, or afther they went to bed. The wind now came whistling under it; and the ould hat and rags, that stopped up the windies, were blown out half a dozen times with such force, that the ashes were carried away almost from the hearth. Sally got very low-spirited on hearing the storm whistling so sorrowfully through the house, for she was afeard that Larry might be out on the dark moors under it; and how any living soul could bear it, she didn't know. The talk of the childhre, too, made her worse; for they were debating among themselves, the crathurs, about what he had better do under the tempest; whether he ought to take the sheltry side of a hillock, or get into a long heather bush or under the ledge of a rock or tree, if he could meet such a thing.

"In the mane time, terrible blasts would come over and through the house, making the ribs crack so that you would think the roof would be taken away at wanst. The fire was now getting low, and Sally had no more turf in the house; so that the childher crouched closer and closer about it, their poor hungry-looking pale faces made paler with fear that the house might come down upon them, or be stripped, and their father from home—and with worse fear that something might happen him under such a tempest of wind and rain as it blew. Indeed it was a pitiful sight to see the ragged crathurs drawing in in a ring nearer and nearer the dying fire; and their poor, naked, half-starved mother, sitting with her youngest infant lying between her knees and her breast; for the bed was too cowld to put it into it, without being kept warm by the heat of them that it used to sleep with."

"Musha, God help her and them," says Ned, "I wish they were here beside me on this comfortable hob, this minute; I'd tight Nancy to get a fog-meal for them, any way—a body can't but pity them afther all!"

"You'd fight Nancy!" said Nancy herself—"maybe Nancy would be as willing to do something for the crathurs as you would—I like every body that's able to pay for what they get! but we ought to have some bowels in us for all that. You'd fight Nancy, indeed!"

"Well," continued the narrator, "there they sat, with cowld and fear in their pale faces, shiverin' over the remains of the fire, for it was now nearly out, and thinking, as the deadly blast would drive through the creaking ould door and the half-stuffed windies, of what their father would do under such a terrible night. Poor Sally, sad and sorrowful, was thinking of all their ould quarrels, and taking the blame all to herself for not bein' more attentive to her business, and more kind to Larry; and when she thought of the way she thrated him, and the ill-tongue she used to give him, the tears began to roll from her eyes, and she rocked herself from side to side, sobbing as if her heart would brake. When the childher saw her wiping her eyes with the corner of the little handkerchief that she had about her neck, they began to cry along with her. At last she thought, as it was now so late, that it would be folly to sit up any longer; she hoped, too, that he might have thought of going into some neighbor's house on his way, to take shelter, and with these thoughts, she raked the *greeshough** over the fire, and after putting the childher in their little straw nest, and spreading their own rags over them, she and the young one went to bed, although she couldn't sleep at all at all, for thinking of Larry.

"There she lay, trembling under the light cover of the bed-clothes, for they missed Larry's coat, listening to the dreadful night that was in it, so lonely, that the very noise of the cow, in the other corner, chewing her cud, in the silence of a short calm, was a great relief to her. It was a long time before she could get a wink of sleep, for there was some uncommon weight upon her that she couldn't account for by any chance; but after she had been lying for about half an hour, she heard something that almost fairly knocked her up. It was the voice of a woman, crying and wailing in the greatest distress, as if all belonging to her were *under-boord*.

"When Sally heard it first, she thought it was nothing but the whistling of the wind; but it soon came again, more sorrowful than before, and as the storm arose, it rose upon the blast along with it, so strange and mourn-

* An old Irish drinking vessel, of a square form, with a handle or ear on each side, out of which all the family drank successively, or in rotation. The expression above is proverbial.

* The warm ashes and embers.

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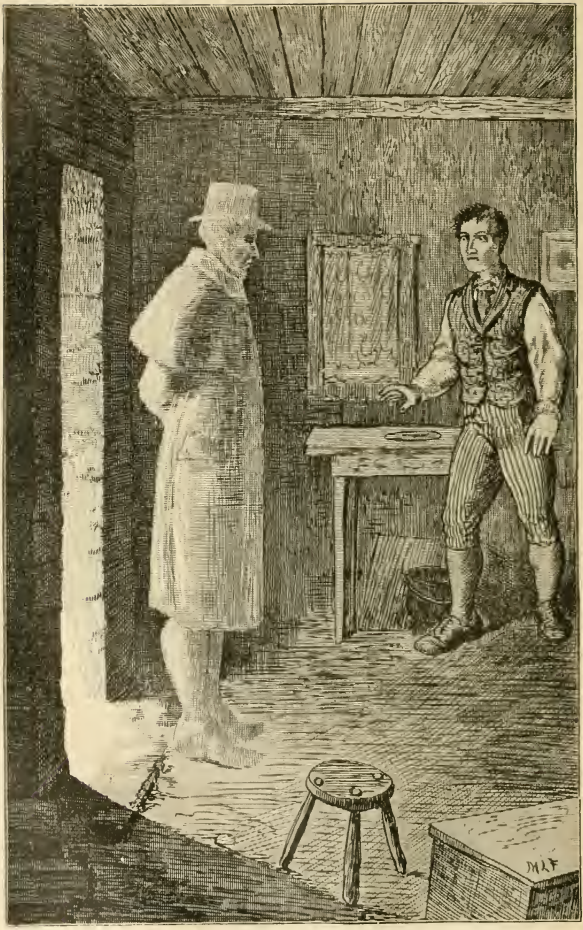

"WHY, LARRY," SAYS HE, "HOW DID YOU GET IN AFTER ME BARRING THE DOOR?"

Larry M'Farland's Wake, p. 113, T. and S. of the I. I.

ful, that her never before heard the like of it. 'The Lord be about us!' said she to herself, 'what can that be at all?—or who is it? for it's not Nelly,' meaning her sister-in-law. Again she listened, and there was, sobbing and sighing in the greatest grief, and she thought she heard it louder than ever, only that this time it seemed to name whomsoever it was lamenting. Sally now got up and put her ear to the door, *to see if she could hear* what it said. At this time the wind got calmer, and the voice also got lower; but although it was still sorrowful, she never heard any living Christian's voice so sweet, and what was very odd, it fell in fits, exactly as the storm sunk, and rose as it blew louder.

"When she put her ear to the chink of the door, she heard the words repeated, no doubt of it, only couldn't be quite sure, as they wern't very plain; but as far as she could make any sense out of them, she thought that it said—'Oh, Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!' Sally's hair stood on end when she heard this; but on listening again, she thought it was her own name instead of Larry's that it repeated, and that it said, 'Sally M'Farland!—Sally M'Farland!—Sally M'Farland!' Still she wasn't sure, for the words wern't plain, and all she could think was, that they resembled her own name or Larry's more than any other words she knew. At last, as the wind fell again, it melted away, weeping most sorrowfully, but so sweetly, that the likes of it was never heard. Sally then went to bed, and the poor woman was so harrished with one thing or another, that at last she fell asleep."

"Twas the *Banshee*," said Shane Fadh.

"Indeed it was nothing else than that same," replied M'Roarkin.

"I wonder Sally didn't think of that," said Nancy—"sure she might know that no living crathur would be out lamenting under such a night as that was."

"She did think of that," said Tom; "but as no Banshee ever followed *her own* * family, she didn't suppose that it could be such a thing; but she forgot that it might follow Larry's. I, myself, heard his brother Tom say, afterwards, that a Banshee used always to be heard before any of them died."

"Did his brother hear it?" Ned inquired.

"He did," said Tom, "and his wife along with him, and knew, at once, that some death would happen in the family—but it wasn't long till he suspected who it came for; for, as he was going to bed that night, on looking towards his own hearth, he thought he saw his brother standing at the fire, with a very sorrowful face upon him. 'Why, Larry,' says he, 'how did you get in, after me barring the door?—or did you turn back from helping them with the corn? You surely had'nt time to go half the way since.'

"Larry, however, made him no answer; and, on looking for him again, there was no Larry there for him. 'Nelly,' says he to his wife, 'did you see any sight of Larry since he went to the still-house?' 'Arrah, no indeed, Tom,' says she; 'what's coming over you to spake to the man that's near Drumfurrar by this time?' 'God keep him from harm!' said Tom;—'poor fellow, I wish nothing ill may happen him this night! I'm afeard, Nelly, that I saw his *fetch*;* and if I did, he hasn't long to live; for when one's fetch is seen at this time of night, their lase of life, let them be sick or in health, is always short.'

"'Hut, Tom aroon!' says Nelly, 'it was the shadow of the jamb or yourself you saw in the light of the candle, or the shadow of the bed-post.'

"The next morning they were all up, hoping that he would drop in to them. Sally got a creel of turf, notwithstanding her condition, and put down a good fire to warm him; but the morning passed, and no sign of him. She now got very uneasy, and mintioned to his brother what she felt, and Tom went up to the still-house to know if he was there, or to try if he could get any tidings of him. But, by the laws! when he heard that he had left that for home the night before, and he in a state of liquor, putting this, and what he had heard and seen in his house together, Tom knew that something must have happened him. He went home again, and on his way had his eye about him, thinking that it would be no miracle, if he'd meet him lying head-foremost in a ditch; however, he did not, but went on, expecting to find him at home before him.

"In the mane time, the neighbors had been all raised to search for him; and, indeed, the hills were alive with people. It was the

* The Banshee in Ireland is, or rather was, said to follow only particular families—principally the old Milesians. It appeared or was heard before the death of any member of the family. Its form was always that of a female—weeping, wailing, wringing its hands, and uttering the national *keene*, or lamentation for the dead. *Banshee* signifies gentle woman.

* This in the North of Ireland is called *wraith*, as in Scotland. The *Fetch* is a spirit that assumes the likeness of a particular person. It does not appear to the individual himself whose resemblance it assumes, but to some of his friends. If it is seen in the morning, it betokens long life; if after sunset, approaching death; after nightfall, immediate death.

second day after, that Sally was standing, looking out at her own door towards the mountains, expecting that every man with a blue coat upon him might be Larry, when she saw a crowd of people coming down the hills. Her heart leaped to her mouth, and she sent Dick, the eldest of the sons, to meet them, and run back with word to her if he was among them. Dick went away; but he hadn't gone far when he met his uncle Tom, coming on before the rest.

"'Uncle,' says Dick, 'did you get my father? for I must fly back with word to my mother, like lightning.'

"'Come here, Dick,' says Tom; 'God help you, my poor *bouchal!* *—Come here, and walk alongside of me, for you can't go back to your mother, till I see her first—God help you, my poor *bouchal*, it's you that's to be pitied, this blessed and sorrowful day;' and the poor fellow could by no means keep in the tears. But he was saved the trouble of breaking the dismal tidings to poor Sally; for as she stood watching the crowd, she saw a door carried upon their shoulders, with something like a man stretched upon it. She turned in, feeling as if a bullet had gone through her head, and sat down with her back to the door, for fraid she might see the thruth, for she couldn't be *quite* sure, they were at such a distance. At last she ventured to take another look out, for she couldn't bear what she felt within her, and just as she rose and came to the door, the first thing she saw coming down the hill a little above the house, was the body of her husband stretched on a door—dead. At that minute, her brother-in-law, Tom, just entered, in time to prevent her and the child she had in her arms from falling on the flure. She had seen enough, God help her!—for she took labor that instant, and, in about two hours afterwards, was stretched a corpse beside her husband, with her heart-broken and desolate orphans in an uproar of outher misery about them. That was the end of Larry M'Farland and Sally Lowry; two that might have done well in the world, had they taken care of themselves—avoided fairs and markets—except when they had business there—not given themselves idle fashions by drinking, or going to dances, and wrought as well for themselves as they did for others."

"But how did he lose his life, at all at all?" inquired Nancy.

"Why, they found his hat in a bog-hole upon the water, and on searching the hole itself poor Larry was fished up from the bottom of it."

"Well, that's a murdhering sorrowful story," said Shane Fadh: "but you won't be after passing that on us for the wake, any how."

"Well, you must learn patience, Shane," said the narrator, "for you know patience is a virtue."

"I'll warrant you that *Tom* and *his wife* made a better hand of themselves," said Alick M'Kinley, "than Larry and Sally did."

"Ah! I wouldn't fear, Alick," said Tom, "but you would come at the truth—'tis you that may say they did; there wasn't two in the parish more comfortable than the same two, at the very time that Larry and Sally came by their deaths. It would do you good to look at their hagyard—the corn stacks were so nately roped and trimmed; and the walls so well made up, that a bird could scarcely get into it. Their barn and cow-house, too, and dwelling-house, were all comfortably thatched, and the windies all glazed, with not a broken pane in them. Altogether they had come on wondherfully; sould a good dale of male and praties every year; so that in a short time they were able to lay by a little money to help to fortune off their little girls, that were growing up fine colleens, all out."

"And you may add, I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "that they lost no time going to fairs and dances, or other foolish diversions. I'll engage they never were at a dance in the Squire's kitchen; that they never went about losing their time working for others, when their own business was going at sixes and sevens, for want of hands; nor spent their money drinking and thrating a parcel of friends that only laugh at them for their pains, and wouldn't, maybe, put one foot past the other to serve them; nor never fought and abused one another for what they both were guilty of."

"Well," says Tom, "you have saved me some trouble, Mr. Morrow, for you just said, to a hair, what they were. But I mustn't forget to mintion one thing that I saw the morning of the berril. We were, about a dozen neighbors of us, talking in the street, just before the door; both the hagyards were forninst us—Tom's snug and nate—but Charley Lawdher had to go over from where we stood to drive the pig out of poor Larry's. There was one of the stacks with the side out of it, just as he had drawn away the sheaves from time to time; for the stack leaned to one side, and he pulled sheaves out of the other side to keep it straight. Now, Mr. Morrow, wasn't he an unfortunate man? for whoever would go down to Squire Dickson's hagyard, would see the same Larry's handiwork so beautiful and illegant, though his

* Bouchal—Boy.

own was in such *brutheen.** Even his barn went to wrack; and he was obliged to thrash his oats in the open air when there would be a frost, and he used to lose one-third of it; and if there came a thaw, 'twould almost brake the crathur."

"God knows," said Nancy, looking over at Ned, very significantly, "and Larry's not alone in neglecting his business; that is, if sartain people were allowed to take their own way; but the truth of it is, that he met with a bad *woman.*† If he had a careful, sober, industrious wife of his own, that would take care of the house and place—*Biddy, will you hand me over that other clove out of the windy-stool there till I finish this stocking for Ned*)—the story would have another ending any how."

"In throth," said Tom, "that's no more than truth, Nancy; but he had not, and everything went to the bad with them entirely."

"It's a thousand pities he hadn't yourself, Nancy," said Alick, grinning; "if he had, I haven't the laste doubt at all, but he'd die worth money."

"Go on, Alick—go on, Avick; I will give you I've to have your joke, any way; for it's you that's the patthern to any man that would wish to thrive in the world."

"If Ned dies, Nancy, I don't know a woman I'd prefer; I'm now a *widdy*‡ these five years; and I feel, somehow, particularly since I began to spend my evenings here, that I'm disremembering very much the old proverb—'a burnt child dreads the fire.'"

"Thank you, Alick, you think I swallow that; but as for Ned, the never a fear of him; except that an increasing stomach is a sign of something; or what's the best chance of all, Alick, for you and me, that he should meet Larry's fate in some of his drunken fits."

"Now, Nancy," says Ned, "there's no use in talking that way; it's only last Thursday, Mr. Morrow, that, in presence of her own brother, Jemmy Connolly, the breeches-maker, and Billy M'Kinny, there, that I put my two five fingers acrass, and swore solemnly by them five crosses, that, *except my mind changed*, I'd never drink more nor one-half pint of spirits and three pints of porther in a day."

"Oh, hould your tongue, Ned—hould your tongue, and don't make me spake," said Nancy; "God help you! many a time you've put the same fingers acrass, and many a time your mind has changed; but I'll say no more now—wait till we see how you'll keep it."

"Healths a-piece, your sowls," said Ned, winking at the company.

"Well, Tom," said Andy Morrow, "about the wake?"

"Och, och! that was the merry wake, Mr. Morrow. *From that day to this I remarked, that, living or dead, them that won't respect themselves, or take care of their families, won't be respected:* and sure enough, I saw full proof of that same at poor Larry's wake. Many a time afterwards I pitied the childher, for if they had seen better, they wouldn't turn out as they did—all but the two youngest, that their uncle took to himself, and reared afterwards; but they had no one to look afther them, and how could it be expected from what they seen, that good could come of them? Squire Dickson gave Tom the other seven acres, although he could have got a higher rint from others; but he was an industrious man that desarved encouragement, and he got it."

"I suppose Tom was at the expense of Larry's berrin, as well as of his marriage," said Alick.

"In troth and he was," said Tom, "although he didn't desarve it from him when he was alive;* seeing he neglected many a good advice that Tom and his dacent woman of a wife often gave him; for all that, blood is thicker than wather—and it's he that waked and berried him dacently; by the same token that there was both full and plenty of the best over him: and everything, as far as Tom was consurned, dacent and creditable about the place."

"He did it for his own sake, of coorse," said Nancy, "bekase one wouldn't wish, if they had it at all, to see any one belonging to them worse off than another at their wake or berrin."

"Thrue for you, Nancy," said M'Roarkin, "and, indeed, Tom was well spoken of by the neighbors for his kindness to his brother after his death; and luck and grace attended him for it, and the world flowed upon him before it came to his own turn."

"Well, when a body dies even a natural death, it's wondherful how soon it goes about; but when they come to an untimely one, it spreads like fire on a dry mountain."

"Was there no inquest?" asked Andy Morrow.

* Brutheen is potatoes champed with butter. Anything in a loose, broken, and irregular state, is said to be in *brutheen*—that is, in disorder and confusion.

† Wife.

‡ The peasantry of a great portion of Ireland use this word as applicable to both sexes.

* The genuine blunders of the Irish—not those studied for them by men ignorant of their modes of expression and habits of life—are always significant, clear, and full of strong sense and moral truth.

"The sorra inquist, not making you an ill answer, sir—the people weren't so exact in them days: but any how the man was dead, and what good could an inquist do him? The only thing that grieved them was, that they both died without the priest; and well it might, for it's an awful thing entirely to die without having the clargy's hands over a body. I tould you that the news of his death spread over all the counthry in less than no time. Accordingly, in the coorse of the day, their relations began to come to the place; but, any way, messengers had been sent especially for them.

"The squire very kindly lent sheets for them both to be laid out in, and mould candle-sticks to hould the lights; and, God he knows, 'twas a grievous sight to see the father and mother both stretched beside one another in their poor place, and their little orphans about them; the gorsoons,—them that had sense enough to know their loss,—breaking their hearts, the craythurs, and so hoarse, that they weren't able to cry or spake. But, indeed, it was worse to see the two young things going over, and wanting to get acrass to waken their daddy and mammy, poor desolit childher!

"When the corpses were washed and dressed, they looked uncommonly well, consitherin'. Larry, indeed, didn't bear death so well as Sally; but you couldn't meet a purtier corpse than she was in a day's travelling. I say, when they were washed and dressed, their friends and neighbors knelt down around them, and offered up a Pather and Ave a-piece, for the good of their sowls: when this was done, they all raised the keena, stooping over them at a half bend, clapping their hands, and praising them, as far as they could say anything good of them; and indeed, the craythurs, they were never any one's enemy but their own, so that nobody could say an ill word of either of them. Bad luck to it for potteen-work every day it rises! only for it, that couple's poor orphans wouldn't be left without father or mother as they were; nor poor Hurrish go the gray gate he did, if he had his father living, may be; but having nobody to bridle him in, he took to horse riding for the squire, and then to staling them for himself. He was hanged afterwards, along with Peter Doraghy Crolly, that shot Ned Wilson's uncle of the Black Hills.

"After the first keening, the friends and neighbors took their sates about the corpse. In a short time, whiskey, pipes, snuff, and tobacco came, and every one about the place got a glass and a fresh pipe. Tom, when he held his glass in his hand, looking at his dead brother, filled up to the eyes, and coul'n't for some time get out a word; at last, when he was able to spake—'Poor Larry,' says he, 'you're lying there low before me, and many a happy day we spint with one another. 'When we were childher,' said he, turning to the rest, 'we were never asunder; he was oulder nor me by two years, and can I ever forget the leathering he gave Dick Rafferty long ago, for hitting me with the rotten egg—although Dick was a great dale bigger than either of us. God knows, although you didn't thrive in life, either of you, as you might and could have done, there wasn't a more neighborly or friendly couple in the parish they lived in; and now, God help them both, and their poor orphans over them! Larry, acushla, your health, and Sally, yours; and may God Almighty have marcy on both your sowls.'

"After this, the neighbors began to flock in more generally. When any relation of the corpses would come, as soon, you see, as they'd get inside the door, whether man or woman, they'd raise the shout of a keena, and all the people about the dead would begin along with them, stooping over them and clapping their hands as before.

"Well, I said, it's it that was the merry wake, and that was only the thruth, neighbors. As soon as night came, all the young boys and girls from the country side about them flocked to it in scores. In a short time the house was crowded; and maybe there wasn't laughing, and story-telling, and singing, and smoking, and drinking, and crying—all going on, *helter-skelter*, together. When they'd be all in full chorus this way, may be, some new friend or relation, that wasn't there before, would come in, and raise the keena; of coorse, the youngsters would then keep quiet; and if the person coming in was from the one neighborhood with any of them that were so merry, as soon as he'd raise the shout, the merry folks would rise up, begin to pelt their hands together, and cry along with him till their eyes would be as red as a ferret's. That once over, they'd be down again at the songs, and diversion, and divilment—just as if nothing of the kind had taken place: the other would then shake hands with the friends of the corpses, get a glass or two, and a pipe, and in a few minutes be as merry as the best of them."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "I should like to know if the Scotch and English are such *heerum-skeerum* kind of people as we Irishmen are."

"Musha, in throth I'm sure they're not," says Nancy, "for I believe that Irishmen are like nobody in the wide world but themselves; quare crathurs, that'll laugh or cry, or fight

with any one, just for nothing else, good or bad, but company."

"Indeed, and you all know, that what I'm saying's thruth, except Mr. Morrow there, that I'm telling it to, bekase he's not in the habit of going to wakes; although, to do him justice, he's very friendly in going to a neighbor's funeral; and, indeed, *kind father for you,** Mr. Morrow, for it's he that was a rad good hand at going to such places himself.

"Well, as I was telling you, there was great sport going on. In one corner, you might see a knot of ould men sitting together, talking over ould times—ghost stores, fairy tales, or the great rebellion of '41, and the strange story of Lamh Dearg, or the *bloody hand*—that, maybe, I'll tell you all some other night, plase God: there they'd sit smoking—their faces quite plased with the pleasure of the pipe—amusing themselves and a crowd of people, that would be listening to them with open mouth. Or, it's odd, but there would be some droll young fellow among them, taking a *rise* out of them; and, positively, he'd often find them able enough for him, particularly ould Ned Magin, that wanted at the time only four years of a hundred. The Lord be good to him, and rest his sowl in glory, it's he that was the pleasant ould man, and could tell a story with any one that ever got up.

"In another corner there was a different set, bent on some piece of divilment of their own. The boys would be sure to get beside their sweethearts, any how; and if there was a purty girl, as you may set it down there was, it's there the *skroodging*,† and the pushing, and the shoving, and, sometimes, the knocking down itself, would be, about seeing who'd get her. There's ould Katty Duffy, that's now as crooked as the hind leg of a dog, and it's herself was then as straight as a rush, and as blooming as a rose—Lord bless us, what an alteration time makes upon the strongest and fairest of us!—it's she that was the purty girl that night, and it's myself that gave Frank M'Shane, that's still alive to acknowledge it, the broad of his back upon the flure, when he thought to pull her off my knee. The very gorsoons and girshas were cooting away among themselves, and learning one another to smoke in the dark corners. But all this, Mr. Morrow, took place in the corpse-house, before ten or eleven o'clock at night; after that time the house got too thronged entirely, and couldn't hould the half of them; so, by jing, off we set, meaning all the youngsters of us, both boys and girls, out to Tom's barn, that was *red** up for us, there to commence the plays. When we were gone, the ould people had more room, and they moved about on the sates we had left them. In the mane time, lashings of tobacco and snuff, cut in plate fuls, and piles of fresh new pipes, were laid on the table for any one that wished to use them.

"When we got to the barn, it's then we *took our pumps off*† in airnest—by the hokey, such sport you never saw. The first play we began was *Hot-loof*; and maybe there wasn't skelping then. It was the two parishes of Errigle-Keeran and Errigle-Truagh against one another. There was the Slip from Althadhawan, for Errigle-Truagh, against Pat M'Ardle, that had married Lanty Gorman's daughter of Cargach, for Errigle-Keeran. The way they play it, Mr. Morrow, is this—two young men out of each parish go out upon the flure—one of them stands up, then bends himself, sir, at a half bend, placing his left hand behind on the back part of his ham, keeping it there to receive what it's to get. Well, there he stands, and the other coming behind him, places his left foot out before him, doubles up the cuff of his coat, to give his hand and wrist freedom: he then rises his right arm, coming down with the heel of his hand upon the other fellow's palm, under him, with full force. By jing, it's the divil's own diversion: for you might as well get a stroke of a sledge as a blow from one of them able, hard-working fellows, with hands upon them like lime-stone. When the fellow that's down gets it hot and heavy, the man that struck him stands bent in his place, and some friend of the other comes down upon him, and pays him for what the other fellow got.

"In this way they take it, turn about, one out of each parish, till it's over; for I believe if they were to pelt one another *since*,‡ that they'd never give up. Bless my soul, but it was terrible to hear the strokes that the Slip and Pat M'Ardle did give that night. The Slip was a young fellow upwards of six feet, with great able bones and little flesh, but terrible thick *shinnins*;§ his wrist was as hard and strong as a bar of iron. M'Ardle was a low, broad man, with a *racket*‖ head and bull neck, and a pair of shoulders that you could hardly get your arms about, Mr. Morrow, long as they are: it's he, indeed, that was the firm, well built chap, entirely. At

* That is, in this point you are the same *kind* as your father; possessing that prominent trait in his disposition or character.

† The pressure in a crowd.

* Cleared up—set in order.

† Threw aside all restraint.

‡ From that hour to this.

§ Sinews.

‖ Curled.

any rate, a man might as well get a kick from a horse as a stroke from either of them.

"Little Jemmy Teague, I remimber, struck a cousin of the Slip's a very smart blow, that made him dance about the room, and blow his fingers for ten minutes after it. Jemmy, himself, was a tight, smart fellow. When the Slip saw what his cousin had got, he rises up, and stands over Jemmy so coolly, and with such good humor, that every one in the house trembled for poor Jemmy, bekase, you see, whenever the Slip was bent on mischief, he used always to grin. Jemmy, however, kept himself bent firm; and to do him justice, didn't flinch from under the stroke, as many of them did—no, he was like a rock. Well, the Slip, as I said, stood over him, fixing himself for the stroke, and coming down with such a pelt on poor Jemmy's hand, that the first thing we saw was the blood acrass the Slip's own legs and feet, that had burst out of poor Jemmy's finger-ends. The Slip then stooped to receive the next blow himself, and you may be sure there was above two dozen up to be at him. No matter; one man they all gave way to, and that was Pat M'Ardle.

"'Hould away,' says Pat,—'clear off, boys, all of you—this stroke's mine by right, any how;—and,' says he, swearing a terrible oath, 'if you don't sup sorrow for that stroke,' says he to the Slip, 'why Pat M'Ardle's not behind you here.'

"He, then, up with his arm, and came down—why, you would think that the stroke he gave the Slip had druv his right hand into his body: but, any way, it's he that took full satisfaction for what his cousin got; for if the Slip's fingers had been cut off at the tops, the blood couldn't spring out from under his nails more nor it did. After this the Slip couldn't strike another blow, bekase his hand was disabled out and out.

"The next play they went to was the *Sitting Brogue*. This is played by a ring of them sitting down upon the bare ground, keeping there knees up. A shoemaker's leather apron is then got, or a good stout brogue, and sent round under their knees. In the mane time one stands in the middle; and after the brogue is sent round, he is to catch it as soon as he can. While he stands there, of course, his back must be to some one, and accordingly those that are behind him thump him right and left with the brogue, while he, all the time, is striving to catch it. Whoever he catches this brogue with must stand up in his place, while he sits down where the other had been, and then the play goes on as before.

"There's another play called the *Standing Brogue*—where one man gets a brogue of the same kind, and another stands up facing him, with his hands locked together, forming an arch turned upside down. The man that houlds the brogue then strikes him with it betune the hands; and even the smartest fellow receives several pelts before he is able to close his hands and catch it; but when he does, he becomes brogueman, and the man who held the brogue stands for him, until he catches it. The same thing is gone through, from one to another, on each side, until it is over.

"The next is *Frimsy Framsy*, and is played in this manner:—A chair or stool is placed in the middle of the flure, and the man who manages the play sits down upon it, and calls his sweetheart, or the prettiest girl in the house. She, accordingly, comes forward, and must kiss him. He then rises up, and she sits down. 'Come now,' he says, 'fair maid—*Frimsy framsy*, who's your fancy?' She then calls them she likes best, and when the young man she calls comes over and kisses her, he then takes her place, and calls another girl—and so on, smacking away for a couple of hours. Well, throth, it's no wonder that Ireland's full of people; for I believe they do nothing but coort from the time they're the hoith of my leg. I dunno is it true, as I hear Captain Sloethorn's steward say, that the Englishwomen are so fond of Irishmen?"

"To be sure it is," said Shane Fadh; "don't I remimber myself, when Mr. Fowler went to England—and he as fine looking a young man, at the time, as ever got into a saddle—he was riding up the street of London, one day, and his servant after him—and by the same token he was a thousand pound worse than nothing; but no matter for that, you see luck was before him—what do you think, but a rich dressed livery servant came out, and stopping the Squire's man, axed whose servant he was?

"'Why, thin,' says Ned Magavran, who was his body servant at the time, 'bad luck to you, you spalpeen, what a question do you ax, and you have eyes in your head!' says he—'hard feeling to you!' says he, 'you vagabone, don't you see I'm my master's?'

"The Englishman laughed. 'I know that, Paddy,' says he—for they call us all Paddies in England, as if we had only one name among us, the thieves; 'but I wish to know his name,' says the Englishman.

"'You do!' says Ned; 'and by the powers!' says he, 'but you must first tell me which side of the head you'd wish to hear it an.'

"'Oh! as for that,' says the Englishman—not up to him, you see—'I don't care much, Paddy, only let me hear it, and where he lives.'

"'Just keep your ground, then,' says Ned, 'till I 'light off this blood-horse of mine'—he was an ould garron that was fattened up, not worth forty shillings—'this blood-horse of mine,' says Ned, 'and I'll tell you.'

"So down he gets, and lays the Englishman sprawling in the channel.

"'Take that, you vagabone!' says he, 'and it'll larn you to call people by their right names agin: I was christened as well as you, you spalpeen!'

"All this time the lady was looking out of the windy, breaking her heart laughing at Ned and the servant; but, behould!—she knew a thing or two, it seems; for, instead of sending a man at all at all, what does she do but sends her own maid—a very purty girl, who comes up to Ned, putting the same questiou to him.

"'What's his name, avourneen?' says Ned, melting, to be sure, at the sight of her—'Why, then, darling, who could refuse you anything?—but, you jewel! by the holy, you must bribe me or I'm dumb,' says he.

"'How could I bribe you?' says she, with a sly smile—for Ned himself was a well-looking young fellow at the time.

"'I'll show you that,' says Ned, 'if you tell me where you live; but, for fraid you forget it—with them two lips of your own, my darling.'

"'There, in that great house,' says the maid; 'my mistress is one of the beautiflest and richest young ladies in London, and she wishes to know where your master could be heard of.'

"'Is that the house?' says Ned, pointing to it.

"'Exactly,' says she: 'that's it.'

"'Well, acushla,' says he, 'you've a purty and an innocent-looking face;' but I'm tould there's many a trap in London well baited. Just only run over while I'm looking at you, and let me see that purty face of yours smiling at me out of the windy that that young lady is peeping at us from.'

"This she had to do.

"'My master,' thought Ned, while she was away, 'will aisily find out what kind of a house it is, any how, if that be it.'

"In a short time he saw her in the windy, and Ned then gave her a sign to come down to him.

"'My master,' says he, 'never was afeard to show his face, or tell his name to any one—he's a Squire Fowler,' says he—'a Sarjen-major in a great militia regiment: he shot five men in his time; and there's not a gentleman in the country he lives in that dare say Boo to his blanket. And now, what's your name,' says Ned, 'you flattering little blackguard you?'

"'My name's Betty Cunningham,' says she.

"'And next, what's your mistress's, my darling?' says Ned.

"'There it is,' says she, handing him a card.

"'Very well,' says Ned, the thief, looking at it with a great air, making as if he could read; 'this will just do, a colleen bawn.'

"'Do you read in your country with the wrong side of the print up?' says she.

"'Up or down,' says Ned, "it's all one to us in Ireland; but, any how, I'm left-handed, you deluder!'

"The upshot of it was, that her mistress turned out to be a great *hairess*, and a great beauty; and she and Fowler got married in less than a month. So, you see, it's true enough that the Englishwomen *are* fond of Irishmen," says Shane; "but, Tom, with submission for stopping you, go on with your Wake."

"The next play, then, is *Marrying*——"

"Hooh!" says Andy Morrow, "why, all their plays are about kissing and marrying, and the like of that."

"Surely and they are, sir," says Tom.

"It's all the nathur of the baste," says Alick.

"The next is marrying. A bouchal puts an ould dark coat on him, and if he can borry a wig from any of the ould men in the wake-house, why, well and good, he's the liker his work—this is the priest; he takes and drives all the young men out of the house, and shuts the door upon them, so that they can't get in till he lets them. He then ranges the girls all beside one another, and, going to the first, makes her name him she wishes to be her husband; this she does, of coorse, and the priest lugs him in, shutting the door upon the rest. He then pronounces this marriage sarvice, when the husband smacks her first, and then the priest:—'Amo amas, avourneen—in nomine gomine, betwuxt and between—for hoc erat in votis, squeeze 'em please 'em—omnia vincit amor, wid two horns to caput nap it—poluphlasboio, the lasses—'Quid,' says Cleopatra; 'Shid,' says Antony—ragibus et clatibus solemus stapere windous—nine months—big bottle, and a honeymoon—Aineas poque Dido poque Roymachree—hum not fiem viat—lag rag, merry kerry, Parawig and breeches—hoc manifestibus omnium—Kiss your wife under the nose, then seek repose. 'Tis done,' says the priest. 'Vinculum trinculum; and now you're married. Amen!' Well, these two are married, and he places his wife upon his knee, for fraid of taking up too much room, *you persave;* there they coort away again, and why shouldn't they?

The priest then goes to the next, and makes her name her husband; this is complied with, and he is brought in after the same manner, but no one else till they're called: he is then married, and kisses his wife, and the priest kisses her after him; and so they're *all* married.

"But if you'd see them that don't chance to be called at all, the figure they cut—slipping into some dark corner, to avoid the mobbing they get from the priest and the others. When they're all united, they must each sing a song—man and wife, according as they sit; or if they can't sing, or get some one to do it for them, they're divorced. But the priest, himself, usually lilts for any one that's not able to give a verse. You see, Mr. Morrow, there's always in the neighborhood some droll fellow that takes all these things upon him, and if *he* happened to be absent, the wake would be quite dull."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "have you any more of their sports, Tom?"

"Ay, have I; one of the best and pleasantest you heard yet."

"I hope there's no more coorting in it," says Nancy; "God knows we're tired of their kissing and marrying."

"Were you always so?" says Ned, across the fire to her.

"Behave yourself, Ned," says she; "don't *you* make me spake; sure you were set down as the greatest Brine-oge that ever was known in the parish, for such things."

"No, but don't you make *me* spake," replies Ned.

"Here, Biddy" said Nancy, "bring that uncle of yours another pint; that's what he wants most at the present time, I'm thinking."

Biddy, accordingly, complied with this.

"Don't make *me* spake," continued Ned.

"Come, Ned," she replied, "you've got a fresh pint now; so drink it, and give me no more *gosther*.*

"*Shuid-urth!*"† says Ned, putting the pint to his head, and winking slyly at the rest.

"Ay, wink; in troth I'll be up to you for that, Ned," says Nancy; by no means satisfied that Ned should enter into particulars. "Well, Tom," says she, diverting the conversation, "go on, and give us the remainder of your Wake."

"Well," says Tom, "the next play is in the military line. You see, Mr. Morrow, the man that leads the sports places them all on their sates, gets from some of the girls a white handkerchief, which he ties round his hat, as you would tie a piece of mourning; he then walks round them two or three times singing,

Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid,
And folly the lad with the white cockade?

When he sings this he takes off his hat, and puts it on the head of the girl he likes best, who rises up and puts her arm around him, and then they both go about in the same way, singing the same words. She then puts the hat on some young man, who gets up and goes round with them, singing as before. *He* next puts it on the girl *he* loves best, who, after singing and going round in the same manner, puts it on another, and *he* on *his* sweetheart, and so on. This is called the *White Cockade*. When it's all over, that is, when every young man has pitched upon the girl that he wishes to be his sweetheart, they sit down, and sing songs, and coort, as they did at the marrying.

"After this comes the *Weds* or *Forfeits*, or what they call putting round the button. Every one gives in a forfeit—the boys a neck-handkerchief or a pen-knife, and the girls a pocket-handkerchief or something that way. The forfeit is held over them, and each of them stoops in turn. They are, then, compelled to command the person that owns that forfeit to sing a song—to kiss such and such a girl—or to carry some ould man, with his legs about their neck, three times round the house, and this last is always great fun. Or, maybe, a young, upsetting fellow, will be sent to kiss some toothless, slavering, ould woman, just to punish him; or if a young woman is any way saucy, she'll have to kiss some ould, withered fellow, his tongue hanging with age half way down his chin, and the tobacco water trickling from each corner of his mouth.

"By jingo, many a time, when the friends of the corpse would be breaking their very hearts with grief and affliction, I have seen them obligated to laugh out, in spite of themselves, at the drollery of the priest, with his ould black coat and wig upon him; and when the laughing fit would be over, to see them rocking themselves again with the sorrow—so sad. The best man for managing such sports in this neighborhood, for many a year, was Roger M'Cann, that lives up as you go to the mountains. You wouldn't begrudge to go ten miles the cowldest winter night that ever blew, to see and hear Roger.

"There's another play that they call the *Priest of the Parish*, which is remarkably pleasant. One of the boys gets a wig upon

* Idle talk—gossip.

† Shuid-urth This to you, or upon you; a form of drinking healths.

himself, as before—goes out on the flure, places the boys in a row, calls one his *man Jack*, and says to each 'What will you be?' One answers 'I'll be *black cap*;' another—'*red cap*;' and so on. He then says, 'The priest of the parish has lost his considhering cap—some says this, and some says that, but I say my man Jack!' Man Jack, then, to put it off himself, says, 'Is it me, sir?' 'Yes, you, sir!" 'You he, sir!' 'Who then, sir?' 'Black cap!' If Black cap, then, doesn't say 'Is it me, sir?' before the priest has time to call him, he must put his hand on his ham, and get a pelt of the brogue A body must be supple with the tongue in it.

"After this comes one they call *Horns*, or the *Painter*. A droll fellow gets a lump of soot or lamp black, and after fixing a ring of the boys and girls about him, he lays his two fore-fingers on his knees, and says. 'Horns, horns, cow horns!' and then raises his fingers by a jerk up above his head; the boys and girls in the ring then do the same thing, for the meaning of the play is this:—the man with the black'ning *always* raises his fingers every time he names an animal; but if he names any that has *no* horns, and that the others jerk up their fingers, then they must get a stroke over the face with the soot. 'Horns, horns, goat horns!'—then he ups with his fingers like lightning; they must all do the same, bekase a goat *has* horns. 'Horns, horns, horse horns!'—he ups with them again, but the boys and girls ought not, bekase a horse has *not* horns; however any one that raises them *then*, gets a slake. So that it all comes to this:—Any one, you see that lifts his fingers when an animal is named that has *no* horns—or any one that does *not* raise them when a baste is mintioned that *has* horns, will get a mark. It's a purty game, and requires a keen eye and a quick hand; and, maybe, there's not fun in straiking the soot over the purty, warm, rosy cheeks of the colleens, while their eyes are dancing with delight in their heads, and their sweet breath comes over so pleasant about one's face, the darlings!—Och! och!

"There's another game they call the *Silly ould Man*, that's played this way:—A ring of the boys and girls is made on the flure—boy, and girl about—holding one another by the hands; well and good—a young fellow gets into the middle of the ring, as 'the silly ould man.' There he stands looking at all the girls to choose a wife, and, in the mane time, the youngsters of the ring sing out—

Here's a silly ould man that lies all alone,
That lies all alone,
That lies all alone;
Here's a silly ould man that lies all alone,
He wants a wife and he can get none.

"When the boys and girls sing this, the silly ould man must choose a wife from some of the colleens belonging to the ring. Having made choice of her, she goes into the ring along with him, and they all sing out—

Now, young couple, you're married together,
You're married together,
You're married together,
You must obey your father and mother,
And love one another like sister and brother—
I pray, young couple, you'll kiss together!

And you may be sure this part of the marriage is not missed, any way."

"I doubt," said Andy Morrow, "that good can't come of so much kissing, marrying, and coorting."

The narrator twisted his mouth knowingly, and gave a significant groan.

"*Be dhe hosth*,* hould your tongue, Mistiur Morrow," said he; "Biddy avourneen," he continued, addressing Biddy and Bessy, "and Bessy, alannah, just take a friend's advice, and never mind going to wakes; to be sure there's plenty of fun and divarsion at sich places, but—healths apiece!" putting the pint to his lips—"and that's all I say about it."

"Right enough, Tom," observed Shane Fadh—"sure most of the matches are planned at them, and, I may say, most of the *runaways*, too—poor, young, foolish craturs, going off, and getting themselves married; then bringing small, helpless families upon their hands, without money or manes to begin the world with, and afterwards likely to eat one another out of the face for their folly; however, there's no putting ould heads upon young shoulders, and I doubt, except the wakes are stopped altogether, that it'll be the ould case still."

"I never remember being at a country wake," said Andy Morrow. "How is everything laid out in the house?"

"Sure it's to you I'm telling the whole story, Mr. Morrow: these thieves about me here know all about it as well as I do—the house, eh? Why, you see, the two corpses were stretched beside one another, washed and laid out. There were long deal boords with their ends upon two stools, laid over the bodies; the boords were covered with a white sheet got at the big house, so the corpses were'nt to be seen. On these, again, were placed large mould candles plates of cut tobacco, pipes, and snuff, and so on. Sometimes corpses are waked in a bed, with their faces visible; when that is the case, white sheets, crosses, and sometimes flowers, are pinned up about the bed, except in the

* The translation follows it above.

front; but when they're undher boord, a set of ould women sit smoking, and rocking themselves from side to side, quite sorrowful—these are *keeners*—friends or relations; and when every one connected with the dead comes in, they raise the *keene*, like a *song* of sorrow, wailing and clapping their hands.

"The furniture is mostly removed, and sates made round the walls, where the neighbors sit smoking, chatting, and gosthering. The best of aiting and dhrinking that they can afford is provided; and, indeed, there is generally open house, for it's unknown how people injure themselves by their kindness and waste at christenings, weddings, and wakes.

"In regard to poor Larry's wake—we had all this, and more at it; for, as I observed a while agone, the man had made himself no friends when he was living, and the neighbors gave a loose to all kinds of divilment when he was dead. Although there's no man would be guilty of any disrespect where the dead are, yet, when a person has led a good life, and conducted themselves dacently and honestly, the young people of the neighborhood show their respect by going through their little plays and divarsions quieter and with less noise, lest they may give any offence; but, as I said, whenever the person didn't live as they ought to do, there's no stop to their noise and *rollikin*.*

"When it drew near morning, every one of us took his sweetheart, and, after convoying her home, we went to our own houses to get a little sleep—so that was the end of poor Larry M'Farland, and his wife, Sally Lowry."

"Success, Tom!" said Bill M'Kinny; "take a pull of the malt now, afther the story, your soul!—But what was the funeral like?"

"Why, then, a poor berrin it was," said Tom; "a miserable sight, God knows—just a few of the neighbors; for those that used to take his thrate, and while he had a shilling in his pocket blarney him up, not one of the skulking thieves showed their faces at it—a good warning to foolish men that throw their money down throats that haven't hearts anundher them.—But boys, I desarve another thrate, I think, afther my story!" This, we need scarcely add, he was supplied with, and after some further desultory chat, they again separated, with the intention of re-assembling at Ned's on the following night.

THE BATTLE OF THE FACTIONS.

ACCORDINGLY, the next evening found them all present, when it was determined unanimously that Pat Frayne, the hedge schoolmaster, should furnish them with the intellectual portion of the entertainment for that night, their object being each to tell a story in his turn.

"Very well," said Pat. "I am quite simultaneous to the wishes of the company; but you will plaise to observe, that there is clay which *is* moist, and clay which is *not* moist. Now, under certain circumstances, the clay which is not moist, ought to be made moist, and one of those circumstances is that in which any larned person becomes loquacious, and indulges in narrative. The philosophical raison, is decided on by Socrates, and the great Phelim M'Poteen, two of the most celebrated liquorary characters that ever graced the sunny side of a plantation, is, that when a man commences a narration with his clay *not* moist, the said narration is found, by all larned experience, to be a very dry one—ehem!"

"Very right, Mr. Frayne," replied Andy Morrow; "so in ordher to avoid a dhry narrative, Nancy, give the masther a jug of your stoutest to wet his whistle, and keep him in wind as he goes along."

"Thank you, Mr. Morrow—and in requital for your kindness, I will elucidate you such a sample of unadulterated Ciceronian eloquence, as would not be found originating from every chimney-corner in this Province, anyhow. I am not bright, however, at oral relation. I have accordingly composed into narrative the following tale, which is appellated 'The Battle of the Factions:'—

"My grandfather, Connor O'Callaghan, though a tall, erect man, with white flowing hair, like snow, that falls profusely about his broad shoulders, is now in his eighty-third year: an amazing age, considhering his former habits. His countenance is still marked with honesty and traces of hard fighting, and his cheeks ruddy and cudgel-worn; his eyes, though not as black as they often used to be, have lost very little of that nate fire which characterizes the eyes of the O'Callaghans, and for which I myself have been—but my modesty won't allow me to allude to that: let it be sufficient for the present to

* Uproariousness.

say, that there never was remembered so handsome a man in his native parish, and that I am as like him as one Cork-red phatie is to another. Indeed, it has been often said, that it would be hard to meet an O'Callaghan without a black eye in his head. He has lost his fore-teeth, however, a point in which, unfortunately, I, though his grandson, have a strong resemblance to him. The truth is, they were knocked out of him in rows, before he had reached his thirty-fifth year—a circumstance which the kind reader will be pleased to receive in extenuation for the same defect in myself. That, however, is but a trifle, which never gave either of us much trouble.

"It pleased Providence to bring us through many hair-breadth escapes, with our craniums uncracked; and when we consider that he, on taking a retrogradation of his past life, can indulge in the plasing recollection of having broken two skulls in his fighting days, and myself one, without either of us getting a fracture in return, I think we have both rason to be thankful. He was a powerful *bulliah battha* * in his day and never met a man able to fight him, except big Mucklemurray, who stood before him the greater part of an hour and a half, in the fair of Knockimdowny, on the day that the first great fight took place—twenty years afther the hard frost—between the O'Callaghans and the O'Hallaghans. The two men fought single hands—for both factions were willing to let them try the engagement out, that they might see what side could boast of having the best man. They began where you enter the north side of Knockimdowny, and fought successively up to the other end, then back again to the spot where they commenced, and afterwards up to the middle of the town, right opposite to the market-place, where my grandfather, by the same a-token, lost a grinder; but he soon took satisfaction for that, by giving Mucklemurray a tip above the eye with the end of an oak stick, decently loaded with lead, which made the poor man feel very quare entirely, for the few days that he survived it.

"Faith, if an Irishman happened to be born in Scotland, he would find it mighty inconvanient—afther losing two or three grinders in a row—to manage the hard oaten bread that they use there; for which rason, God be good to his sowl that first invented the phaties, anyhow, because a man can masticate them without a tooth, at all at all. I'll engage, if larned books were consulted, it would be found out that he was an Irishman. I wonder that neither Pastorini nor Columbkill mentions anything about him in their prophecies concerning the church; for my own part, I'm strongly inclinated to believe that it must have been Saint Patrick himself; and I think that his driving all kinds of venomous reptiles out of the kingdom is, according to the Socrastic method of argument, an undeniable proof of it. The subject, to a dead certainty, is not touched upon in the Brehon Code,* nor by any of the three Psalters,† which is extremely odd, seeing that the earth never produced a root equal to it in the multiplying force of prolification. It is, indeed, the root of prosperity to a fighting people: and many a time my grandfather boasts to this day, that the first bit of *bread* he ever *ett* was a *phatie*.

"In mentioning my grandfather's fight with Mucklemurray, I happened to name them blackguards, the O'Hallaghans: hard fortune to the same set, for they have no more discretion in their quarrels, than so many Egyptian mummies, African buffoons, or any other uncivilized animals. It was one of them, he that's married to my own fourth cousin, Biddy O'Callaghan, that knocked two of my grinders out, for which piece of civility I had the satisfaction of breaking a splinter or two in his carcase, being always honestly disposed to pay my debts.

"With respect to the O'Hallaghans, they and our family have been next neighbors since before the Flood—and that's as good as two hundred years; for I believe it's 198, any how, since my great grandfather's grand-uncle's ould mare was swept out of the 'Island,' in the dead of the night, about half an hour after the whole country had been *ris* out of their beds by the thunder and lightning. Many a field of oats and many a life, both of beast and Christian, was lost in it, especially of those that lived on the bottoms about the edge of the river: and it was true for them that said it came before *something;* for the *next year* was one of the hottest *summers* ever remembered in Ireland.

"These O'Hallaghans couldn't be at peace with a saint. Before they and our faction began to quarrel, it's said that the O'Donnells, or Donnells, and they had been at it, —and a blackguard set the same O'Donnells were, at all times—in fair and market, dance, wake, and berrin, setting the country on fire. Whenever they met, it was heads cracked

* Literally, a stroke of cudgel; put for cudgel-player.

* This was the old code of laws peculiar to Ireland before the introduction of English legislation into it.

† There was properly only two Psalters, those of Tara and Cashel. The Psalters were collections of genealogical history, partly in verse; from which latter circumstance they had their name.

and bones broken; till by degrees the O'Donnells fell away, one after another, from fighting, accidents, and hanging; so that at last there was hardly the name of one of them in the neighborhood. The O'Hallaghans, after this, had the country under themselves—were the cocks of the walk entirely;—who but they? A man darn't look crooked at them, or he was certain of getting his head in his fist. And when they'd get drunk in a fair, it was nothing but 'Whoo! for the O'Hallaghans!' and leaping yards high off the pavement, brandishing their cudgels over their heads, striking their heels against their hams, tossing up their hats; and when all would fail, they'd strip off their coats, and trail them up and down the street, shouting, 'Who dare touch the coat of an O'Hallaghan? Where's the blackguard Donnells now?'—and so on, till flesh and blood couldn't stand it.

"In the course of time, the whole country was turned against them; for no crowd could get together in which they didn't kick up a row, nor a bit of stray fighting couldn't be, but they'd pick it up first; and if a man would venture to give them a contrairy answer, he was sure to get the crame of a good welting for his pains. The very landlord was timorous of them; for when they'd get behind in their *rint*, hard fortune to the bailiff, or proctor, or steward, he could find, that would have anything to say to them. And the more wise they; for maybe, a month would hardly pass till all belonging to them in the world would be in a heap of ashes: and who could say who did it? for they were as cunning as foxes.

"If one of them wanted a wife, it was nothing but find out the purtiest and the richest farmer's daughter in the neighborhood, and next march into her father's house, at the dead hour of night, tie and gag every mortal in it, and off with her to some friend's place in another part of the country. Then what could be done? If the girl's parents didn't like to give in, their daughter's name was sure to be ruined; at all events, no other man would think of marrying her, and the only plan was, to make the best of a bad bargain; and God He knows, it was making a bad bargain for a girl to have any matrimonial coucatenation with the same O'Hallaghans; for they always had the bad drop in them, from first to last, from big to little—the blackguards! But wait, it's not over with them yet.

"The bone of contintion that got between them and our faction was this circumstance; their lands and ours were divided by a river that ran down from the high mountains of Slieve Boglish, and, after a coorse of eight or ten miles, disembogued itself, first into George Duffy's mill-dam, and afterwards into that superb stream, the Blackwater, that might be well and appropriately appellated the Irish Niger. This river, which, though small at first, occasionally inflated itself to such a gigantic altitude, that it swept away cows, corn, and cottages, or whatever else happened to be in the way, was the march ditch, or *merin* between our farms. Perhaps it is worth while remarking, as a solution for natural philosophers, that these inundations were much more frequent in winter than in summer; though, when they did occur in summer, they were truly terrific.

"God be with the days, when I and half a dozen gorsoons used to go out, of a warm Sunday in summer, the bed of the river nothing but a line of white meandering stones, so hot that you could hardly stand upon them, with a small obscure thread of water creeping invisibly among them, hiding itself, as it were, from the scorching sun; except here and there, that you might find a small crystal pool where the streams had accumulated. Our plan was to bring a pocketful of roche lime with us, and put it into the pool, when all the fish used to rise on the instant to the surface, gasping with open mouth for fresh air, and we had only to lift them out of the water; a nate plan which, perhaps, might be adopted successfully, on a more extensive scale, by the Irish fisheries. Indeed, I almost regret that I did not remain in that station of life, for I was much happier then than ever I was since I began to study and practice larning. But this is vagating from the subject.

"Well, then, I have said that them O'Hallaghans lived beside us, and that this stream divided our lands. About half a quarter—*i. e.*, to accommodate myself to the vulgar phraseology—or, to speak more scientifically, one-eighth of a mile from our house was as purty a hazel glen as you'd wish to see, near half a mile long—its developments and proportions were truly classical. In the bottom of this glen was a small green island, about twelve yards, diametrically, of Irish admeasurement, that is to say, be the same more or less; at all events, it lay in the way of the river, which, however, ran towards the O'Hallaghan side, and, consequently, the island was our property.

"Now, you'll observe, that this river had been, for ages, the merin between the two farms, for they both belonged to separate landlords, and so long as it kept the O'Hallaghan side of the little peninsula in question there could be no dispute about it, for all was clear. One wet winter, however, it seemed to change its mind upon the subject;

for it wrought and wore away a passage for itself on our side of the island, and by that means took part, as it were, with the O'Hallaghans, leaving the territory which had been our property for centuries, in their possession. This was a vexatious change to us, and, indeed, eventually produced very feudal consequences. No sooner had the stream changed sides, than the O'Hallaghans claimed the island as theirs, according to their tenement; and we, having had it for such length of time in our possession, could not break ourselves of the habitude of occupying it. They incarcerated our cattle, and we incarcerated theirs. They summoned us to their landlord, who was a magistrate; and we summoned them to ours, who was another. The verdicts were north and south. Their landlord gave it in favor of them, and ours in favor of us. The one said he had law on his side; the other, that he had proscription and possession, length of time and usage.

"The two squires then fought a challenge upon the head of it, and what was more singular, upon the disputed spot itself; the one standing on their side, the other on ours; for it was just *twelve paces* every way. Their friend was a small, light man, with legs like drumsticks; the other was a large, able-bodied gentleman, with a red face and hooked nose. They exchanged two shots, only one of which — the second — took effect. It pastured upon their landlord's spindle leg, on which he held it out, exclaiming, that while he lived he would never fight another challenge with his antagonist, 'because,' said he, holding out his own spindle shank, 'the man who could hit *that* could hit *anything*.'

"We then were advised, by an attorney, to go to law with them; and they were advised by another attorney to go to law with us: accordingly, we did so, and in the course of eight or nine years it might have been decided, but just at the legal term approximated in which the decision was to be announced, the river divided itself with mathematical exactitude on each side of the island. This altered the state and law of the question *in toto;* but, in the meantime, both we and the O'Hallaghans were nearly fractured by the expenses. Now during the lawsuit we usually houghed and mutilated each other's cattle, according as they trespassed the premises. This brought on the usual concomitants of various battles, fought and won by both sides, and occasioned the lawsuit to be dropped; for we found it a mighty inconvanient matter to fight it out both ways; by the same a-token that I think it a proof of stultity to go to law at all at all, as long as a person is able to take it into his own management. For the only incongruity in the matter is this: that, in the one case, a set of lawyers have the law in *their* hands, and, in the other, that you have it in *your own;* that's the only difference, and 'tis easy knowing where the advantage lies.

"We, however, paid the most of the expenses, and would have *ped* them all with the greatest integrity, were it not that our attorney, when about to issue an execution against our property, happened somehow to be shot, one evening, as he returned home from a dinner which was given by him that was attorney for the O'Hallaghans. Many a boast the O'Hallaghan's made, before the quarrelling between us and them commenced, that they'd sweep the streets with the *fighting* O'Callaghans, which was an epithet that was occasionally applied to our family. We differed, however, materially from them; for we were honorable, never starting out in dozens on a single man or two, and beating him into insignificance. A couple, or maybe, when irritated, three, were the most we ever set at a single enemy, and if we left him lying in a state of imperception, it was the most we ever did, except in a regular confliction, when a man is justified in saving his own skull by breaking one of an opposite faction. For the truth of the business is, that he who breaks the skull of him who endeavors to break his own is safest; and, surely, when a man is driven to such an alternative, the choice is unhesitating.

"O'Hallaghans' attorney, however, had better luck; they were, it is true, rather in the retrograde with him touching the law charges, and, of coorse, it was only candid in him to look for his own. One morning, he found that two of his horses had been executed by some *incendiary* unknown, in the coorse of the night; and, on going to look at them, he found a taste of a notice posted on the inside of the stable-door, giving him intelligence that if he did not find a *horpus corpus** whereby to transfer his body out of the country, he would experience a fate parallel to that of his brother lawyer or the horses. And, undoubtedly, if honest people never perpetrated worse than banishing such vermin, along with proctors, and drivers of all kinds, out of a civilized country, they would not be so very culpable or atrocious.

"After this, the lawyer went to reside in Dublin; and the only bodily injury he received was the death of a land-agent and a bailiff, who lost their lives faithfully in driving for rent. They died, however, successfully; the bailiff having been provided for

* *Habeas corpus;* the above is the popular pronunciation.

nearly a year before the agent was sent to give an account of his stewardship—as the Authorized Version has it.

"The occasion on which the first re-encounter between us and the O'Hallaghans took place, was a peaceable one. Several of our respective friends undertook to produce a friendly and oblivious potation between us—it was at a berrin belonging to a corpse who was related to us both; and, certainly, in the beginning we were all as thick as whigged milk. But there is no use now in dwelling too long upon that circumstance; let it be sufficient to assert that the accommodation was effectuated by fists and cudgels, on both sides—the first man that struck a blow being one of the friends that wished to bring about the tranquillity. From that out the play commenced, and God he knows when it may end; for no dacent faction could give in to another faction without losing their character, and being kicked, and cuffed, and kilt, every week in the year.

"It is the *great battle*, however, which I am after going to describe: that in which we and the O'Hallaghans had contrived, one way or other, to have the parish divided—one-half for them, and the other for us; and, upon my credibility, it is no exaggeration to declare that the whole parish, though ten miles by six, assembled itself in the town of Knockimdowny, upon this interesting occasion. In thruth, Ireland ought to be a land of mathemathitians; for I am sure her population is well trained, at all events, in the two sciences of *multiplication* and *division*. Before I adventure, however, upon the narration, I must wax pathetic a little, and then proceed with the main body of the story.

"Poor Rose O'Hallaghan!—or, as she was designated—*Rose Galh*, or *Fair Rose*, and sometimes simply, Rose Hallaghan, because the detention of the big O often produces an afflatus in the pronunciation, that is sometimes mighty inconvenient to such as do not understand oratory—besides, that the Irish are rather fond of sending the liquids in a gutthural direction—Poor Rose! that faction *fight* was a black *day* to her, the sweet innocent—when it was well known that there wasn't a man, woman, or child, on either side that wouldn't lay their hands under her feet. However, in order to *insense* the reader better into her character, I will commence a small sub-narration, which will afterwards emerge into the parent stream of the story.

"The chapel of Knockimdowny is a slated house, without any ornament, except a set of wooden cuts, painted red and blue, that are placed *seriatum* around the square of the building in the internal side. Fourteen * of these suspind at equal distances on the walls each set in a painted frame; these constitute a certain species of country devotion. It is usual, on Sundays, for such of the congregation as are most inclined to piety, to genuflect at the first of these pictures, and commence a certain number of prayers to *it*; after the repetition of which, they travel on their knees along the bare earth to the second, where they repate another prayer peculiar to *that*, and so on, till they finish the grand *tower* of the interior. Such, however, as are not especially addictated to this kind of locomotive prayer, collect together in various knots through the chapel, and amuse themselves by auditing or narrating, anecdotes, discussing policy, or detraction; and in case it be summer, and the day of a fine texture, they scatter themselves into little crowds on the chapel-green, or lie at their length upon the grass in listless groups, giving way to chat and laughter.

"In this mode, laired on the sunny side of the ditches and hedges, or collected in rings round that respectable character, the Academician of the village, or some other well-known *Senachie*, or story-teller, they amuse themselves till the priest's arrival. Perhaps, too, some walking geographer of a pilgrim may happen to be present; and if there be, he is sure to draw a crowd about him, in spite of all the efforts of the learned Academician to the contrary. It is no unusual thing to see such a vagrant, in all the vanity of conscious sanctimony, standing in the middle of the attentive peasants, like the nave and felloes of a cart-wheel—if I may be permitted the loan of an apt similitude—repeating some piece of unfathomable and labyrinthine devotion, or perhaps warbling, from Stentorian lungs, some *melodia sacra*, in an untranslatable tongue; or, it may be, exhibiting the mysterious power of an amber bade fastened as a Decade to his *paudareens*,† lifting a chaff or light bit of straw by the force of its attraction. This is an exploit which causes many an eye to turn from the bades to his own bearded face, with a hope, as it were, of being able to catch a glimpse of the lurking sanctimony by which the knave hoaxes them in the miraculous.

"The amusements of the females are also nearly such as I have drafted out. Nosegays of the darlings might be seen sated on green banks, or sauntering about with a sly intention of coming in compact with their sweethearts, or, like bachelors' buttons in smiling

* These are called the "Fourteen Stations of the Cross."

† Pilgrims and other impostors pass these things upon the people as miracles upon a small scale.

rows, criticising the young men as they pass. Others of them might be seen screened behind a hedge, with their backs to the spectators, taking the papers off their curls before a small bit of looking-glass placed against the ditch; or perhaps putting on their shoes and stockings—which phrase can be used only by the authority of the figure *heusteron proteron*—inasmuch as if they put on the shoes first, you persave, it would be a scientific job to get on the stockings after; but it's an idiomatical expression, and therefore justifiable. However, it's a general custom in the country, which I dare to say has not yet spread into large cities, for the young women to walk bare-footed to the chapel, or within a short distance of it, that they may exhibit their bleached thread stockings and well-greased slippers to the best advantage, not pretermitting a well-turned ankle and neat leg, which, I may fearlessly assert, my fair country-women can show against any other nation, living or dead.

"One sunny Sabbath, the congregation of Knockindowny were thus assimilated, amusing themselves in the manner I have just outlined; a series of country girls sat on a little green mount, called the Rabbit Bank, from the circumstance of its having been formerly an open burrow, though of late years it has been closed. It was near twelve o'clock, the hour at which Father Luke O'Shaughran was generally seen topping the rise of the hill at Larry Mulligan's public-house, jogging on his bay hack at something between a walk and a trot—that is to say, his horse moved his fore and hind legs on the off side at one motion, and the fore and hind legs of the near side in another, going at a kind of dog's trot, like the pace of an idiot with sore feet in a shower—a pace, indeed, to which the animal had been set for the last sixteen years, but beyond which, no force, or entreaty, or science, or power, either divine or human, of his Reverence could drive him. As yet, however, he had not become apparent; and the girls already mentioned were discussing the pretensions which several of their acquaintances had to dress or beauty.

"'Peggy,' said Katy Carroll to her companion, Peggy Donohue, 'were you *out* * last Sunday?'

"'No, in troth, Katy, I was disappointed in getting my shoes from Paddy Mellon,† though I left him the measure for my foot three weeks agone, and gave him a thousand warnings to make them *duck-nebs;* but, instead of that,' said she, holding out a very purty foot, 'he has made them as sharp in the toe as a pick-axe, and a full mile too short for me. But why do ye ax was I *out,* Katty?'

"'Oh, nothing,' responded Katty, 'only that you missed a sight, anyway.'

"'What was it Kitty, ahagur?' asked her companion with mighty great curiosity.

"'Why, nothing less, indeed, nor Rose Cullenan decked out in a white muslin gown, and a black sprush bonnet, tied under her chin wid a silk ribbon, no less; but what killed us out and out was—you wouldn't guess?'

"'Arrah, how could I guess, woman alive? A silk handkerchy, maybe; for I wouldn't doubt the same Rose but she would be setting herself up for the likes of such a thing.'

"'It's herself that had, as red as scarlet, about her neck; but that's not it.'

"'Arrah, Katty, tell it to us at wanst; out with it, ahagur; sure there's no treason in it, anyhow.'

"'Why, thin, nothing less nor a crass-bar red-and-white pocket-handkerchy, to wipe her purty complexion wid!'

"To this Peggy replied by a loud laugh, in which it was difficult to say whether there was more of sathir than astonishment.

"'A pocket-handkerchy!' she exclaimed; 'musha, are we alive afther that, at all at all! Why, that bates Molly M'Cullagh and her red mantle entirely. I'm sure, but it's well come up for the likes of her, a poor, imperint crathur, that sprung from nothing, to give herself such airs.'

"'Molly M'Cullagh, indeed,' said Katty, 'why, they oughtn't to be mintioned in the one day, woman. Molly's come of a dacent ould stock, and kind mother for her to keep herself in genteel ordher at all times; she

* Out.—This expression in remote parts of the country is understood to mean being at mass.

† Paddy Mellon—a short, thick-set man, with gray hair, which he always kept cropped close—was the most famous shoemaker in the parish; in fact, the Drummond of a large district. No shoes were considered worth wearing if *he* did not make them. But, having admitted this, I am bound in common justice and honesty to say that so big a liar never put an awl into leather. No language could describe his iniquity in this respect. I myself am a living witness of this. Many a trudge has the villain taken out of me in my boyhood, and as sure as I went on the appointed day—which was always Saturday—so surely did he swear that they would be ready for me on that day week. He was, as a tradesman, the most multifarious and barefaced liar I ever met; and what was the most rascally trait about him, was the faculty he possessed of making you believe the lie as readily after the fifteenth repetition of it, as when it was uttered fresh from his lips.

sees nothing else, and can afford it, not all as one as the other *flipe*,* that would go to the world's end for a bit of dress.'

"'Sure she thinks she's a beauty, too, if you plase,' said Peggy, tossing her head with an air of disdain; 'but tell us, Katty, how did the muslin sit upon her at all, the upsetting crathur?'

"'Why, for all the world like a shift on a Maypowl, or a stocking on a body's nose: only nothing killed us outright but the pocket-handkerchy!'

"'Hut!' said the other, 'what could we expect from a proud piece like her, that brings a Manwill† to mass every Sunday, purtending she can read in it, and Jem Finigan saw the wrong side of the book *toards* her, the Sunday of the *Purcession!*'‡

"At this hit they both formed another risible junction, quite as sarcastic as the former—in the midst of which the innocent object of their censure, dressed in all her obnoxious finery, came up and joined them. She was scarcely sated—I blush to the very point of my pen during the manuscription—when the confabulation assumed a character directly antipodial to that which marked the precedent dialogue.

"'My gracious, Rose, but that's a purty thing you have got in your gown!—where did you buy it?'

"'Och, thin, not a one of myself likes it over much. I'm sorry I didn't buy a gingham: I could have got a beautiful patthern, all out, for two shillings less; but they don't wash so well as this. I bought it in Paddy McGartland's, Peggy.'

"'Troth, it's nothing else but a great beauty; I didn't see anything on you this long time that becomes you so well, and I've remarked that you always look best in white.'

"'Who made it, Rose?' inquired Katty; 'for it sits illegant.'

"'Indeed,' replied Rose, 'for the differ of the price, I thought it better to bring it to Peggy Boyle, and be sartin of not having it spoiled. Nelly Keenan made the last; and although there was a full breadth more in it nor this, bad cess to the one of her but spoiled it on me; it was ever so much too short in the body, and too tight in the sleeves, and then I had no step at all at all.'

"'The sprush bonnet is exactly the fit for the gown,' observed Katty; 'the black and the white's jist the cut—how many yards had you, Rose?'

"'Jist ten and a half; but the half-yard was for the tucks.'

"'Ay, faix! and brave full tucks she left in it; ten would do *me*, Rose?'

"'Ten!—no, nor ten and a half; you're a size bigger nor me at the laste, Peggy; but you'd be asy fitted, you're so *well* made.'

"'Rose, *darling*,' said Peggy, 'that's a great beauty, and shows off your complexion all to pieces; you have no notion how well you look in it and the sprush.'

"In a few minutes after this her namesake, Rose Gallh O'Hallaghan, came towards the chapel, in society with her father, mother, and her two sisters. The eldest, Mary, was about twenty-one; Rose, who was the second, about nineteen, or scarcely that; and Nancy, the junior of the three, about twice seven.

"'There's the O'Hallaghans,' says Rose.

"'Ay,' replied Katty; 'you may talk of beauty, now; did you ever lay your two eyes on the likes of Rose for downright—musha, if myself knows what to call it—but, anyhow, she's the lovely crathur to look at.'

"Kind reader, without a single disrespectful insinuation against any portion of the fair sex, you may judge what Rose O'Hallaghan must have been, when even these three were necessitated to praise her *in her absence!*

"'I'll warrant,' observed Katty, 'we'll soon be after seeing John O'Callaghan'—(he was my own cousin)—'sthrolling afther them, at his ease.'

"'Why,' asked Rose, 'what makes you say that?'

"'Bekase,' replied the other, 'I've a rason for it.'

"'Sure John O'Callaghan wouldn't be thinking of her,' observed Rose, 'and their families would see other shot: their factions would never have a crass marriage, anyhow.'

"'Well,' said Peggy, 'it's the thousand pities that the same two couldn't go together; for fair and handsome as Rose is, you'll not deny but John comes up to her; but faix! sure enough it's they that's the proud people on both sides, and dangerous to make or meddle with, not saying that ever there was the likes of the same two for dacency and peaceableness among either of the factions.'

"'Didn't I tell yez?' cried Katty; 'look

* Flipe—One who is "flippant"—of which word it is the substantive, and a good one too.

† Manuel—a Catholic Prayer-book.

‡ The priest described in "Ned M'Keown" having been educated on the Continent, was one of the first to introduce the Procession of the Host in that part of the country. The Consecrated Host, shrined in a silver vessel formed like a chalice, was borne by a priest under a silken canopy; and to this the other clergymen present offered up incense from a censer, whilst they circumambulated the chapel inside and out, if the day was fine.

at him now staling afther her; and it'll be the same thing going home again; and, if Rose is not much belied, it's not a bit displasing to her.'

"'Between ourselves,' observed Peggy, 'it would be no wondher the darling young erathur would fall in love with him; for you might thravel the country afore you'd meet with his fellow for face and figure.'

"'There's Father Ned,' remarked Katty; "we had betther get into the chapel before the *scroodgin* comes an, or your bonnet and gown, Rose, won't be the betther for it.'

"They now proceeded to the chapel, and those who had been amusing themselves after the same mode, followed their exemplar. In a short time the hedges and ditches adjoining the chapel were quite in solitude, with the exception of a few persons from the extreme parts of the parish, who might be seen running with all possible velocity 'to overtake mass,' as the phrase on that point expresses itself.

"The chapel of Knockimdowny was situated at the foot of a range of lofty mountains; a by-road went past the very door, which had under subjection a beautiful extent of cultivated country, diversificated by hill and dale, or rather by hill and hollow; for, as far as my own geographical knowledge goes, I have uniformly found them inseparable. It was also ornamented with the waving verdure of rich corn-fields and meadows, not pretermitting phatie-fields in full blossom—a part of rural landscape which, to my utter astonishment, has escaped the pen of poet, and the brush of painter; although I will risk my reputation as a man of pure and categorical taste, if a finer ingredient in the composition of a landscape could be found than a field of Cork-red phaties or Moroky *blacks* in full bloom, allowing a man to judge by the pleasure they confer upon the eye, and therefore to the heart. About a mile up from the chapel, towards the south, a mountain-stream, not the one already intimated—over which there was no bridge, crossed the road. But in lieu of a bridge, there was a long double plank laid over it, from bank to bank; and as the river was broad, and not sufficiently incarcerated within its channel, the neighbors were necessitated to throw these planks across the narrowest part they could find in the contiguity of the road. This part was consequently the deepest, and, in floods, the most dangerous; for the banks were elevated as far as they went, and quite tortuositous.

"Shortly after the priest had entered the chapel, it was observed that the hemisphere became, of a sudden, unusually obscure, though the preceding part of the day had not only been uncloudously bright, but hot in a most especial manner. The obscurity, however, increased rapidly, accompanied by that gloomy stillness which always takes precedence of a storm, and fills the mind with vague and interminable terror. But this ominous silence was not long unfractured; for soon after the first appearance of the gloom, a flash of lightning quivered through the chapel, followed by an extragavantly loud clap of thunder, which shook the very glass in the windows, and filled the congregation to the brim with terror. Their dismay, however, would have been infinitely greater, only for the presence of his Reverence, and the confidence which might be traced to the solemn occasion on which they were assimilated.

"From this moment the storm became progressive in dreadful magnitude, and the thunder, in concomitance with the most vivid flashes of lightning, peaded through the sky, with an awful grandeur and magnificence, that were exalted and even rendered more sublime by the still solemnity of religious worship. Every heart now prayed fervently—every spirit shrunk into a deep sense of its own guilt and helplessness—and every conscience was terror-stricken, as the voice of an angry God thundered out of his temple of storms though the heavens; for truly, as the Authorized Version has it, 'darkness was under his feet, and his pavilion round about was dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies, because he was wroth.'

"The rain now condescended in even-down torrents, and thunder succeeded thunder in deep and terrific peals, whilst the roar of the gigantic echoes that deepened and reverberated among the glens and hollows, 'laughing in their mountain mirth,'—hard fortune to me, but they made the flesh creep on my bones!

"This lasted for an hour, when the thunder slackened: but the rain still continued. As soon as mass was over, and the storm had elapsed, except an odd peal which might be heard rolling at a distance behind the hills, the people began gradually to recover their spirits, and enter into confabulation; but to venture out was still impracticable. For about another hour it rained incessantly, after which it ceased; the hemisphere became lighter—and the sun shone out once more upon the countenance of nature with its former brightness. The congregation then decanted itself out of the chapel—the spirits of the people dancing with that remarkable buoyancy or juvenility which is felt after a thunderstorm, when the air is calm, soople, and balmy—and all nature garmented with glittering verdure and light. The crowd next

began to commingle on their way home, and to make the usual observations upon the extraordinary storm which had just passed, and the probable effect it would produce on the fruit and agriculture of the neighborhood.

"When the three young women, whom we have already introduced to our respectable readers, had evacuated the chapel, they determined to substantiate a certitude, as far as their observation could reach, as to the truth of what Kitty Carroll had hinted at, in reference to John O'Callaghan's attachment to Rose Galh O'Hallaghan, and her taciturn approval of it. For this purpose they kept their eye upon John, who certainly seemed in no especial hurry home, but lingered upon the chapel green in a very careless method. Rose Galh, however, soon made her appearance, and, after going up the chapel-road a short space, John slyly walked at some distance behind, without seeming to pay her any particular notice, whilst a person up to the secret might observe Rose's bright eye sometimes peeping back to see if he was after her. In this manner they proceeded until they came to the river, which, to their great alarm, was almost fluctuating over its highest banks.

"A crowd was now assembled, consulting as to the safest method of crossing the planks, under which the red boiling current ran, with less violence, it is true, but much deeper than in any other part of the stream. The final decision was, that the very young and the old, and such as were feeble, should proceed by a circuit of some miles to a bridge that crossed it, and that the young men should place themselves on their knees along the planks, their hands locked in each other, thus forming a support on one side, upon which such as had courage to venture across might lean, in case of accident or megrim. Indeed, anybody that had able nerves might have crossed the planks without this precaution, had they been dry; but, in consequence of the rain, and the frequent attrition of feet, they were quite slippery; and, besides, the flood rolled terrifically two or three yards below them, which might be apt to beget a megrim that would not be felt if there was no flood.

"When this expedient had been hit upon, several young men volunteered themselves to put it in practice; and in a short time a considerable number of both sexnals crossed over, without the occurrence of any unpleasant accident. Paddy O'Hallaghan and his family had been stationed for some time on the bank, watching the success of the plan; and as it appeared not to be attended with any particular danger, they also determined to make the attempt. About a perch below the planks stood John O'Callaghan, watching the progress of those who were crossing them, but taking no part in what was going forward. The river, under the planks, and for some perches above and below them, might be about ten feet deep; but to those who could swim, it was less perilous, should any accident befall them, than those parts where the current was more rapid, but shallower. The water here boiled, and bubbled, and whirled about; but it was slow, and its yellow surface unbroken by rocks or fords.

"The first of the O'Hallaghans that ventured over it was the youngest, who, being captured by the hand, was encouraged by many cheerful expressions from the young men who were clinging to the planks. She got safe over, however; and when she came to the end, one who was stationed on the bank gave her a joyous pull, that translated her several yards upon *terra firma*.

"'Well, Nancy,' he observed, '*you're* safe, anyhow; and if I don't dance at your wedding for this, I'll never say you're decent.'

"To this Nancy gave a jocular promise, and he resumed his station, that he might be ready to render similar assistance to her next sister. Rose Galh then went to the edge of the plank several times, but her courage as often refused to be forthcoming. During her hesitation, John O'Callaghan stooped down, and privately untied his shoes, then unbuttoned his waistcoat, and very gently, being unwilling to excite notice, slipped the knot of his cravat. At long last, by the encouragement of those who were on the plank, Rose attempted the passage, and had advanced as far as the middle of it, when a fit of dizziness and alarm seized her with such violence, that she lost all consciousness—a circumstance of which those who handed her along were ignorant. The consequence, as might be expected, was dreadful; for as one of the young men was receiving her hand, that he might pass her to the next, she lost her momentum, and was instantaneously precipitated into the boiling current.

"The wild and fearful cry of horror that succeeded this cannot be laid on paper. The eldest sister fell into strong convulsions, and several of the other females fainted on the spot. The mother did not faint; but, like Lot's wife, she seemed to be translated into stone: her hands became clenched convulsively, her teeth locked, her nostrils dilated, and her eyes shot half way out of her head. There she stood, looking upon her daughter struggling in the flood, with a fixed gaze of wild and impotent frenzy, that, for fearfulness, beat the thunder-storm all to nothing. The father rushed to the edge of the river, oblivious of his incapability to swim, deter

mined to save her or lose his own life, which latter would have been a *dead* certainty, had he ventured; but he was prevented by the crowd, who pointed out to him the madness of such a project.

"'For God's sake, Paddy, don't attimpt it,' they exclaimed, 'except you wish to lose your own life, without being able to save hers: no man could swim in that flood, and it upwards of ten feet deep.'

"Their arguments, however, were lost upon him; for, in fact, he was insensible to everything but his child's preservation. He, therefore, only answered their remonstrances by attempting to make another plunge into the river.

"'Let me alone, will yez,' said he—'let me alone! I'll either save my child, Rose, or die along with her! How could I live after her? Merciful God, any of them but *her!* Oh! Rose, darling,' he exclaimed, 'the favorite of my heart—will no one save you?' All this passed in less than a minute.

"Just as these words were uttered, a plunge was heard a few yards below the bridge, and a man appeared in the flood, making his way with rapid strokes to the drowning girl. Another cry now arose from the spectators: 'It's John O'Callaghan,' they shouted—'it's John O'Callaghan, and they'll both be lost.' 'No,' exclaimed others; 'if it is in the power of man to save her, *he* will!' 'O, blessed father, she's lost!' now burst from all present; for, after having struggled and been kept floating for some time by her garments, she at length sunk, apparently exhausted and senseless, and the thief of a flood flowed over her, as if she had not been under it's surface.

"When O'Callaghan saw that she went down, he raised himself up in the water, and cast his eye towards that part of the bank opposite which she disappeared, evidently, as it proved, that he might have a mark to guide him in fixing on the proper spot where to plunge after her. When he came to the place, he raised himself again in the stream, and, calculating that she must by this time have been borne some distance from the spot where she sank, he gave a stroke or two down the river, and disappeared after her. This was followed by another cry of horror and despair, for, somehow, the idea of desolation which marks, at all times, a deep, overswollen torrent, heightened by the bleak mountain scenery around them, and the dark, angry voracity of the river where they had sunk, might have impressed the spectators with utter hopelessness as to the fate of those now engulfed in its vortex. This, however, I leave to those who are deeper read in philosophy than I am.

"An awful silence succeeded the last shrill exclamation, broken only by the hoarse rushing of the waters, whose wild, continuous roar, booming hollowly and dismally in the ear, might be heard at a great distance over all the country. But a new sensation soon invaded the multitude; for after the lapse of about half a minute, John O'Callaghan emerged from the flood, bearing in his sinister hand the body of *his own* Rose Gallh—for it's he that loved her tenderly. A peal of joy congratulated them from the assembled crowd; hundreds of directions were given to him how to act to the best advantage. Two young men in especial, who were both dying about the lovely creature that he held, were quite anxious to give advice.

"'Bring her to the other side, John, ma bouchal; it's the safest,' said Larry Carty.

"'Will you let him alone, Carty?' said Simon Tracy, who was the other, 'you'll only put him in a perplexity.'

"But Carty should order in spite of every thing. He kept bawling out, however, so loud, that John raised his eye to see what he meant, and was near losing hold of Rose. This was too much for Tracy, who ups with his fist, and downs him—so they both at it; for no one there could take themselves off those that were in danger, to interfere between them. But at all events, no earthly thing can happen among Irishmen without a fight.

"The father, during this, stood breathless, his hands clasped, and his eyes turned to heaven, praying in anguish for the delivery of his darling. The mother's look was still wild and fixed, her eyes glazed, and her muscles hard and stiff; evidently she was insensible to all that was going forward; while large drops of paralytic agony hung upon her cold brow. Neither of the sisters had yet recovered, nor could those who supported them turn their eyes from the more imminent danger, to pay them any particular attention. Many, also, of the other females, whose feelings were too much wound up when the accident occurred, now fainted, when they saw she was likely to be rescued; but most of them were weeping with delight and gratitude.

"When John brought her to the surface, he paused for a moment to recover breath and collectedness; he then caught her by the left arm, near the shoulder, and cut, in a slanting direction, down the stream, to a watering place, where a slope had been formed in the bank. But he was already too far down to be able to work across the stream to this point; for it was here much stronger and more rapid than under the planks. Instead, therefore, of reaching the slope, he found

himself in spite of every effort to the contrary, about a perch below it; and, except he could gain this point, against the strong rush of the flood, there was very little hope of being able to save either her or himself—for he was now much exhausted.

"Hitherto, therefore, all was still doubtful, whilst strength was fast failing him. In this trying and almost hopeless situation, with an admirable presence of mind, he adopted the only expedient which could possibly enable him to reach the bank. On finding himself receding down, instead of advancing up the current, he approached the bank, which was here very deep and perpendicular; he then sank his fingers into and pressed his right foot against the firm blue clay with which it was stratified, and by this means advanced, bit by bit, up the stream, having no other force by which to propel himself against it. After this mode did he breast the current with all his strength—which must have been prodigious, or he never could have borne it out—until he reached the slope, and got from the influence of the tide, into dead water. On arriving here, his hand was caught by one of the young men present, who stood up to the neck, waiting his approach. A second man stood behind him, holding his other hand, a link being thus formed, that reached out to the firm bank; and a good pull now brought them both to the edge of the river. On finding bottom, John took his Colleen Galh in his own arms, carried her out, and pressing his lips to hers, laid her in the bosom of her father; then, after taking another kiss of the young drowned flower, he burst into tears, and fell powerless beside her. The truth is, the spirit that had kept him firm was now exhausted; both his legs and arms having become nerveless by the exertion.

"Hitherto her father took no notice of John, for how could he? seeing that he was entirely wrapped up in his daughter; and the question was, though rescued from the flood, if life was in her. The sisters were by this time recovered, and weeping over her, along with the father—and, indeed, with all present; but the mother could not be made to comprehend what they were about at all at all. The country people used every means with which they were intimate to recover Rose; she was brought instantly to a farmer's house beside the spot, put into a warm bed, covered over with hot salt, wrapped in half-scorched blankets, and made subject to every other mode of treatment that could possibly revoke the functions of life. John had now got a decent draught of whiskey, which revived him. He stood over her, when he could be admitted, watching for the symptomatics of her revival; all, however, was vain. He now determined to try another course: by-and-by he stooped, put his mouth to her mouth, and, drawing in his breath, respired with all his force from the bottom of his very heart into hers; this he did several times rapidly—faith, a tender and agreeable operation, any how. But mark the consequence: in less than a minute her white bosom heaved—her breath returned—her pulse began to play—she opened her eyes, and felt his tears of love raining warmly on her pale cheek!

"For years before this no two of these opposite factions had spoken, nor up to this minute had John and they, even upon this occasion, exchanged a monosyllable. The father now looked at him—the tears stood afresh in his eyes; he came forward—stretched out his hand—it was received; and the next moment he fell upon John's neck, and cried like an infant.

"When Rose recovered, she seemed as if striving to recordate what had happened; and, after two or three minutes, inquired from her sister, in a weak but sweet voice, 'Who saved me?'

"'Twas John O'Callaghan, Rose darling,' replied the sister, in tears, 'that ventured his own life into the boiling flood, to save yours—and did save it, jewel!'

"Rose's eye glanced at John—and I only wish, as I am a bachelor not further than my forty-fourth, that I may ever have the happiness to get such a glance from two blue eyes, as she gave him that moment—a faint smile played about her mouth, and a slight blush lit up her fair cheek, like the evening sunbeams on the virgin snow, as the poets have said for the five-hundredth time, to my own personal knowledge. She then extended her hand, which John, you may be sure, was no way backward in receiving, and the tears of love and gratitude ran silently down her cheeks.

"It is not necessary to detail the circumstances of this day farther; let it be sufficient to say, that a reconciliation took place between those two branches of the O'Hallaghan and O'Callaghan families, in consequence of John's heroism and Rose's soft persuasion, and that there was, also, every perspective of the two factions being penultimately amalgamated. For nearly a century they had been pell-mell at it, whenever and wherever they could meet. Their forefathers, who had been engaged in the lawsuit about the island which I have mentioned, were dead and petrified in their graves; and the little peninsula in the glen was gradationally worn away by the river, till nothing remained but a desert, upon a small scale, of sand and gravel. Even the ruddy, able-bodied squire, with the longi-

tudinal nose, projecting out of his face like a broken arch, and the small, fiery magistrate—both of whom had fought the duel, for the purpose of setting forth a good example, and bringing the dispute to a *peaceable* conclusion—were also dead. The very memory of the original contention had been lost (except that it was preserved along with the cranium of my grandfather), or became so indistinct that the parties fastened themselves on some more modern provocation, which they kept in view until another fresh motive would start up, and so on. I know not, however, whether it was fair to expect them to give up at once the agreeable recreation of fighting. It's not easy to abolish old customs, particularly diversions; and every one knows that this is our national amusement.

"There were, it is true, many among both factions who saw the matter in this reasonable light, and who wished rather, if it were to cease, that it should die away by degrees, from the battle of the whole parish, equally divided between the factions, to the subordinate row between certain members of them—from that to the faint broil of certain families, and so on to the single-handed play between individuals. At all events, one-half of them were for peace, and two-thirds of them were equally divided between peace and war.

"For three months after the accident which befell Rose Galh O'Hallaghan, both factions had been tolerantly quiet—that is to say, they had no general engagement. Some slight skirmishes certainly did take place on market-nights, when the drop was in, and the spirits up; but in those neither John nor Rose's immediate families took any part. The fact was, that John and Rose were on the evening of matrimony; the match had been made—the day appointed, and every other necessary stipulation ratified. Now, John was as fine a young man as you would meet in a day's traveling; and as for Rose, her name went far and near for beauty: and with justice, for the sun never shone on a fairer, meeker, or modester virgin than Rose Galh O'Hallaghan.

"It might be, indeed, that there were those on both sides who thought that, if the marriage was obstructed, their own sons and daughters would have a better chance. Rose had many admirers; they might have envied John his happiness; many fathers, on the other side, might have wished their sons to succeed with Rose. Whether I am sinister in this conjecture is more than I can say. I grant, indeed, that a great portion of it is speculation on my part. The wedding-day, however, was arranged; but, unfortunately, the fair-day of Knockimdowny occurred, in the rotation of natural time, precisely one week before it. I know not from what motive it proceeded, but the factions on both sides were never known to make a more light-hearted preparation for battle. Cudgels of all sorts and sizes (and some of them, to my own knowledge, great beauties) were provided.

"I believe I may as well take this opportunity of saying that real Irish cudgels must be root-growing, either oak, black-thorn, or crab-tree—although crab-tree, by the way, is apt to fly. They should not be too long—three feet and a few inches is an accommodating length. They must be naturally top-heavy, and have around the end that is to make acquaintance with the cranium three or four natural lumps, calculated to divide the flesh in the natest manner, and to leave, if possible, the smallest taste in life of pit in the skull. But if a good root-growing *kippeen* be light at the fighting-end, or possess not the proper number of knobs, a hole, a few inches deep, is to be bored in the end, which must be filled with melted lead. This gives it a widow-and-orphan-making quality, a child-bereaving touch, altogether very desirable. If, however, the top splits in the boring—which, in awkward hands, is not uncommon—the defect may be remediated by putting on an iron ferrule, and driving two or three strong nails into it, simply to preserve it from flying off; not that an Irishman is ever at a loss for weapons when in a fight, for so long as a scythe, flail, spade, pitchfork, or stone is at hand, he feels quite contented with the lot of war. No man, as they say of great statesmen, is more fertile in expedients during a row; which, by the way, I take to be a good quality, at all events.

"I remember the fair-day of Knockimdowny well; it has kept me from griddle-bread and tough nutriment ever since. Hard fortune to Jack Roe O'Hallaghan! No man had better teeth than I had till I met with him that day. He fought stoutly on his own side; but he was *ped* then for the same basting that fell to me, though not by my hands, if to get his jaw decently divided into three halves could be called a fair liquidation of an old debt—it was equal to twenty shillings in the pound, any how.

"There had not been a larger fair in the town of Knockimdowny for years. The day was dark and sunless, but sultry. On looking through the crowd, I could see no man without a cudgel; yet, what was strange, there was no certainty of any sport. Several desultory skrimmages had locality, but they were altogether sequestered from the great

factions of the O's. Except that it was pleasant and stirred one's blood to look at them, or occasioned the cudgels to be grasped more firmly, there was no personal interest felt by any of us in them; they therefore began and ended, here and there, through the fair, like mere flashes in the pan, dying in their own smoke.

"The blood of every prolific nation is naturally hot; but when that hot blood is inflamed by ardent spirits, it is not to be supposed that men should be cool; and God he knows, there is not on the level surface of this habitable globe, a nation that has been so thoroughly inflamed by *ardent spirits* of all kinds as Ireland.

"Up till four o'clock that day, the factions were quiet. Several relations on both sides had been invited to drink by John and Rose's families, for the purpose of establishing a good feeling between them. But this was, after all, hardly to be expected, for they hated one another with an ardency much too good-humored and buoyant; and, between ourselves, to bring Paddy over a bottle is a very equivocal mode of giving him an anti-cudgeling disposition. After the hour of four, several of the factions were getting very friendly, which I knew at the time to be a bad sign. Many of them nodded to each other, which I knew to be a worse one; and some of them shook hands with the greatest cordiality, which I no sooner saw than I slipped the knot of my cravat, and held myself in preparation for the sport.

"I have often had occasion to remark—and few men, let me tell you, had finer opportunities of doing so—the differential symptomatics between a Party Fight, that is, a battle between Orangemen and Ribbonmen, and one between two Roman Catholic Factions. There is something infinitely more anxious, silent, and deadly, in the compressed vengeance, and the hope of slaughter, which characterize a *party fight*, than is to be seen in a battle between *factions*. The truth is, the enmity is not so deep and well-grounded in the latter as in the former. The feeling is not political nor religious between the factions; whereas, in the other, it is both, which is a mighty great advantage; for when this is adjucted to an intense personal hatred, and a sense of wrong, probably arising from a too intimate recollection of the leaded black thorn, or the awkward death of some relative, by the musket or the bayonet, it is apt to produce very purty fighting, and much respectable retribution.

"In a party fight, a prophetic sense of danger, hangs, as it were, over the crowd—the very air is loaded with apprehension; and the vengeance burst is proceeded by a close, thick darkness, almost sulphury, that is more terrifical than the conflict itself, though clearly less dangerous and fatal. The scowl of the opposing parties, the blanched cheeks, the knit brows, and the grinding teeth, not pretermitting the deadly gleams that shoot from their kindled eyes, are ornaments which a plain battle between factions cannot boast, but which, notwithstanding, are very suitable to the fierce and gloomy silence of that premeditated vengeance which burns with such intensity in the heart, and scorches up the vitals into such a thirst for blood. Not but that they come by different means to the same conclusion; because it is the feeling, and not altogether the manner of operation, that is different.

"Now a faction fight doesn't resemble this at all at all. Paddy's at home here; all song, dance, good-humor, and affection. His cheek is flushed with delight, which, indeed, may derive assistance from the consciousness of having no bayonets or loaded carabines to contend with; but anyhow, he's at home—his eye is lit with real glee—he tosses his hat in the air, in the height of mirth—and leaps, like a mounteback, two yards from the ground. Then, with what a gracious dexterity he brandishes his cudgel! what a joyous spirit is heard in his shout at the face of a friend from another faction! His very 'who!' is contagious, and would make a man, that had settled on running away, return and join the sport with an appetite truly Irish. He is, in fact, while under the influence of this heavenly *afflatus*, in love with every one, man, woman, and child. If he meet his sweetheart, he will give her a kiss and a hug, and that with double kindness, because he is on his way to thrash her father or brother. It is the *acumen* of his enjoyment; and woe be to him who will adventure to go between him and his amusements. To be sure, skulls and bones are broken, and lives lost; but they are lost in pleasant fighting—they are the consequences of the sport, the beauty of which consists in breaking as many heads and necks as you can; and certainly when a man enters into the spirit of any exercise, there is nothing like elevating himself to the point of excellence. Then a man ought never to be disheartened. If you lose this game, or get your head good-humoredly beaten to pieces, why you may win another, or your friends may mollify two or three skulls as a set-off to yours; but that is nothing.

"When the evening became more advanced, maybe, considering the poor look up there was for anything like decent sport—maybe, in the early part of the day, it wasn't the delightful sight to see the boys on

each side of the two great factions beginning to get frolicsome. Maybe the songs and the shouting, when they began, hadn't melody and music in them, any how! People may talk about harmony; but what harmony is equal to that in which five or six hundred men sing and shout, and leap and caper at each other, as a prelude to neighborly fighting, where they beat time upon the drums of each other's ears and heads with oak drumsticks? That's an Irishman's music; and hard fortune to the *garran** that wouldn't have friendship and kindness in him to join and play a *stave* along with them! 'Whoo; your sowl! Hurroo! Success to our side! Hi for the O'Callaghans! Where's the blackguard to—,' I beg pardon, decent reader; I forgot myself for a moment, or rather I got new life in me, for I am nothing at all at all for the last five months—a kind of nonentity I may say, ever since that vagabond Burges occasioned me to pay a visit to my distant relations, till my friends get that last matter of the collar-bone settled.

"The impulse which *faction* fighting gives to trade and business in Ireland is truly surprising; whereas *party* fighting depreciates both. As soon as it is perceived that a *party* fight is to be expected, all buying and selling are nearly suspended for the day; and those who are not *up*,† and even many who are, take themselves and their property home as quickly as may be convenient. But in a *faction* fight, as soon as there is any perspective of a row, depend upon it, there is quick work at all kinds of negotiation; and truly there is nothing like brevity and decision in buying and selling; for which reason, faction fighting, at all events, if only for the sake of national prosperity, should be encouraged and kept up.

"Towards five o'clock, if a man was placed on an exalted station, so that he could look at the crowd, *and wasn't able to fight*, he could have seen much that a man might envy him for. Here a hat went up, or maybe a dozen of them; then followed a general huzza. On the other side, two dozen *cauheens* sought the sky, like so many scaldy crows attempting their own element for the first time, only they were not so black. Then another shout, which was answered by that of their friends on the opposite side; so that you would hardly know which side huzzaed loudest, the blending of both was so truly symphonious. Now there was a shout for the face of an O'Callaghan; this was prosecuted on the very heels by another for the face of an O'Hallaghan. Immediately a man of the O'Hallaghan side doffed his tattered frieze, and catching it by the very extremity of the sleeve, drew it with a tact, known only by an initiation of half a dozen street days, up the pavement after him. On the instant, a blade from the O'Callaghan side *peeled* with equal alacrity, and stretching his *home-made** at full length after him, proceeded triumphantly up the street, to meet the other.

"Thunder-an-ages, what's this for, at all, at all! I wish I hadn't begun to manuscript an account of it, any how; 'tis like a hungry man dreaming of a good dinner at a feast, and afterwards awaking and finding his front ribs and back-bone on the point of union. Reader, is that a black-thorn you carry—tut, where is my imagination bound for?——to meet the other, I say.

"'Where's the rascally *O'Callaghan* that will place his toe or his shillely on this frieze?' 'Is there no blackguard *O'Hallaghan* jist to look *crucked* at the coat of an O'Callaghan, or say black's the white of his eye?'

"'Troth and there is, Ned, avourneen, that same on the sod here.'

"'Is that Barney?'

"'The same, Ned, ma bouchal; and how is your mother's son, Ned?'

"'In good health at the present time, thank God and you; how is yourself, Barney?'

"'Can't complain as time goes; only take this, any how, to mend your health, ma bouchal.' (Whack.)

"'Success, Barney, and here's at your sarvice, avick, not making little of what I got, any way.' (Crack.)

"About five o'clock on a May evening, in the fair of Knockimdowny, was the ice thus broken, with all possible civility, by Ned and Barney. The next moment a general rush took place towards the scene of action, and ere you could bless yourself, Barney and Ned were both down, weltering in their own and each other's blood. I scarcely know, indeed, though with a mighty respectable quota of experimentality myself, how to describe what followed. For the first twenty minutes the general harmony of this fine row might be set to music, according to a scale something like this:—Whick whack—crick crack—whick whack—crick crack—&c., &c., &c. 'Here yer sowl—(crack)—there yer sowl—(whack). Whoo for the O'Hallaghans!'—(crack, crack, crack). 'Hurroo for the O'Callaghans!—(whack, whack, whack). The O'Callaghans for ever!'—(whack). 'The

* Garran—a horse; but it is always used as meaning a bad one—one without mettle. When figuratively applied to a man, it means a coward.

† Initiated into Whiteboyism.

* Irish frieze is mostly manufactured at home, which accounts for the expression here.

O'Hallaghans for ever!'—(crack). 'Murther! murther!—(crick, crack)—foul! foul!—(whick, whack). Blood and turf!—(whack, whick) — tunther-an-ouns'— (crack, crick). 'Hurroo! my darlings! handle your kippeens—(crack, crack)—the O'Hallaghans are going!'—(whack, whack).

"You are to suppose them here to have been at it for about half an hour.

"Whack, crack—'oh—oh—oh! have mercy upon me, boys—(crack—a shriek of murther! murther—crack, crack, whack)—my life—my life—(crack, crack—whack, whack)—oh! for the sake of the living Father!—for the sake of my wife and childher, Ned Hallaghan, spare my life.'

"'So we will, but take this, any how'—(whack, crack, whack, crack).

"'Oh! for the love of God, don't kill—(whack, crack, whack). Oh!'—(crack, crack, whack—*dies*).

"'Huzza! huzza! huzza!' from the O'Hallaghans. 'Bravo, boys! there's one of them done for: whoo! my darlings! hurroo! the O'Hallaghans for ever!'

"The scene now changes to the O'Callaghan side.

"'Jack—oh, Jack, avourneen—hell to their sowls for murdherers—Paddy's killed—his skull's smashed! Revinge, boys, Paddy O'Callaghan's killed! On with you, O'Callaghans—on with you—on with you, Paddy O'Callaghan's murdhered—take to the stones—that's it—keep it up, down with him! Success!—he's the bloody villain that didn't show him marcy—that's it. Tunder-an-ouns, is it laving him that way you are afther—let *me* at him!'

"'Here's a stone, Tom!'

"'No, no, this stick has the lead in it. It'll *do* him, never fear!'

"'Let him alone, Barney, he's got enough.'

"'By the powdhers, it's myself that won't: didn't he kill Paddy?—(crack, crack). Take that, you murdhering thief!'—(whack, whack).

"'Oh!—(whack, crack)—my head—I'm killed—I'm'—(crack—*kicks the bucket*).

"'Now, your sowl, that does you, any way—(crack, whack)—hurro!—huzza!—huzza!—Man for man, boys—an O'Hallaghan's done for—whoo! for our side—tol-deroll, tol-deroll, tow, row, row—huzza!—tol-deroll, lol-deroll, tow, row, row, huzza for the O'Callaghans!'

"From this moment the battle became delightful; it was now pelt and welt on both sides, but many of the kippeens were broken: many of the boys had their fighting arms disabled by a dislocation, or bit of fracture, and those weren't equal to more than doing a little upon such as were down.

"In the midst of the din, such a dialogue as this might be heard:

"'Larry, you're after being done for, for this day.' (Whack, crack.)

"'Only an eye gone—is that Mickey?' (whick, whack, crick, crack.)

"'That's it, my darlings!—you may say that, Larry—'tis my mother's son that's in it—(crack, crack, a general huzza): (Mickey and Larry) huzza! huzza! huzza for the O'Hallaghans! What have *you* got, Larry?'—(crack, crack).

"'Only the bone of my arm, God be praised for it, very purtily snapt across!'—(whack, whack).

"'Is that all? Well, some people have luck!'—(crack, crack, crack).

"'Why I've no reason to complain, thank God—(whack, crack!)—purty play that, any way—Paddy O'Callaghan's settled—did you hear it?—(whack, whack, another shout)—That's it boys—handle the shilleleys!—Success O'Hallaghans—down with the bloody O'Callaghans!'

"'I did hear it: so is Jem O'Hallaghan—(crack, whack, whack, crack)—you're not able to get up, I see—tare-an-ourty, isn't it a pleasure to hear that play?—What ails you?'

"'Oh, Larry, I'm in great pain, and getting very weak, entirely'—(*faints*).

"'Faix, and he's settled too, I'm thinking.'

"'Oh, murdher, my arm!' (One of the O'Callaghans attacks him—crack, crack)——

"'Take that, you bagabone!'—(whack, whack).

"'Murdher, murdher, is it strikin' a *down* man you're after?—foul, foul, and my arm broke!'—(crack, crack).

"'Take that, with what you got before, and it'll ase you, maybe.'

"(A party of the O'Hallaghans attack the man who is beating him).

"'Murdher, murdher!'—(crack, whack, whack, crack, crack, whack).

"'Lay on him, your sowls to pirdition—lay on him, hot and heavy—give it to him! He struck me and me down wid my broken arm!'

"'Foul, ye thieves of the world!—(from the O'Callaghan)—foul! five against one—give me fair play!—(crack, crack, crack)—Oh!—(whack)—Oh, oh, oh!'—(falls senseless, covered with blood).

"'Ha, hell's cure to you, you bloody thief; you didn't spare me with my arm broke'—(Another general shout.) 'Bad end to it, isn't it a poor case entirely, that I can't even throw up my caubeen, let alone join in the diversion.'

"Both parties now rallied, and ranged themselves along the street, exhibiting a firm

compact phalanx, wedged close against each other, almost foot to foot. The mass was thick and dense, and the tug of conflict stiff, wild, and savage. Much natural skill and dexterity were displayed in their mutual efforts to preserve their respective ranks unbroken, and as the sallies and charges were made on both sides, the temporary rush, the indentation of the multitudinous body, and the rebound into its original position, gave an undulating appearance to the compact mass — reeking, dragging, groaning, and buzzing as it was, that resembled the serpentine motion of a rushing water-spout in the clouds.

"The women now began to take part with their brothers and sweethearts. Those who had no bachelors among the opposite factions, fought along with their brothers; others did not scruple even to assist in giving their enamored swains the father of a good beating. Many, however, were more faithful to love than to natural affection, and these sallied out, like heroines, under the banners of their sweethearts, fighting with amazing prowess against their friends and relations; nor was it at all extraordinary to see two sisters engaged on opposite sides — perhaps tearing each other as, with dishevelled hair, they screamed with a fury that was truly exemplary. Indeed it is no untruth to assert that the women do much valuable execution. Their manner of fighting is this—as soon as the fair one decides upon taking a part in the row, she instantly takes off her apron or her stocking, stoops down, and lifting the first four pounder she can get, puts it in the corner of her apron, or the foot of her stocking, if it has a foot, and marching into the scene of action, lays about her right and left. Upon my credibility, they are extremely useful and handy, and can give mighty nate knockdowns—inasmuch as no guard that a man is acquainted with can ward off their blows. Nay, what is more, it often happens, when a son-in-law is in a faction against his father-in-law and his wife's people generally, that if he and his wife's brother meet, the wife will clink him with the *pet* in her apron, downing her own husband with great skill, for it is not always that marriage extinguishes the hatred of factions; and very often 'tis the brother that is humiliated.

"Up to the death of these two men, John O'Callaghan and Rose's father, together with a large party of their friends on both sides, were drinking in a public-house, determined to take no portion in the fight, at all at all. Poor Rose, when she heard the shouting and terrible strokes, got as pale as death, and sat close to John, whose hand she captured in hers, beseeching him, and looking up in his face with the most imploring sincerity as she spoke, not to go out among them; the tears falling all the time from her fine eyes, the mellow flashes of which, when John's pleasantry in soothing her would seduce a smile, went into his very heart. But when, on looking out of the window where they sat, two of the opposing factions heard that a man on each side was killed; and when on ascertaining the names of the individuals, and of those who murdered them, it turned out that one of the murdered men was brother to a person in the room, and his murderer uncle to one of those in the window, it was not in the power of man or woman to keep them asunder, particularly as they were all rather advanced in liquor. In an instant the friends of the murdered man made a rush at the window, before any pacifiers had time to get between them, and catching the nephew of him who had committed the murder, hurled him head-foremost upon the stone pavement, where his skull was dashed to pieces, and his brains scattered about the flags!

"A general attack instantly took place in the room, between the two factions; but the apartment was too low and crowded to permit of proper fighting, so they rushed out to the street, shouting and yelling, as they do when the battle comes to the *real* point of doing business. As soon as it was seen that the heads of the O'Callaghan's and O'Hallaghans were at work as well as the rest, the fight was recommenced with retrebled spirit; but when the mutilated body of the man who had been flung from the window, was observed lying in the pool of his own proper brains and blood, such a cry arose among his friends, as would *cake** the vital fluid in the veins of any one not a party in the quarrel. Now was the work—the moment of interest —men and women groaning, staggering, and lying insensible; others shouting, leaping, and buzzaing; some singing, and not a few able-bodied spalpeens blurting, like overgrown children, on seeing their own blood; many raging and roaring about like bulls;—all this formed such a group as a faction fight, and nothing else, could represent.

"The battle now blazed out afresh; and all kinds of instruments were pressed into the service. Some got flails, some spades, some shovels, and one man got his hands upon a scythe, with which, unquestionably, he would have taken more lives than one; but, very fortunately, as he sallied out to join the crowd, he was politely visited in the back of the head by a brick-bat, which had a mighty convincing way with it of giving him

* Harden.

a peaceable disposition, for he instantly lay down, and did not seem at all anxious as to the result of the battle. The O'Hallaghans were now compelled to give way, owing principally to the introvention of John O'Callaghan, who, although he was as good as sworn to take no part in the contest, was compelled to fight merely to protect himself. But, blood-and-turf! when he *did* begin, he was dreadful. As soon as his party saw him engaged, they took fresh courage, and in a short time made the O'Hallaghan's retreat up the church-yard. I never saw anything equal to John; he absolutely sent them down in dozens; and when a man would give him any inconvenience with the stick, he would *down* him with the fist, for right and left were all alike to him. Poor Rose's brother and he met, both roused like two lions; but when John saw who it was, he held back his hand:—

"'No, Tom,' says he, 'I'll not strike *you*, for Rose's sake. I'm not fighting through ill will to you or your family; so take another direction, for I can't strike you.'

"The blood, however, was unfortunately up in Tom.

"'We'll decide it now,' said he, 'I'm as good a man as you, O'Callaghan: and let me whisper this in your ears—you'll never warm the one bed with Rose, while's God's in heaven—it's past that now—there can be nothing but blood between us!'

"At this juncture two of the O'Callaghans ran with their shillelaghs up, to beat down Tom on the spot.

"'Stop, boys!' said John, 'you mustn't touch him; he had no hand in the quarrel. Go, boys, if you respect me; lave him to myself.'

"The boys withdrew to another part of the fight; and the next instant Tom struck the very man that interfered to save him, across the temple, and cut him severely. John put his hand up and staggered.

"'I'm sorry for this,' he observed; 'but it's now self-defence with me;' and at the same moment, with one blow, he left Tom O'Hallaghan stretched insensible on the street.

"On the O'Hallaghans being driven to the church-yard, they were at a mighty great inconvenience for weapons. Most of them had lost their sticks, it being a usage in fights of this kind to twist the cudgels from the grasp of the beaten men, to prevent them from rallying. They soon, however, furnished themselves with the best they could find, videlicet, the skull, leg, thigh, and arm bones, which they found lying about the grave-yard. This was a new species of weapon, for which the majority of the O'Callaghans were scarcely prepared. Out they sallied in a body—some with these, others with stones, and making fierce assault upon their enemies, absolutely *druv* them back—not so much by the damage they were doing, as by the alarm and terror which these unexpected species of missiles excited.

"At this moment, notwithstanding the fatality that had taken place, nothing could be more truly comical and facetious than the appearance of the field of battle. Skulls were flying in every direction—so thick, indeed, that it might with truth be asseverated, that many who were petrified in the dust, had their skulls broken in this great battle between the factions.—God help poor Ireland! when its inhabitants are so pugnacious, that even the grave is no security against getting their crowns cracked, and their bones fractured! Well, any how, skulls and bones flew in every direction; stones and brick-bats were also put in motion; spades, shovels, loaded whips, pot-sticks, churn-staffs, flails, and all kinds of available weapons were in hot employment.

"But, perhaps, there was nothing more truly felicitous or original in its way than the mode of warfare adopted by little Neal Malone, who was tailor for the O'Callaghan side: for every tradesman is obliged to fight on behalf of his own faction. Big Frank Farrell, the miller, being on the O'Hallaghan side, had been sent for, and came up from his mill behind the town, quite fresh. He was never what could be called a *good man*,* though it was said that he could lift ten hundred weight. He puffed forward with a great cudgel, determined to commit slaughter out of the face, and the first man he met was the *weeshy* fraction of a tailor, as nimble as a hare. He immediately attacked him, and would probably have taken his measure for life had not the tailor's activity protected him. Farrell was in a rage, and Neal, taking advantage of his blind fury, slipped round him, and, with a short run, sprung upon the miller's back, and planted a foot upon the threshold of each coat pocket, holding by the mealy collar of his waistcoat. In this position he belabored the miller's face and eyes with his little hard fist to such purpose, that he had him in the course of a few minutes nearly as blind as a mill-horse. The miller roared for assistance, but the pell-mell was going on too warmly for his cries to be available. In fact, he resembled an elephant with a monkey on his back.

* A brave man. He was a man of huge size and prodigious strength, and died in consequence of an injury he received in lifting one of the cathedral bells at Clogher, which is said to be ten hundred-weight.

"'How do you like that, Farrell?' Neal would say, giving him a cuff—'and that, and that; but that is best of all. Take it again, gudgeon (two cuffs more)—here's grist for you (half a dozen additional)—hard fortune to you! (crack, crack.) What! going to lie down!—by all that's terrible, if you do, I'll *annigulate** *you!* Here's a *dhuragh*,† (another half dozen)—long measure, you savage!—the baker's dozen, you baste!—there's five-an'-twenty to the score, Sampson! and one or two in' (crack, whack).

"'Oh! murther sheery!' shouted the miller. 'Murther-an-age, I'm kilt! Foul play!—foul play!'

"'You lie, big Nebuchodonosor! it's not—this is all *fair* play, you big baste! *Fair* play, Sampson!—by the same a-token, here's to jog your memory that it's the *Fair* day of Knockimdowny! *Irish Fair* play, you whale! But I'll whale you' (crack, crack, whack).

"'Oh! oh!' shouted the miller.

"'Oh! oh! is it? Oh, if I had my scissors here till I'd clip your ears off—wouldn't I be the happy man, any how, you swab, you?' (whack, whack, crack).

"'Murther! murther! murther!' shouted the miller. 'Is there no help?'

"'Help, is it?—you may say that (crack crack): there's a trifle—a small taste in the *milling* style, you know; and here goes to dislodge a *grinder*. Did ye ever hear of the tailor on horseback, Sampson? eh? (whack, whack). Did you ever expect to see a tailor on horseback of yourself, you baste? (crack). I tell you, if you offer to lie down, I'll *annigulate* you out o' the face.'

"Never, indeed, was a miller before or since so well dusted; and, I dare say, Neal would have rode him long enough, but for an O'Hallaghan, who had gone into one of the houses to procure a weapon. This man was nearly as original in his choice of one as the tailor in the position which he selected for beating the miller. On entering the kitchen, he found that he had been anticipated: there was neither tongs, poker, nor churn-staff, nor, in fact, anything wherewith he could assault his enemies; all had been carried off by others. There was, however, a goose, in the action of being roasted on a spit at the fire: this was enough; Honest O'Hallaghan saw nothing but the spit, which he accordingly seized, goose and all, making the best of his way, so armed, to the scene of battle. He just came out of an entry as the miller was once more roaring for assistance, and, to a dead certainty, would have spitted the tailor like a cock-sparrow against the miller's carcase, had not his activity once more saved him. Unluckily, the unfortunate miller got the thrust behind which was intended for Neal, and roared like a bull. He was beginning to shout 'Foul play!' again, when, on turning round, he perceived that the thrust had not been intended for him, but for the tailor.

"'Give me that spit,' said he; 'by all the mills that ever were turned. I'll spit the tailor this blessed minute beside the goose, and we'll roast them both together.'

"The other refused to part with the spit, but the miller seizing the goose, flung it with all his force after the tailor, who stooped, however, and avoided the blow.

"'No man has a better right to the goose than the tailor,' said Neal, as he took it up, and, disappearing, neither he nor the goose could be seen for the remainder of the day.

"The battle was now somewhat abated. Skulls, and bones, and bricks, and stones, were, however, still flying; so that it might be truly said, the bones of contention were numerous. The streets presented a woeful spectacle: men were lying with their bones broken—others, though not so seriously injured, lappered in their blood—some were crawling up, but were instantly knocked down by their enemies—some were leaning against the walls, or groping their way silently along them, endeavoring to escape observation, lest they might be smashed down and altogether murdered. Wives were sitting with the bloody heads of their husbands in their laps, tearing their hair, weeping and cursing, in all the gall of wrath, those who left them in such a state. Daughters performed the said offices to their fathers, and sisters to their brothers; not pretermitting those who did not neglect their broken-pated bachelors to whom they paid equal attention. Yet was the scene not without abundance of mirth. Many a hat was thrown up by the O'Callaghan side, who certainly gained the day. Many a song was raised by those who tottered about with trickling sconces, half drunk with whiskey, and half stupid with beating. Many a 'whoo,' and 'hurroo,' and 'huzza,' was sent forth by the triumphanters; but truth to tell, they were miserably feeble and faint, compared to what they had been in the beginning of the amusement; sufficiently evincing that, although they might boast of

* Annihilate—Many of the jawbreakers—and this was one in a double sense—used by the hedge-schoolmasters, are scattered among the people, by whom they were so twisted that it would be extremely difficult to recognize them.

† Dhuragh—An additional portion of anything thrown in from a spirit of generosity, after the measure agreed on is given. When the miller, for instance, receives his toll, the country-people usually throw in several handfuls of meal as a *Dhuragh*.

the name of victory, they had got a bellyful of beating; still there was hard fighting.

"I mentioned, some time ago, that a man had adopted a scythe. I wish from my heart there had been no such bloody instrument there that day; but truth must be told. John O'Callaghan was now engaged against a set of the other O's, who had rallied for the third time, and attacked him and his party. Another brother of Rose Galh's was in this engagement, and him did John O'Callaghan not only knock down, but cut desperately across the temple. A man, stripped, and covered with blood and dust, at that moment made his appearance, his hand bearing the blade of the aforesaid scythe. His approach was at once furious and rapid, and I may as well add, fatal; for before John O'Callaghan had time to be forewarned of his danger, he was cut down, the artery of his neck laid open, and he died without a groan. It was truly dreadful, even to the oldest fighter present, to see the strong rush of red blood that curvated about his neck, until it gurgled, gurgled, gurgled, and lappered, and bubbled out, ending in small red spouts, blackening and blackening, as they became fainter and more faint. At this criticality, every eye was turned from the corpse to the murderer; but *he* had been instantly struck down, and a female, with a large stone in her apron, stood over him, her arms stretched out, her face horribly distorted with agony, and her eyes turned backwards, as it were, into her head. In a few seconds she fell into strong convulsions, and was immediately taken away. Alas! alas! it was Rose Galh; and when we looked at the man she had struck down, he was found to be her brother! flesh of her flesh, and blood of her blood! On examining him more closely, we discovered that his underjaw hung loose, that his limbs were supple; we tried to make him speak, but in vain—he too was a corpse.

"The fact was, that in consequence of his being stripped, and covered by so much blood and dust, she knew him not; and, impelled by her feelings to avenge herself on the murderer of her lover, to whom she doubly owed her life, she struck him a deadly blow, without knowing him to be her brother. The shock produced by seeing her lover murdered, and the horror of finding that she herself, in avenging him, had taken her brother's life, was too much for a heart so tender as hers. On recovering from her convulsions, her senses were found to be gone for ever! Poor girl! she is still living; but from that moment to this, she has never opened her lips to mortal. She is, indeed, a fair ruin, but silent, melancholy, and beautiful as the moon in the summer heaven. Poor Rose Galh! you and many a mother, and father, and wife, and orphan, have had reason to maledict the *bloody Battles of the Factions.*

"With regard to my grandfather, he says that he didn't see purtier fighting within his own memory; not since the fight between himself and Big Mucklemurray took place in the same town. But, to do him justice, he condemns the scythe and every other weapon except the cudgels; because, he says, that if they continue to be resorted to, nate fighting will be altogether forgotten in the country."

[It was the original intention of the author to have made every man in the humble group about Ned M'Keown's hearth narrate a story illustrating Irish life, feeling, and manners; but on looking into the matter more closely, he had reason to think that such a plan, however agreeable for a time, would ultimately narrow the sphere of his work, and perhaps fatigue the reader by a superfluity of Irish dialogue and its peculiarities of phraseology. He resolved therefore, at the close of the Battle of the Factions, to abandon his original design, and leave himself more room for description and observation.]

THE STATION.

Our readers are to suppose the Reverend Philemy M'Guirk, parish priest of Tir-neer, to be standing upon the altar of the chapel, facing the congregation, after having gone through the canon of the Mass; and having nothing more of the service to perform, than the usual prayers with which he closes the ceremony.

"Take notice, that the Stations for the following week will be held as follows:—

"*On Monday, in Jack Gallagher's of Corraghnamuddagh.* Are you there, Jack?"

"To the fore, yer Reverence."

"Why, then, Jack, there's something ominous—something auspicious—to happen, or we wouldn't have you here; for it's very

seldom that you make part or parcel of this *present* congregation; seldom are you here, Jack, it must be confessed: however, you know the old classical proverb, or if *you* don't, *I* do, which will just answer as well—*Non semper ridet Apollo*—it's not every day *Manus* kills a bullock; so, as you *are* here, be prepared for us on Monday."

"Never fear, yer Reverence, never fear; I think you ought to know that the grazin' at Corraghnamoddagh's not bad."

"To do you justice, Jack, the mutton was always good with you, only if you would get it better killed it would be an improvement. Get Tom McCusker to kill it, and then it'll have the right smack."

"Very well, yer Rev'rence, I'll do it."

"*On Tuesday, in Peter Murtagh's of the Crooked Commons.* Are you there, Peter?"

"Here, yer Reverence."

"Indeed, Peter, I might know you are here; and I wish that a great many of *my* flock would take example by you: if they did, I wouldn't be so far behind in getting in my *dues*. Well, Peter, I suppose you know that this is Michaelmas?" *

"So fat, yer Reverence, that they're not able to wag; but, any way, Katty has them marked for you—two fine young crathurs, only this year's fowl, and the ducks isn't a taste behind them—she crammin' them this month past."

"I believe you, Peter, and I would take your word for more than the condition of the geese. Remember me to Katty, Peter."

"*On Wednesday, in Parrah More Slevin's of Mullaghfadh.* Are you there, Parrah More?"—No answer. "Parrah More Slevin?"—Silence. "Parrah More Slevin, of Mullaghfadh?"—No reply. "Dan Fagan?"

"Present, sir."

"Do you know what keeps that reprobate from mass?"

"I bleeve he's takin' advantage, sir, of the frost, to get in his praties to-day, in respect of the bad footin', sir, for the horses in the bog when there's not a frost. Any how, betune that and a bit of a sore head that he got, yer Reverence, on Thursday last in takin' part wid the O'Scallaghans agin the Bradys, I bleeve he had to stay away to-day."

"On the Sabbath day, too, without my leave! Well, tell him from me, that I'll make an example of him to the whole parish, if he doesn't attend mass better. Will the Bradys and the O'Scallaghans never be done with their quarrelling? I protest, if they don't live like Christians, I'll read them out from the altar. Will you tell Parrah More that I'll hold a station in his house on next Wednesday?"

"I will, sir; I will, yer Reverence."

"*On Thursday, in Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy's of the Esker.* Are you there, Phaddhy?"

"Wid the help of God, I'm here, sir."

"Well, Phaddhy, how is yer son Briney, that's at the Latin? I hope he's coming on well at it."

"Why, sir, he's not more nor a year and a half at it yet, and he's got more books amost nor he can carry; he'll break me buying books for him."

"Well, that's a good sign, Phaddhy; but why don't you bring him to me till I examine him?"

"Why, never a one of me can get him to come, sir, he's so much afeard of yer Reverence."

"Well, Phaddhy, we were once modest and bashful ourselves, and I'm glad to hear that he's afraid of his *clargy*; but let him be prepared for me on Thursday, and maybe I'll let him know something he never heard before; I'll open his eyes for him."

"Do you hear that, Briney?" said the father, aside to the son, who knelt at his knee; "you must give up yer hurling and idling now, you see. Thank yer Reverence; thank you, docthor."

"*On Friday, in Barny O'Darby's*, alias *Barny Butters.* Are you there, Barny?"

"All that's left of me is here, sir."

"Well, Barny, how is the butter trade this season?"

"It's a little on the rise, now, sir: in a month or so I'm expecting it will be brisk enough. *Boney*, sir, is doing that much for us anyway."

"Ay, and, Barny, he'll do more than that for us: God prosper *him* at all events; I only hope the time's coming, Barny, when every one will be able to eat his own butter, and his own beef, too."

"God send it, sir."

"Well, Barny, I didn't hear from your brother Ned these two or three months; what has become of him?"

"Ah, yer Reverence, Pentland done him up."

"What! the gauger?"

"He did, the thief; but maybe he'll sup sorrow for it, afore he's much oulder."

"And who do you think informed, Barny?"

"Oh, I only wish we knew that, sir."

"I wish *I* knew it, and if I thought any miscreant here would become an *informer*, I'd make an example of him. Well, Barny, on Friday next: but I suppose Ned has a drop still—eh, Barny?"

* Michaelmas is here jocularly alluded to as that period of the year when geese are fattest.

"Why, sir, we'll be apt to have something stronger nor wather, anyhow."

"Very well, Barny; your family was always a dacent and spirited family. I'll say that for them; but, tell me, Barny, did you begin to *dam* the river yet?* I think the trouts and eels are running by this time."

"The creels are made, yer Reverence, though we did not set them yet; but on Tuesday night, sir, wid the help o' God, we'll be ready."

"You can *corn* the trouts, Barny, and the eels too; but should you catch nothing, go to Pat Hartigan, Captain Sloethorn's gamekeeper, and, if you tell him it's for me, he'll drag you a batch out of the fish-pond."

"Ah! then, you're Reverence, it's himself that'll do that wid a heart an' a half."

Such was the conversation which took place between the Reverend Philemy M'Guirk, and those of his parishioners in whose houses he had appointed to hold a series of Stations, for the week ensuing the Sunday laid in this our account of that hitherto undescribed portion of the Romish discipline.

Now, the reader is to understand, that a station in this sense differs from a station made to any peculiar spot remarkable for local sanctity. There, a station means the performance of a pilgrimage to a certain place, under peculiar circumstances, and the going through a stated number of prayers and other penitential ceremonies, for the purpose of wiping out sin in this life, or of relieving the soul of some relation from the pains of purgatory in the other; here, it simply means the coming of the parish priest and his curate to some house in the townland, on a day publicly announced from the altar for that purpose, on the preceding Sabbath.

This is done to give those who live within the district in which the station is held an opportunity of *coming to their duty*, as frequenting the ordinance of confession is emphatically called. Those who attend confession in this manner once a year, are considered *merely* to have done their duty; it is expected, however, that they should *approach the tribunal*,† as it is termed, at least twice during that period, that is, at the two great festivals of Christmas and Easter. The observance or omission of this rite among Roman Catholics, establishes, in a great degeee, the nature of individual character. The man who frequents his duty will seldom be pronounced a bad man, let his conduct and principles be what they may in other respects; and he who neglects it, is looked upon, by those who attend it, as in a state little short of reprobation.

When the "giving out" of the stations was over, and a few more jests were broken by his Reverence, to which the congregation paid the tribute of a general and uproarious laugh, he turned round, and resumed the performance of the mass, whilst his "flock" began to finger their beads with faces as grave as if nothing of the kind had occurred. When mass was finished, and the holy water sprinkled upon the people, out of a tub carried by the mass-server through the chapel for that purpose, the priest gave them a Latin benediction, and they dispersed.

Now, of the five individuals in whose houses the "stations" were appointed to be held, we will select *Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy* for our purpose; and this we do, because it was the first time in which a station was ever kept in his house, and consequently *Phaddhy* and his wife had to undergo the initiatory ceremony of entertaining Father *Philemy* and his curate, the Reverend *Con M'Coul*, at dinner.

Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy had been, until a short time before the period in question, a very poor man; but a little previous to that event, a brother of his, who had no children, died very rich—that is, for a farmer—and left him his property, or, at least, the greater part of it. While Phaddhy was poor, it was surprising what little notice he excited from his Reverence; in fact, I have heard him acknowledge, that during all the days of his poverty, he never got a nod of recognition or kindness from Father Philemy, although he sometimes did, he said, from Father Con, his curate, who honored him on two occasions so far as to challenge him to a bout at throwing the shoulder-stone, and once to a leaping match, at both of which exercises Father Con, but for the superior power of Phaddhy, had been unrivalled.

"It was an unlucky day to him," says Phaddy, "that he went to challenge me, at all at all; for I was the only man that ever bate him, and he wasn't able to hould up his head in the parish for many a day after."

As soon, however, as Phaddhy became a man of substance, one would almost think that there had been a secret relationship between his good fortune and Father Philemy's memory; for, on their first meeting, after

* It is usual among the peasantry to form, about Michaelmas, small artificial cascades, called *dams*, under which they place long, deep, wicker creels, shaped like inverted cones, for the purpose of securing the fish that are now on their return to the large rivers, after having deposited their spawn in the higher and remoter streams. It is surprising what a number of fish, particularly of eels, are caught in this manner—sometimes from one barrel to three in the course of a single night!

† That is, of confession—so going to confession is termed by the priests.

Phaddhy's getting the property, the latter shook him most cordially by the hand—a proof that, had not his recollection been as much improved as Phaddhy's circumstances, he could by no means have remembered him; but this is a failing in the memory of many, as well as in that of Father Philemy. Phaddhy, however, *was no Donnell*, to use his own expression, and saw as far into a deal board as another man.

"And so, Phaddy," said the priest, "how are all your family?—six you have, I think?"

"Four, your Rev'rence, only four," said Phaddy, winking at Tim Dillon, his neighbor, who happened to be present—"three boys an' one girl."

"Bless my soul, and so it is indeed, Phaddy, and I ought to know it; an how is your wife Sarah?—I mean, I hope Mrs. Sheemus Phaddhy is well: by the by, is that old complaint of hers gone yet?—a pain in the stomach, I think it was, that used to trouble her; I hope in God, Phaddhy, she's getting over it, poor thing. Indeed, I remember telling her, last Easter, when she came to her duty, to eat oaten bread and butter with water-grass every morning *fasting*, it cured myself of the same complaint."

"Why, thin, I'm very much obliged to your Rev'rence for purscribin' for her," replied Phaddhy; "for, sure enough, she has neither pain nor ache, at the present time, for the best rason in the world, docthor, that she'll be dead jist seven years, if God spares your Rev'rence an' myself till to-morrow fortnight, about five o'clock in the mornin'."

This was more than Father Philemy could stand with a good conscience, so after getting himself out of the dilemma as well as he could, he shook Phaddhy again very cordially by the hand, saying, "Well, good-bye, Phaddhy, and God be good to poor Sarah's soul—I now remember her funeral, sure enough, and a decent one it was, for indeed she was a woman that had everybody's good word—and, between you and me, she made a happy death, that's as far as we can judge here; for, after all, there may be danger, Phaddy, there may be danger, you understand—however, it's your own business, and your duty, too, to think of that; but I believe you're not the man that would be apt to forget her."

"Phaddhy, ye thief o' the world," said, Tim Dillon, when Father Philemy was gone, "there's no comin' up to ye; how could you make sich a fool of his Rev'rence, as to tell 'im that Katty was dead, and that you had only four childher, an' you has eleven o' them, an' the wife in good health?"

"Why, jist, Tim," replied Phaddhy, with his usual shrewdness, "to tache his Rev'rence himself to practise truth a little; if he didn't know that I got the stockin' of guineas and the Linaskey farm by my brother Barney's death, do ye think that he'd notish me at all at all?—not himself, avick; an' maybe he won't be afther comin' round to me for a sack of my best oats,* instead of the bushel I used to give him, and houldin' a couple of stations wid me every year."

"But won't he go mad when he hears you tould him nothing but lies?"

"Not now, Tim," answered Phaddhy—"not now; thank God, I'm not a poor man, an' he'll keep his temper. I'll warrant you the horsewhip won't be up now, although, afore this, I wouldn't say but it might—though the poorest day I ever was, 'id's myself that wouldn't let priest or friar lay a horsewhip to my back, an' that *you* know, Tim."

Phaddhy's sagacity, however, was correct; for, a short time after this conversation, Father Philemy, when collecting his oats, gave him a call, laughed heartily at the sham account of Katty's death, examined young Briney in his Latin, who was called after his uncle, pronounced him very *cute*, and likely to become a great scholar—promised his interest with the bishop to get him into Maynooth, and left the family, after having shaken hands with, and stroked down the heads of, all the children.

When Phaddhy, on the Sunday in question, heard the public notice given of the Station about to be held in his house, notwithstanding his correct knowledge of Father Philemy's character, on which he looked with a competent portion of contempt, he felt a warmth of pride about his heart, that arose from the honor of having a station, and of entertaining the clergy, in their official capacity, under his own roof, and at his own expense—that gave him, he thought, a personal consequence, which even the "stockin' of guineas" and the Linaskey farm were unable, of themselves, to confer upon him. He did enjoy, 'tis true, a very fair portion of happiness on succeeding to his brother's property; but this would be a triumph over the envious and ill-natured remarks which several of his neighbors and distant relations had taken the liberty of indulging in against

* The priest accompanied by a couple of servants, each with a horse and sack, collects from such of his parishioners as can afford it, a quantity of oats, varying with the circumstances of the donor. This collection—called Questing—is voluntary on the part of his parishioners, who may refuse it if they wish; very few are found, however, hardy enough to risk the obloquy of declining to contribute, and the consequence is that the custom operates with as much force as if it were legal and compulsory.

him, on the occasion of his good fortune. He left the chapel, therefore, in good spirits, whilst Briney, on the contrary, hung a lip of more melancholy pendency than usual, in dread apprehension of the examination that he expected to be inflicted on him by his Reverence at the station.

Before I introduce the conversation which took place between Phaddhy and Briney, as they went home, on the subject of this literary ordeal, I must observe, that there is a custom, hereditary in some Irish families, of calling fathers by their *Christian* names, instead of by the usual appellation of "father." This usage was observed, not only by Phaddhy and his son, but by all the Phaddys of that family, generally. Their surname was *Doran*, but in consequence of the great numbers in that part of the country who bore the same name, it was necessary as of old, to distinguish the several branches of it by the Christian names of their fathers and grandfathers, and sometimes this distinction went as far back as the great-grandfather. For instance—Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy, meant Phaddhy, the son of Sheemus, the son of Phaddhy; and his son, Briney, was called, Brian Phaddy Sheemus Phaddy, or, *anglice*, Bernard the son of Patrick, the son of James, the son of Patrick. But the custom of children calling fathers, in a *viva voce* manner, by their Christian names, was independent of the other more general usage of the patronymic.

"Well, Briney," said Phaddy, as the father and son returned home, cheek by jowl from the chapel, "I suppose Father Philemy will go very deep in the Latin wid ye on Thursday; do ye think ye'll be able to answer him?"

"Why, Phaddhy," replied Briney, "how could *I* be able to answer a clargy?—doesn't he know all the languages, and I'm only in the *Fibulæ Æsiopii* yet."

"Is that Latin or Greek, Briney?"

"It's Latin, Phaddhy."

"And what's the translation of that?"

"It signifies the Fables of Æsiopius."

"Bliss my sowl! and Briney, did ye conster that out of yer own head?"

"Hogh! that's little of it. If ye war to hear me consther *Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock?"

"And, Briney, are ye in Greek at all yet?"

"No, Phaddhy, I'll not be in Greek till I'm in Virgil and Horace, and thin I'll be near finished."

"And how long will it be till that, Briney?"

"Why, Phaddhy, you know I'm only a year and a half at the Latin, and in two years more I'll be in the Greek."

"Do ye think will ye ever be as larned as Father Philemy, Briney?"

"Don't ye know whin I'm a clargy I will; but I'm only a *lignum sacerdotis* yet, Phaddhy."

"What's *ligdum saucerdotis*, Briney?"

"A block of a priest, Phaddhy."

"Now, Briney, I suppose Father Philemy knows everything."

"Ay, to be sure he does; all the languages that's spoken through the world, Phaddhy."

"And must all the priests know them, Briney?—how many are they?"

"Seven—sartainly, every priest must know them, or how could they lay the divil, if he'd spake to them in a tongue they couldn't understand, Phaddhy?"

"Ah, I declare, Briney, I see it now; only for that, poor Father Philip, the heavens be his bed, wouldn't be able to lay ould Warnock, that haunted Squire Sloethorn's stables."

"Is that when the two horses was stole, Phaddhy?"

"The very time, Briney; but God be thanked, Father Philip settled him to the day of judgment."

"And where did he put him, Phaddhy?"

"Why, he wanted to be put anundher the hearth-stone; but Father Philip made him walk away with himself into a thumb-bottle, and tied a stone to it, and then sent him to where he got a cooling, the thief, at the bottom of the lough behind the house."

"Well, I'll tell you what I'm thinking I'll be apt to do, Phaddhy, when I'm a clargy."

"And what is that, Briney?"

"Why, I'll—but, Phaddhy, don't be talking of this, bekase, if it should come to be known, I might get my brains knocked out by some of the heretics."

"Never fear, Briney, there's no danger of *that*—but what is it?"

"Why, I'll translate all the Protestants into asses, and then we'll get our hands *rest* of them altogether."

"Well, that flogs for cuteness, and it's a wondher the clargy * doesn't do it, and thim has the power; for 'twould give us pace entirely. But, Briney, will you speak in Latin to Father Philemy on Thursday?"

"To tell you the thruth, Phaddhy, I would rather he wouldn't examine me this bout, at all at all."

"Ay, but you know we couldn't go agin him, Briney, bekase he promised to get you into the college. Will you speak some Latin now till I hear you?"

* I have no hesitation in asserting that the bulk of the uneducated peasantry really believe that the priests have this power.

"Hem!—*Verbum personaley cohairit cum nomnatibo numbera at persona at nunquam sera yeast at bonis moras voia.*"

"Bless my heart!—and, Briney, where's that taken from?"

"From Syntax, Phaddhy."

"And who *was* Shintax—do you know, Briney?"

"He was a Roman, Phaddhy, bekase there's a Latin prayer in the beginning of the book."

"Ay, was he—a priest, I'll warrant him. Well, Briney, do you mind yer Latin, and get on wid yer larnin', and when you grow up you'll have a pair of boots, and a horse of your own (and a good broadcloth black coat, too) to ride on, every bit as good as Father Philemy's, and may be betther nor Father Con's."

From this point, which usually wound up these colloquies between the father and son, the conversation generally diverged into the more spacious fields of science; so that by the time they reached home, Briney had probably given the father a learned dissertation upon the elevation of the clouds above the earth, and told him within how many thousand miles they approached it, at their nearest point of approximation.

"Katty," said Phaddhy, when he got home, "we're to have a station here on Thursday next: 'twas given out from the altar to-day by Father Philemy."

"Oh, wurrah, wurrah!" exclaimed Katty, overwhelmed at the consciousness of her own incapacity to get up a dinner in sufficient style for such guests—"wurrah, wurrah! Phaddhy, ahagur, what on the livin' earth will we do at all at all! Why, we'll never be able to manage it."

"Arrah, why, woman; what do they want but their skinful to eat and dhrink, and I'm sure we're able to allow them that, any way?"

"Arrah, bad manners to me, but you're enough to vex a saint—'their skinful to eat and dhrink!'—you common crathur you, to speak that way of the clargy, as if it was ourselves or the laborers you war spaking of."

"Ay, and aren't we every bit as good as they are, if you go to that?—haven't we sowls to be saved as well as themselves?"

"'As good as they are!'—as good as the clargy!! *Manum a yea agus a wurrah!**—listen to what he says! Phaddhy, take care of yourself, you've got rich, now; but for all that, take care of yourself. You had betther not bring the priest's ill-will, or his bad heart upon us. You know they never thruv that had it; and maybe it's a short time your riches might stay wid you, or maybe it's a short time you might stay wid them: at any rate, God forgive you, and I hope he will, for making use of sich unsanctified words to your lawful clargy."

"Well, but what do you intind to do?—or, what do you think of getting for them?" inquired Phaddy.

"Indeed, it's very little matther what I get for them, or what I'll do either—sorrow one of myself cares almost: for a man in his senses, that ought to know better, to make use of such low language about the blessed and holy crathurs, that hasn't a stain of sin about them, no more than the child unborn!"

"So *you* think."

"So *I* think! aye, and it would be betther for you that you thought so, too; but ye don't know what's before ye yet, Phaddhy; and now take warnin' in time, and mend your life."

"Why what do you see wrong in my life? Am I a drunkard? am I lazy? did ever I neglect my business? was I ever bad to you or to the childher? didn't I always give yez yer fill to ate, and kept yez as well clad as yer neighbors that was richer? Don't I go to my knees, too, every night and morning?"

"That's true enough, but what signifies it all? When did ye cross a priest's foot to go to your duty? Not for the last five years, Phaddhy—not since poor Torly (God be good to him) died of the mazles, and that'll be five years, a fortnight before Christmas."

"And what are you the betther of all yer confessions? Did they ever mend yer temper, avourneen? no, indeed, Katty, but you're ten times worse tempered coming back from the priest than before you go to him."

"Oh! Phaddhy! Phaddhy! God look down upon you this day, or any man that's in yer hardened state—I see there's no use in spaking to you, for you'll still be the ould cut."

"Ay, will I; so you may as well give up talking about it. Arrah, woman!" said Phaddhy, raising his voice, "who does it ever make betther—show me a man now in all the neighborhood, that's a pin-point the holier of it? Isn't there Jemmy Shields, that goes to *his duty* wanst a month, malivogues his wife and family this minute, and then claps them to a Rosary the next; but the ould boy's a thrifle to him of a fast day, after coming from the priest. Betune ourselves, Katty, you're not much behind him."

Katty made no reply to him, but turned up her eyes, and crossed herself, at the wickedness of her unmanageable husband.

"Well, Briney," said she, turning abrupt-

* My soul to God and the Virgin.

ly to the son, "don't take patthern by that man, if you expect to do any good; let him be a warning to you to mind yer duty, and respect yer clargy—and prepare yerself, now that I think of it, to go to Father Philemy or Father Con on Thursday: but don't be said or led by that man, for I'm sure I dunna how he intends to face the Man above when he laves this world—and to keep from his duty, and to spake of his clargy as he does!"

There are few men without their weak sides. Phaddhy, although the priests were never very much his favorites, was determined to give what he himself called *a let-out* on this occasion, simply to show his ill-natured neighbors that, notwithstanding their unfriendly remarks, he knew "what it was to be dacent," as well as his betters; and Katty seconded him in his resolution, from her profound veneration for the *clargy*.

Every preparation was accordingly entered into, and every plan adopted that could possibly be twisted into a capability of contributing to the entertainment of Fathers Philemy and Con.

One of those large, round, stercoraceous nosegays that, like many other wholesome plants, make up by odor what is wanting in floral beauty, and which lay rather too *contagious* as Phaddhy expressed it, to the door of his house, was transplanted by about half a dozen laborers, and as many barrows, in the course of a day or two, to a bed some yards distant from the spot of its first growth; because, without any reference whatever to the nasal sense, it was considered that it might be rather an *eye-sore* to their Reverences, on approaching the door. Several concave inequalities, which constant attrition had worn in the earthen floor of the kitchen, were filled up with blue clay, brought on a car from the bank of a neighboring river, for the purpose. The dresser, chairs, tables, pots, and pans, all underwent a rigor of discipline, as if some remarkable event was about to occur; nothing less, it must be supposed than a complete domestic revolution, and a new state of things. Phaddhy himself cut two or three large furze bushes, and, sticking them on the end of a pitchfork, attempted to sweep down the chimney. For this purpose he mounted on the back of a chair, that he might be able to reach the top with more ease; but, in order that his footing might be firm, he made one of the servant-men sit upon the chair, to keep it steady during the operation. Unfortunately, however, it so happened that this man was needed to assist in removing a meal-chest to another part of the house; this was under Katty's superintendence, who, seeing the fellow sit rather more at his ease than she thought the hurry and importance of the occasion permitted, called him, with a little of her usual sharpness and energy, to assist in removing the chest. For some reason or other, which it is not necessary to mention here, the fellow bounced from his seat, in obedience to the shrill tones of Katty, and the next moment Phaddhy (who was in a state of abstraction in the chimney, and totally unconscious of what was going forward below) made a descent decidedly contrary to the nature of that which most aspirants would be inclined to relish. A severe stun, however, was the most serious injury he received on his own part, and several round oaths, with a good drubbing, fell to the servant; but unluckily he left the furze bush behind him in the highest and narrowest part of the chimney; and were it not that an active fellow succeeded in dragging it up from the outside of the roof, the chimney ran considerable risk, as Katy said, of being choked.

But along with the lustration which every fixture within the house was obliged to undergo, it was necessary that all the youngsters should get new clothes; and for this purpose, Jemmy Lynch, the tailor, with his two journeymen and three apprentices, were sent for in all haste, that he might fit Phaddhy and each of his six sons, in suits, from a piece of home-made frieze, which Katty did not intend to break up till "towards Christmas."

A station is no common event, and accordingly the web was cut up, and the tailor left a wedding-suit, half-made, belonging to Edy Dolan, a thin old bachelor, who took it into his head to try his hand at becoming a husband ere he'd die. As soon as Jemmy and his train arrived, a door was taken off the hinges, and laid on the floor, for himself to sit upon, and a new drugget quilt was spread beside it, for his journeymen and apprentices. With nimble fingers they plied the needle and thread, and when night came, a turf was got, into which was stuck a piece of rod, pointed at one end and split at the other; the "the white candle," slipped into a shaving of the fringe that was placed in the cleft end of the stick, was then lit, whilst many a pleasant story, told by Jemmy, who had been once in Dublin for six weeks, delighted the circle of lookers-on that sat around them.

At length the day previous to the important one arrived. Hitherto, all hands had contributed to make every thing in and about the house look "dacent"—scouring, washing, sweeping, pairing, and repairing, had been all disposed of. The boys got their hair

cut to the quick with the tailor's scissors; and such of the girls as were not full grown, got only that which grew on the upper part of the head taken off, by a cut somewhat resembling the clerical tonsure, so that they looked extremely wild and unsettled, with their straight locks projecting over their ears; every thing, therefore, of the less important arrangements had been gone through—but the weighty and momentous concern was as yet unsettled.

This was the feast; and alas! never was the want of experience more strongly felt than here. Katty was a bad cook, even to a proverb; and bore so indifferent a character in the country for cleanliness, that very few would undertake to eat her butter. Indeed, she was called Katty *Sallagh** on this account: however, this prejudice, whether ill or well founded, was wearing fast away, since Phaddhy had succeeded to the stocking of guineas, and the Lisnaskey farm. It might be, indeed, that her former poverty helped her neighbors to see this blemish more clearly: but the world is so seldom in the habit of judging people's qualities or failings through this uncharitable medium, that the supposition is rather doubtful. Be this as it may, the arrangements for the breakfast and dinner must be made. There was plenty of bacon, and abundance of cabbages—eggs, *ad infinitum*—oaten and wheaten bread in piles—turkeys, geese, pullets, as fat as aldermen—cream as rich as Crœsus—and three gallons of poteen, one sparkle of which, as Father Philemy said in the course of the evening, would lay the hairs on St. Francis himself in his most self-negative mood, if he saw it. So far so good: everything excellent and abundant in its way. Still the higher and more refined items—the *deliciæ epularum*—must be added. *White bread*, and tea, and sugar, were yet to be got; and lump-sugar for the punch; and a tea-pot and cups and saucers to be borrowed; all which was accordingly done.

Well, suppose everything disposed for to-morrow's feast;—suppose Phaddhy himself to have butchered the fowl, because Katty, who was not able to bear the sight of blood, had not the heart to kill "the cratburs:" and imagine to yourself one of the servant men taking his red-hot tongs out of the fire, and squeezing a large lump of hog's lard, placed in a grisset, or *Kam*, on the hearth, to grease all their brogues; then see in your mind's eye those two fine, fresh-looking girls, slyly take their old rusty fork out of the fire, and going to a bit of three-corned looking-glass, pasted into a board, or, perhaps, to a pail of water, there to curl up their rich-flowing locks, that had hitherto never known a curl but such as nature gave them.

On one side of the hob sit two striplings, "thryin' wan another in their catechiz," that they may be able to answer, with some credit, to-morrow. On the other hob sits Briney, hard at his syntax, with the *Fibulæ Æsiopii*, as he called it, placed open at a particular passage, on the seat under him, with a hope that, when Philemy will examine him, the book may open at his favorite fable of "*Gallus Gallinaceus*—a dung-hill cock." Phaddy himself is obliged to fast this day, there being one day of his penance yet unperformed, since the last time he was at his duty; which was, as aforesaid, about five years: and Katty, now that everything is cleaned up and ready, kneels down in a corner to go over her beads, rocking herself in a placid silence that is only broken by an occasional malediction against the servants, or the cat, when it attempts the abduction of one of the dead fowl.

The next morning the family were up before the sun, who rubbed his eyes, and swore that he must have overslept himself, on seeing such a merry column of smoke dancing over Phaddhy's chimney. A large wooden dish was placed upon the threshold of the kitchen door, filled with water, in which, with a trencher of oatmeal for soap,* they successively scrubbed their faces and hands to some purpose. In a short time afterwards, Phaddhy and the sons were cased, stiff and awkward, in their new suits, with the tops of their fingers just peeping over the sleeve cuffs. The horses in the stable were turned out to the fields, being obliged to make room for their betters, that were soon expected under the reverend bodies of Father Philemy and his curate; whilst about half a bushel of oats was left in the manger, to regale them on their arrival. Little Richard Maguire was sent down to the *five-acres*, with the pigs, on purpose to keep them from about the house, they not being supposed fit company at a set-dinner. A roaring turf fire, which blazed two yards up the chimney, had been put down; on this was placed a large pot, filled with water for the tea, because they had no kettle.

By this time the morning was tolerably advanced, and the neighbors were beginning to arrive in twos and threes, to wipe out old scores. Katty had sent several of the gorsoons "to see if they could see any sight of the clargy," but hitherto their Reverences were invisible. At length, after several fruit-

* Dirty Katty.

* Fact. Oatmeal is in general substituted for soap, by those who cannot afford to buy the latter.

less embassies of this description, Father Con was seen jogging along on his easy-going hack, engaged in the perusal of *his Office*, previous to his commencing the duties of the day. As soon as his approach was announced, a chair was immediately placed for him in a room off the kitchen—the parlor, such as it was, having been reserved for Father Philemy himself, as the place of greater honor. This was an arrangement, however, which went against the grain of Phaddhy, who, had he got his will, would have established Father Con in the most comfortable apartment of the house: but that old vagabond, human nature, is the same under all circumstances—or, as Katty would have (in her own phraseology) expressed it, "still the ould cut;" for even there the influence of rank and elevation was sufficient to throw merit into the shade; and the parlor-seat was allotted to Father Philemy, merely for being Parish Priest, although it was well known that he could not "*tare off*" * mass in half the time that Father Con could, nor throw a sledge, or shoulder-stone within a perch of him, nor scarcely clear a street-channel, whilst the latter could jump one-and-twenty feet at a running leap. But these are rubs which men of merit must occasionally bear; and, when exposed to them, they must only rest satisfied in the consciousness of their own deserts.

From the moment that Father Con became visible, the conversation of those who were collected in Phaddhy's dropped gradually, as he approached the house, into a silence which was only broken by an occasional short observation, made by one or two of those who were in habits of the greatest familiarity with the priest; but when they heard the noise of his horse's feet near the door, the silence became general and uninterrupted.

There can scarcely be a greater contrast in anything than that presented by the beginning of a station-day and its close. In the morning, the faces of those who are about to confess present an expression in which terror, awe, guilt, and veneration may be easily traced; but in the evening all is mirth and jollity. Before confession every man's memory is employed in running over the catalogue of crimes, as they are to be found in the prayer-books, under the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, the *Commandments* of the Church, the four sins that cry to heaven for vengeance, and the seven sins against the Holy Ghost.

When Father Con arrived, Phaddhy and Katty were instantly at the door to welcome him.

"*Musha, cead millia failtha ghud* * to our house, Father Con, avourneen!" says Katty, dropping him a low curtsey, and spreading her new, brown, quilted petticoat as far out on each side of her as it would go—"musha, an' it's you that's welcome from my heart out."

"I thank you," said honest Con, who, as he knew not her name, did not pretend to know it.

"Well, Father Con," said Phaddhy, this is the first time you have ever come to us this way; but, plase God, it won't be the last, I hope."

"I hope not, Phaddhy," said Father Con, who, notwithstanding his simplicity of character, loved a good dinner in the very core of his heart, "I hope not, *indeed*, Phaddhy."

He then threw his eye about the premises, to see what point he might set his temper to during the remainder of the day; for it is right to inform our readers that a priest's temper, at a station, generally rises or falls according to the prospect of his cheer.

Here, however, a little vista, or pantry, jutting out from the kitchen, and left ostentatiously open, presented him with a view which made his very nose curl with kindness. What it contained we do not pretend to say, not having seen it ourselves; we judge, therefore, only by its effects upon his physiognomy.

"Why, Phaddhy," he says, "this is a very fine house you've got over you;" throwing his eye again towards a wooden buttress which supported one of the rafters that was broken.

"Why then, your Reverence, it would not be a bad one," Phaddhy replied, "if it had a new roof and new side-walls; and I intend to get both next summer, if God spares me till then."

"Then, upon my word, if it had new side-walls, a new roof, and new gavels, too," replied Father Con, "it would look certainly a great deal the better for it;—and do you intend to to get them next summer, Paddy?"

"If God spares me, sir."

"Are all these fine gorsoons yours, Phaddhy?"

"Why, so Katty says, your Reverence," replied Phaddhy, with a good-natured laugh.

"Haven't you got one of them for the church, Phaddhy?"

* The people look upon that priest as the best and most learned who can perform the ceremony of the mass in the shortest period of time. They call it, as above, "tareing off." The quickest description of mass, however, is the "hunting mass," so termed from the speed at which the priest goes over it—that is, "at the rate of a hunt."

* A hundred thousand welcomes to you.

"Yes, your Reverence, there's one of them that I hope will live to have the *robes* upon him. Come over, Briney, and speak to Father Con. He's not very far in his Latin yet, sir; but his master tells me that he hasn't the likes of him in the school for brightness—— Briney, will you come over, I say; come over, sarrah, and spake to the gintleman, and him wants to shake hands wid you—come up, man, what are you afeard of?—sure Father Con's not going to examine you now."

"No, no, Briney," said Father Con, "I'm not about to examine you at present."

"He's a little dashed, yer Reverence, bekase he thought you war going to put him through some of his Latin," said the father, bringing him up like a culprit to Father Con, who shook hands with him, and, after a few questions as to the books he read, and his progress, dismissed him.

"But, Father Con, wid submission," said Katty, "where's Father Philemy from us?—sure, we expected him along wid you, and he wouldn't go to disappoint us?"

"Oh, you needn't fear that, Katty," replied Father Con; "he'll be here presently—before breakfast, I'll engage for him at any rate; but he had a touch of the headache this morning, and wasn't able to rise so early as I was."

During this conversation a little crowd had collected about the door of the room in which he was to hear the confessions, each struggling and fighting to get the first turn; but here, as in the more important concerns of this world, the weakest went to the wall. He now went into the room, and taking Katty herself first, the door was closed upon them, and he gave her absolution; and thus he continued to confess and absolve them, one by one, until breakfast.

Whenever a station occurs in Ireland, a crowd of mendicants and other strolling impostors seldom fail to attend it; on this occasion, at least, they did not. The day, though frosty, was fine; and the door was surrounded by a train of this description, including both sexes, some sitting on stones, some on stools, with their blankets rolled up under them; and others, more ostensibly devout, on their knees, hard at prayer; which, lest their piety might escape notice, our readers may be assured, they did not offer up in silence. On one side you might observe a sturdy fellow, with a pair of tattered urchins secured to his back by a sheet or blanket pinned across his breast with a long iron skewer, their heads just visible at his shoulders, munching a thick piece of wheaten bread, and the father on his knees, with a a huge wooden cross in hand, repeating his *padareens*, and occasionally throwing a jolly eye towards the door, or through the window, opposite which he knelt, into the kitchen, as often as any peculiar stir or commotion led him to suppose that breakfast, the loadstar of his devotion, was about to be produced.

Scattered about the door were knots of these, men and women, occasionally chatting together; and when the subject of their conversation happened to be exhausted, resuming their beads, until some new topic would occur, and so on alternately.

The interior of the kitchen where the neighbors were assembled, presented an appearance somewhat more decorous. Andy Lalor, the mass-server, in whom the priest had the greatest confidence, stood in a corner examining, in their catechism, those who intended to confess; and, if they were able to stand the test, he gave them a bit of twisted brown paper as a ticket, and they were received at the tribunal.

The first question the priest uniformly puts to the penitent is, "Can you repeat the *Confiteor?*" If the latter answers in the affirmative, he goes on until he comes to the words, *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*, when he stops, it being improper to repeat the remainder until after he has confessed; but, if he is ignorant of the "Confiteor," *the priest repeats it for him!* and he commences the rehearsal of his offences, specifically as they occurred; and not only does he reveal his individual crimes, but his very thoughts and intentions. By this regulation our readers may easily perceive, that the penitent is completely at the mercy of the priest—that all family feuds, quarrels, and secrets are laid open to his eye—that the ruling passions of men's lives are held up before him, the weaknesses and propensities of nature—all the unguarded avenues of the human heart and character are brought within his positive knowledge, and that, too, as they exist in the young and the old, the married and the single, the male and the female.

It was curious to remark the ludicrous expression of temporary sanctity which was apparent on the countenances of many young men and maidens who were remarkable in the neighborhood for attending dances and wakes, but who, on the present occasion, were sobered down to a gravity which sat very awkwardly upon them; particularly in the eyes of those who knew the lightness and drollery of their characters. This, however, was observable only *before* confession; for, as soon as, "the priest's blessed hand had been over them," their gloom and anxiety passed away, and the thoughtless buoyancy of their natural disposition resumed its influence over their minds. A good-humored

nod, or a sly wink, from a young man to his female acquaintance, would now be indulged in; or, perhaps a small joke would escape, which seldom failed to produce a subdued laugh from such as *had* confessed, or an impatient rebuke from those who had *not*.

"Tim!" one would exclaim, "arn't ye ashamed or afeared to get an that way, and his Reverence undher the wan roof wid ye?"

"Tim, you had better dhrop your joking," a second would observe, "and not be putting us through other,* when we have our offenses to remimber; you have got your *job* over, and now you have nothing to trouble you."

"Indeed, it's fine behavior," a third would say, "and you afther coming from the priest's knee; and what more, didn't *resave* † yet; but wait till Father Con appears, and, I'll warrant, you'll be as grave as another, for all you're so stout now."

The conversation would then pass to the merits of Father Philemy and Father Con, as Confessors.

"Well," one would observe—"for my part, I'd rather go to Father Philemy, fifty times over, than wanst to Father Con, bekase he never axes questions; but whatever you like to tell him, he hears it, and forgives you at wanst."

"And so sign's an it," observed another; "he could confess more in a day that Father Con could in a week."

"But for all that," observed Andy Lalor, "it's still best to go to the man that puts the questions, you persave, and that won't let the turning of a straw escape him. Whin myself goes to Father Philemy, somehow or other, I totally disremember more nor wan half of what I intinded to tell him, but Father Con misses nothing, for he axes it."

When the last observation was finished, Father Con, finding that the usual hour for breakfast had arrived, came into the kitchen, to prepare for the celebration of mass. For this purpose, a table was cleared, and just in the nick of time arrived old Moll Brian, the vestment woman, or itinerant sacristan, whose usual occupation was to carry the priests' *robes* and other apparatus, from station to station. In a short time, Father Con was surpliced and robed; Andy Lalor, whose face was charged with commensurate importance during the ceremony, *saveed* Mass, and answered the priest stoutly in Latin although he had not the advantage of understanding that sacerdotal language. Those who had *confessed*, now *communicated*; after which, each of them took a draught of water out of a small jug, which was handed round from one to another. The ceremony then closed, and those who had partaken of the sacrament, with the exception of such as were detained for breakfast, after filling their bottles with holy water, went home with a light heart. A little before the mass had been finished, Father Philemy arrived; but as Phaddy and Katty were then preparing to *resave*,* they could not at that moment give him a formal reception. As soon, however, as communion was over, the *cead millia failtha* was repeated with the usual warmth, by both, and by all their immediate friends.

Breakfast was now laid in Katty's best style, and with an originality of arrangement that scorned all precedent. Two tables were placed, one after another, in the kitchen; for the other rooms were not sufficiently large to accommodate the company. Father Philemy filled the seat of honor at the head of the table, with his back to an immense fire. On his right hand sat Father Con; on his left, Phaddhy himself, "to keep the *clargy* company;" and, in due succession after them, their friends and neighbors, each taking precedence according to the most scrupulous notions of respectability. Beside Father Con sat "Pether Malone," a "young collegian," who had been sent home from Maynooth to try his native air, for the recovery of his health, which was declining. He arrived only a few minutes after Father Philemy, and was a welcome reinforcement to Phaddhy, in the arduous task of sustaining the conversation with suitable credit.

With respect to the breakfast, I can only say, that it was superabundant—that the tea was as black as bog water—that there were hen, turkey, and geese eggs—plates of toast soaked, crust and crumb, in butter; and lest there might be a deficiency, one of the daughters sat on a stool at the fire, with her open hand, by way of a fire screen, across her red, half-scorched brows, toasting another plateful, and, to crown all, on each corner of the table was a bottle of whiskey. At the lower board sat the youngsters, under the *surveillance* of Katty's sister, who presided in that quarter. When they were commencing breakfast, "Father Philemy," said Katty, "won't yer Rev'rence bless the mate,† if ye plase?"

"If I don't do it myself," said Father Philemy, who was just after sweeping the top off a turkey egg, "I'll get them that will. Come," said he to the collegian, "give us grace, Peter; you'll never learn younger."

This, however, was an unexpected blow to

* Confusing us. † Communicate.

* That is, the Sacrament. † Food.

Peter, who knew that an English grace would be incompatible with his "college breeding," yet was unprovided with any in Latin. The eyes of the company were now fixed upon him, and he blushed like scarlet on finding himself in a predicament so awkward and embarrassing. "*Aliquid, Petre, aliquid ; 'de profundis'—si habes nihil aliud,*" said Father Philemy, feeling for his embarrassment, and giving him a hint. This was not lost, for Peter began, and gave them the *De profundis*—a Latin psalm, which Roman Catholics repeat for the relief of the souls in purgatory. They forgot, however, that there was a person in company who considered himself as having an equal claim to the repetition of at least the one-half of it ; and accordingly, when Peter got up and repeated the first verse, Andy Lalor got also on his legs, and repeated the response.* This staggered Peter a little, who hesitated, as uncertain how to act.

"*Perge, Petre, perge,*" said Father Philemy, looking rather wistfully at his egg—"*perge, stultus est et asinus quoque.*" Peter and Andy proceeded until it was finished, when they resumed their seats.

The conversation during breakfast was as sprightly, as full of fun and humor as such breakfasts usually are. The priest, Phaddhy, and the young collegian, had a topic of their own, whilst the rest were engaged in a kind of by play, until the meal was finished.

"Father Philemy," said Phaddhy, in his capacity of host, "before we begin we'll all take a dhrop of what's in the bottle, if it's not displasing to yer Reverence ; and, sure, I know, 'tis the same that doesn't come wrong at a station, any how."

This, *more majorum*, was complied with ; and the glass, as usual, went round the table, beginning with their Reverences.

Hitherto, Father Philemy had not had time to bestow any attention on the state of Kitty's larder, as he was in the habit of doing, with a view to ascertain the several items contained therein for dinner. But as soon as the breakfast-things were removed, and the coast clear, he took a peep into the pantry, and, after throwing his eye over its contents, sat down at the fire, making Phaddhy take a seat beside him, for the especial purpose of sounding him as to the practicability of effecting a certain design which was then snugly latent in his Reverence's fancy. The fact was, that on taking the survey of the premises aforesaid, he discovered that, although there was abundance of fowl, and fish, and bacon, and hung-beef —yet, by some unaccountable and disastrous omission, there was neither fresh mutton nor fresh beef. The priest, it must be confessed, was a man of considerable fortitude, but this was a blow for which he was scarcely prepared, particularly as a boiled leg of mutton was one of his fifteen favorite joints at dinner. He accordingly took two or three pinches of snuff in rapid succession, and a seat at the fire, as I have said, placing Phaddhy, unconscious of his design, immediately beside him.

Now, the reader knows that Phaddhy was a man possessing a considerable portion of dry, sarcastic humor, along with that natural quickness of penetration and shrewdness for which most of the Irish peasantry are in a very peculiar degree remarkable ; add to this that Father Philemy, in consequence of his contemptuous bearing to him before he came in for his brother's property, stood not very high in his estimation. The priest knew this, and consequently felt that the point in question would require to be managed, on his part, with suitable address.

"Phaddhy," says his Reverence, "sit down here till we chat a little, before I commence the duties of the day. I'm happy to see that you have such a fine thriving family : how many sons and daughters have you ?"

"Six sons, yer Reverence," replied Phaddhy, "and five daughters : indeed, sir, they're as well to be seen as their neighbors, considhering all things. Poor crathurs, they get fair play* now, thank God, compared to what they used to get—God rest their poor uncle's sowl for that ! Only for him, your Reverence, there would be very few inquiring this or any other day about them."

"Did he die as rich as they said, Phaddhy ?" inquired his Reverence.

"Hut, sir," replied Phaddhy, determined to take what he afterwards called a *rise* out of the priest ; "they knew little about it—as rich as they said, sir ! no, but three times as rich, itself : but, any how, he was the man that could make the money."

"I'm very happy to hear it, Phaddhy, on your account, and that of your children. God be good to him—*requiescat animus ejus in pace, per omnia secula seculorum, Amen!* —he liked a drop in his time, Phaddhy, as well as ourselves, eh ?"

"*Amen, amen*—the heavens be his bed !—he did, poor man ! but he had it at first cost, your Reverence, for he *run* it all himself in the mountains : he could afford to take it."

"Yes, Phaddhy, the heavens be his bed, I pray ; no Christmas or Easter ever passed,

* This prayer is generally repeated by two persons, who recite each a verse alternately.

* By this is meant good food and clothing.

but he was sure to send me the little keg of stuff that never saw water; but, Phaddhy, there's one thing that concerns me about him, in regard of his love of drink—I'm afraid it's a throuble to him where he is at present; and I was sorry to find that, although he died full of money, he didn't think it worth his while to leave even the price of a mass to be said for the benefit of his own soul."

"Why, sure you know, Father Philemy, that he wasn't what they call a dhrinking man: once a quarther, or so, he sartinly did take a jorum; and except at these times, he was very sober. But God look upon us, yer Reverence—or upon myself, anyway; for if *he's* to suffer for his doings that way, I'm afeard *we'll* have a troublesome reck'ning of it."

"Hem, a-hem!—Phaddhy," replied the priest, "he has raised you and your children from poverty, at all events, and you ought to consider *that*. If there is anything in your power to contribute to the relief of his soul, you have a strong duty upon you to do it; and a number of masses, offered up devoutly, would——"

"Why, he did, sir, raise both myself and my childre from poverty," said Phaddhy, not willing to let that point go farther—"*that* I always own to; and I hope in God that whatever little trouble might be upon him for the dhrop of dhrink, will be wiped off by this kindness to us."

"He hadn't even a *Month's mind!!*" *

"And it's not but I spoke to him about both, yer Reverence."

"And what did he say, Phaddy?"

"'Phaddy,' said he, 'I have been giving Father M'Guirk, one way or another, between whiskey, oats, and dues, a great deal of money every year; and now, afther I'm dead,' says he, 'isn't it an ungrateful thing of him not to offer up one mass for my sowl, except I leave him payment for it?'"

"Did he say that, Phaddhy?"

"I'm giving you his very words, yer Reverence."

"Phaddhy, I deny it; it's a big lie—he could not make much use of such words, and he going to face death. I say you could not listen to them; the hair would stand on your head if he did; but God forgive him!—that's the worst I wish him. Didn't the hair stand on your head, Phaddhy, to hear him?"

"Why, then, to tell yer Reverence God's truth, I can't say it did."

"You can't say it did! and if I was in your coat, I would be ashamed to say it did not. I was always troubled about the way the fellow died, but I hadn't the slightest notion that he went off such a reprobate. I fought *his* battle and *yours* hard enough yesterday; but I knew less about him than I do now."

"And what, wid submission, did you fight our battles about, yer Reverence?" inquired Phaddhy.

"Yesterday evening, in Parrah More Slevin's, they had him a miser, and yourself they set down as very little better."

"Then I don't think I desarved that from Parrah More, anyhow, Father Philemy; I think I can show myself as dacent as Parrah More or any of *his* faction."

"It was not Parrah More himself, nor his family, that said anything about you, Phaddhy," said the priest, "but others that were present. You must know that we were all to be *starved* here to-day."

"Oh! ho!" exclaimed Phaddhy, who was hit most palpably upon the weakest side—the very sorest spot about him, "they think bekase this is the first station that ever was held in *my* house, that you won't be thrated as you ought; but they'll be disappointed; and I hope, for so far, that yer Reverence and yer friends had no rason to complain."

"Not in the least, Phaddhy, considering that it was a first station; and if the dinner goes as well off as the breakfast, they'll be biting their nails: but I should not wish myself that they would have it in their power to sneer or throw any slur over you about it.——Go along, Dolan," exclaimed his Reverence to a countryman who came in from the street, where those stood who were for confession, to see if he had gone to his room—'Go along, you vagrant, don't you see I'm not gone to the *tribunal* yet?——But it's no matter about that, Phaddhy, it's of other things you ought to think: when were you at your duty?"

"This morning, sir," replied the other—"but I'd have them to understand, that had the presumption to use my name in any such manner, that I know when and where to be dacent with any mother's son of Parrah More's faction; and *that* I'll be afther whispering to them some of these fine mornings, plase goodness."

"Well, well, Phaddhy, don't put yourself in a passion about it, particularly so soon after having been at confession—it's not right—I told them myself, that we'd have a leg of mutton and a bottle of wine at all events, for

* A Month's Mind is the repetition of one or more masses, at the expiration of a month after death, for the repose of a departed soul. There are generally more than the usual number of priests on such occasions: each of whom receives a sum of money, varying according to the wealth of the survivor—sometimes five shillings, and sometimes five guineas.

it was what *they* had; but that's not worth talking about: when were you with the priest before, Phaddhy?"

"If I wasn't able, it would be another thing, but, as long as I'm able, I'll let them know that I've the spirit"—said Phaddhy, smarting under the imputation of niggardliness—"when was I at confession before, Father Philemy? Why, then, dear forgive me, not these five years;—and I'd surely be the first of the family that would show a mane spirit, or a want of hospitality."

"A leg of mutton is a good dish, and a bottle of wine is fit for the first man in the land!" observed his Reverence; "five years!—why, is it possible you stayed away so long, Phaddhy! how could you expect to prosper with five years' burden of sin upon your conscience—what would it cost you——?"

"Indeed, myself's no judge, your Reverence, as to that; but, cost what it will, I'll get both."

"I say, Phaddhy, what trouble would it cost you to come to your duty twice a year at the very least; and, indeed, I would advise you to become a monthly communicant. Parrah More was speaking of it as to himself, and you ought to go——"

"And I will go and bring Parrah More here to his dinner, this very day, if it was only to let him see with his own eyes——"

"You ought to go once a month, if it was only to set an example to your children, and to show the neighbors how a man of substance and respectability, and the head of a family, ought to carry himself."

"Where is the best wine got, your Reverence?"

"Alick M'Loughlin, *my nephew*, I believe, keeps the best wine and spirits in Ballyslantha.—You ought also, Phaddy, to get a scapular, and become a scapularian; I wish your brother had thought of *that*, and he wouldn't have died in so hardened a state, nor neglected to make a provision for the benefit of his soul, as he did."

"Lave the rest to me, yer Reverence, I'll get it; Mr. M'Loughlin will give me the right sort, if he has it betune him and death."

"M'Laughlin! what are you talking about?"

"Why, what is your Reverence talking about?"

"The scapular," said the priest.

"But I mane the wine and the mutton," says Phaddhy.

"And is that the way you treat me, you reprobate you?" replied his Reverence in a passion: "is that the kind of attention you're paying me, and I advising you, all this time, *for the good of your soul?* Phaddhy, I tell you, you're enough to vex me to the core—five years!—only once at confession in five years! What do I care about your mutton and your wine!—you may get dozens of them if you wish; or, may be, it would be more like a Christian to never mind getting them, and let the neighbors *laugh* away. It would teach you humility, you hardened creature, and God knows you want it; for my part, I'm speaking to you about other things; but that's the way with the most of you—mention any spiritual subject that concerns your soul, and you turn a deaf ear to it—here, Dolan, come in to your duty. In the meantime, you may as well tell Katty not to boil the mutton too much; it's on your knees you ought to be at your rosary, or the seven penitential psalms, any way."

"Thrue for you, sir," says Phaddhy; "but as to going wanst a month, I'm afeard, your Rev'rence, if it would shorten my timper as it does Katty's, that we'd be bad company for one another; she comes home from confession, newly set, like a razor, every bit as sharp; and I'm sure that I'm within the truth when I say there's no bearing her."

"That's because you've no relish for anything spiritual yourself, you nager you," replied his Reverence, "or you wouldn't see her temper in that light—but, now that I think of it, where did you get that stuff we had at breakfast?"

"Ay, that's the sacret; but I knew your Rev'rence would like it; did Parrah More aiqual it? No, nor one of his faction couldn't lay his finger on such a dhrop."

"I wish you could get me a few gallons of it," said the priest; "but let us drop that; I say, Phaddhy, you're too worldly and too careless about your duty."

"Well, Father Philemy, there's a good time coming; I'll mend yet."

"You want it, Phaddhy."

"Would three gallons do, sir?"

"I would rather you would make it five, Phaddhy; but go to your rosary."

"It's the penitential psalms, first, sir," said Phaddhy, "and the rosary at night. I'll try, anyhow; and if I can make off five for you, I will."

"Thank you, Phaddhy; but I would recommend you to say the rosary *before* night."

"I believe yer Reverence is right," replied Phaddhy, looking somewhat slyly in the priest's face; "I think it's best to make sure of it now, in regard that in the evening, your Reverence—do you persave?"

"Yes," said his Reverence, "you're in a better frame of mind at present, Phaddhy, being fresh from confession." So saying, his Reverence—for whom Phaddhy, with all his shrewdness in general, was not a match—went into his room, that he might send home

about four dozen of honest, good-humored, thoughtless, jovial, swearing, drinking, fighting Hibernians, free from every possible stain of sin and wickedness!

"Are you all ready now?" said the priest, to a crowd of country people who were standing about the kitchen door, pressing to get the "first turn" at the tribunal, which on this occasion consisted of a good oaken chair, with his Reverence upon it.

"Why do you crush forward in that manner, you ill-bred spalpeens? Can't you stand back, and behave yourselves like common Christians?—back with you! or, if you make me get my whip, I'll soon clear you from about the decent man's door. Hagarty, why do you crush them two girls there, you great Turk, you? Look at the vagabonds! Where's my whip," said he, running in, and coming out in a fury, when he commenced cutting about him, until they dispersed in all directions. He then returned into the house; and, after calling in about two dozen, began to catechize them as follows, still holding the whip in his hand, whilst many of those individuals, who at a party quarrel or faction fight, in fair or market, were incapable of the slightest terror, now stood trembling before him, absolutely pale and breathless with fear.

"Come, Kelly," said he to one of them, "are you fully prepared for the two blessed sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, that you are about to receive? Can you read, sir?"

"Can I read, is id?—my *brother Barney* can, yer Rev'rence," replied Kelly, sensible, amid all the disadvantages around him, of the degradation of his ignorance.

"What's that to me, sir?" said the priest, "what your brother Barney can do—can you not read yourself?"

"I can not, your Reverence," said Kelly, in a tone of regret.

"I hope you have your Christian Doctrine, at all events," said the priest. "Go on with the Confiteor."

Kelly went on—"*Confectur Dimniportenti batchy Mary semplar virginy, batchy Mickletoe Archy Angelo, batchy Johnny Bartisty, sanctris postlis—Petrum hit Paulum omnium sanctris, et tabby pasture, quay a pixavit minus coglety ashy hony verbum et offer him smaxy quilta smaxy quilta-smaxy maxin in quilta.*"*

"Very well, Kelly, right enough, all except the pronouncing, which wouldn't pass muster in Maynooth, however. How many kinds of commandments are there?"

"Two, sir."

"What are they?"

"God's and the Church's."

"Repeat God's share of them."

He then repeated the first commandment according to *his* catechism.

"Very good, Kelly, very good. Well, now, repeat the commandments of the Church."

"First—Sundays and holidays, Mass thou shalt sartinly hear;

"Second—All holidays sanctificate throughout all the whole year.

"Third—Lent, Ember days, and Virgins, thou shalt be sartain to fast;

"Fourth—Fridays and Saturdays flesh thou shalt not, good, bad or indifferent, taste.

"Fifth—In Lent and Advent, nuptial fastes gallantly forbear.

"Sixth—Confess your sins, at laste once dacently and soberly every year.

"Seventh—Resave your God at confission about great Easter-day;

"Eighth—And to his Church and his own frolicsome clargy neglect not tides (tithes) to pay."

"Well," said his Reverence, "now, the great point is, do you understand them?"

"Wid the help of God, I hope so, your Rev'rence; and I have also the three thriptological vartues."

"Theological, sirrah!"

"Theojollyological vartues; the four sins that cry to heaven for vingeance; the *five* carnal vartues—prudence, justice, timptation, and solitude;* the seven deadly sins; the eight grey attitudes——"

"Grey attitudes! Oh, the Bœotian!" exclaimed his Reverence, "listen to the way in which he's playing havoc among them. Stop, sir," for Kelly was going on at full speed—"Stop, sir." I tell you it's not *gray* attitudes, but *bay* attitudes—doesn't every one know the eight beatitudes?"

"The eight *bay* attitudes; the nine ways of being guilty of another's sins; the ten commandments; the twelve fruits of a Christian; the fourteen stations of the cross; the fifteen mystheries of the passion——"

"Kelly," said his Reverence, interrupting him, and heralding the joke, for so it was

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* We subjoin the original, for the information of our readers:

"Confiteor Deo Omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ, semper Virgini, beato Michaelo archangelo, beato Johanni Baptistæ, sanctis Apostolis, Petro et Paulo, omnibus sanctis, et tibi, pater, quia, peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo, et opere, mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa." Let not our readers suppose that the above version in the mouth of a totally illiterate peasant is overcharged; for we have the advantage of remembering how we ourselves used to hear it pronounced in our early days. We will back the version in the text against Edward Irving's new language for any money.—*Original note.*

* Temperance and fortitude.

intended, with a hearty chuckle, "you're getting fast out of your *teens*, ma bouchal?" and this was, of course, honored with a merry peal, extorted as much by an effort at softening the rigor of examination, as by the traditionary duty which entails upon the Irish laity the necessity of laughing at a priest's jokes, without any reference at all to their quality. Nor was his Reverence's own voice the first to subside into that gravity which became the solemnity of the occasion; for, even whilst he continued the interrogatories, his eye was laughing at the conceit with which it was evident the inner man was not competent to grapple. "Well, Kelly, I can't say but you've answered very well, as far as the *repeating* of them goes; but do you perfectly *understand* all the commandments of the church?"

"I do, sir," replied Kelly, whose confidence kept pace with his Reverence's good-humor.

"Well, what is meant by the fifth?"

"The fifth, sir?" said the other, rather confounded—"I must begin agin, sir, and go on till I come to it."

"Well," said the priest, "never mind that; but tell us what the eighth means?"

Kelly stared at him a second time, but was not able to advance "First—Sundays and holidays, mass thou shalt hear;" but before he had proceeded to the second, a person who stood at his elbow began to whisper to him the proper reply, and in the act of so doing received a lash of the whip across the ear for his pains.

"You blackguard, you!" exclaimed Father Philemy, "take that—how dare you attempt to prompt any person that *I'm* examining?"

Those who stood around Kelly now fell back to a safe distance, and all was silence, terror, and trepidation once more.

"Come, Kelly, go on—the eighth?"

Kelly was still silent.

"Why, you ninny you, didn't you repeat it just now. 'Eighth—And to his church neglect not tithes to pay.' Now that I have put the words in your mouth, what does it mean?"

Kelly having thus got the cue, replied, in the words of the Catechism, "To pay *tides* to the lawful *pasterns* of the church, sir."

"*Pasterns!*—oh, you ass you! Pasterns!—you poor, base, contemptible, crawling reptile, as if we trampled you under our hooves—oh, you scruff of the earth! Stop, I say—it's *pastors*."

"Pastures of the church."

"And, tell me, do you fulfil that commandment?"

"I do, sir."

"It's a lie, sir," replied the priest, brandishing the whip over his head, whilst Kelly instinctively threw up his guard to protect himself from the blow. "It's a lie, sir," repeated his Reverence; "you don't fulfil it. What *is* the church?"

"The church is the congregation of the faithful that purfiss the true faith, and are obadient to the Pope."

"And who do you pay tithes to?"

"To the parson, sir."

"And, you poor varmint you, is *he* obadient to the Pope?"

Kelly only smiled at the want of comprehension which prevented him from seeing the thing according to the view which his Reverence took of it.

"Well, now," continued Father Philemy, "who are the *lawful* pastors of God's church?"

"You are, sir: and all our own priests."

"And who ought you to pay your tithes to?"

"To you, sir, in coorse; sure I always knew that, your Rev'rence."

"And what's the reason, then, you don't pay them to me, instead of the parson?"

This was a puzzler to Kelly, who only knew his own side of the question. "You have me there, sir," he replied, with a grin.

"Because," said his Reverence, "the Protestants, for the present, have the law of the land on their side, and power over you to compel the payment of tithes to themselves; but we have right, justice, and the law of God on ours; and, if every thing was in its proper place, it is not to the *parsons*, but to *us*, that you would pay them."

"Well, well, sir," replied Kelly, who now experienced a community of feeling upon the subject with his Reverence, that instantly threw him into a familiarity of manner which he thought the point between them justified—"who knows, sir?" said he with a knowing smile, "there's a good time coming, yer Rev'rence."

"Ay," said Father Philemy, "wait till we get once into the Big* House, and if we don't turn the scales—if the Established Church doesn't go down, why, it won't be our fault. Now, Kelly, all's right but the money—have you brought your dues?"

"Here it is, sir," said Kelly, handing him his dues for the last year.

It is to be observed here, that, according as the penitents went to be examined, or to kneel down to confess, a certain sum was exacted from each, which varied according to the arrears that might have been due to the priest. Indeed, it is not unusual for the host and hostess, on these occasions, to be

* Parliament. This was written before the passing of the Emancipation Bill.

refused a participation in the sacrament, until they pay this money, notwithstanding the considerable expense they are put to in entertaining not only the clergy, but a certain number of their own friends and relations.

"Well, stand aside, I'll hear you first; and now, come up here, you young gentleman, that laughed so heartily a while ago at my joke—ha, ha, ha!—come up here, child."

A lad now approached him, whose face, on a first view, had something simple and thoughtless in it, but in which, on a closer inspection, might be traced a lurking, sarcastic humor, of which his Reverence never dreamt.

"You're for confession, of course?" said the priest.

"*Of coorse,*" said the lad, echoing him, and laying a stress upon the word, which did not much elevate the meaning of the compliance in general with the rite in question.

"Oh!" exclaimed the priest, recognizing him when he approached—"you are Dan Fagan's son, and designed for the church yourself; you are a good Latinist, for I remember examining you in Erasmus about two years ago—*Quomodo se habet corpus tuum, charum lignum sacerdotis?*"

"*Valde, Domine,*" replied the lad, "*Quomodo se habet anima tua, charum exemplar sacerdotage, et fulcrum robustissium Ecclesiæ sacrosanctæ?*"

"Very good, Harry," replied his Reverence, laughing—"stand aside; I'll hear you after Kelly."

He then called up a man with a long melancholy face, which he noticed before to have been proof against his joke, and after making two or three additional and fruitless experiments upon his gravity, he commenced a cross fire of peevish interrogatories, which would have excluded him from the "tribunal" on that occasion, were it not that the man was remarkably well prepared, and answered the priest's questions very pertinently.

This over, he repaired to his room, where the work of absolution commenced; and, as there was a considerable number to be rendered sinless before the hour of dinner, he contrived to un-sin them with an alacrity that was really surprising.

Immediately after the conversation already detailed between his Reverence and Phaddhy, the latter sought Katty, that he might communicate to her the unlucky oversight which they had committed, in neglecting to provide fresh meat and wine. "We'll be disgraced forever," said Phaddhy, "without either a bit of mutton or a bottle of wine for the gintlemen, and that big thief Parrah More Slevin had both."

"And I hope," replied Katty, "that you're not so mane as to let any of that faction outdo you in *dacency*, the nagerly set? It was enough for them to bate us in the law-shoot about the horse, and not to have the laugh agin at us about this."

"Well, that same law-shoot is not over with them yet," said Phaddhy; "wait till the spring fair comes, and if I don't have a faction gathered that'll sweep them out of the town, why my name's not Phaddhy! But where is Matt till we sind him off?"

"Arrah, Phaddhy," said Katty, "wasn't it friendly of Father Philemy to give us the *hard word* about the wine and mutton?"

"Very friendly," retorted Phaddhy, who, after all, appeared to have suspected the priest—"very friendly, indeed, when it's to put a good joint before himself, and a bottle of wine in his jacket. No, no, Katty! it's not altogether for the sake of Father Philemy, but I wouldn't have the neighbors say that I was near and undacent; and above all things, I wouldn't be worse nor the Slevins—for the same set would keep it up agin us long enough."

Our readers will admire the tact with which Father Philemy worked upon the rival feeling between the factions; but, independently of this, there is a generous hospitality in an Irish peasant which would urge him to any stratagem, were it even the disposal of his only cow, sooner than incur the imputation of a narrow, or, as he himself terms it, "undacent" or "nagerly"* spirit.

In the course of a short time, Phaddhy dispatched two messengers, one for the wine, and another for the mutton; and, that they might not have cause for any unnecessary delay, he gave them the two reverend gentlemen's horses, ordering them to spare neither whip nor spur until they returned. This was an agreeable command to the messengers, who, as soon as they found themselves mounted, made a bet of a "trate," to be paid on arriving in the town to which they were sent, to him who should first reach a little stream that crossed the road at the entrance of it, called the "Pound burn." But I must not forget to state, that they not only were mounted on the priest's horses, but took their great-coats, as the day had changed, and threatened to rain. Accordingly, on getting out upon the main road, they set off, whip and spur, at full speed, jostling one another, and cutting each other's horses as if they had been intoxicated; and the fact is, that, owing to the liberal distribution of the bottle that morning, they were not far from it.

* Niggardly.

THEY SET OFF, WHIP AND SPUR, AT FULL SPEED, JOSTLING ONE ANOTHER, AND CUTTING EACH OTHER'S HORSES.
—*The Station*, p. 756, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

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"Bless us!" exclaimed the country people, as they passed, "what on airth can be the matther with Father Philemy and Father Con, that they're abusing wan another at sich a rate!"

"Oh!" exclaimed another, "it's apt to be a sick call, and they're thrying, maybe, to be there before the body grows cowld." *

"Ay, it may be," a third conjectured, "it's to old Magennis, that's on the point of death, and going to lave all his money behind him."

But their astonishment was not a whit lessened, when, in about an hour afterwards, they perceived them both return; the persou who represented Father Con having an overgrown leg of mutton slung behind his back like an Irish harp, reckless of its friction against his Reverence's coat, which it had completely saturated with grease; and the duplicate of Father Philemy with a sack over his shoulder, in the bottom of which was half a dozen of Mr. M'Laughlin's best port.

Phaddhy, in the meantime, being determined to mortify his rival Parrah More by a superior display of hospitality, waited upon that personage, and exacted a promise from him to come down and partake of the dinner—a promise which the other was not slack in fulfilling. Phaddhy's heart was now on the point of taking its rest, when it occurred to him that there yet remained one circumstance in which he might utterly eclipse his rival, and that was to ask Captain Wilson, his landlord, to meet their Reverences at dinner. He accordingly went over to him, for he only lived a few fields distant, having first communicated the thing privately to Katty, and requested that, as their Reverences that day held a station in his house, and would dine there, he would have the kindness to dine along with them. To this the Captain, who was intimate with both the clergymen, gave a ready compliance, and Phaddhy returned home in high spirits.

In the meantime, the two priests were busy in the work of absolution; the hour of three had arrived, and they had many to shrive; but, in the course of a short time, a reverend auxiliary made his appearance, accompanied by one of Father Philemy's nephews, who was then about to enter Maynooth. This clerical gentleman had been appointed to a parish; but, owing to some circumstances which were known only in the distant part of the diocese where he had resided, he was deprived of it, and had, at the period I am writing of, no appointment in the church, though he was in full orders. If I mistake not, he incurred his bishop's displeasure by being too warm an advocate for Domestic Nomination,* a piece of discipline, the re-establishment of which was then attempted by the junior clergymen of the diocese wherein the scene of this station is laid. Be this as it may, he came in time to assist the gentlemen in absolving those penitents (as we must call them so) who still remained unconfessed.

During all this time Katty was in the plenitude of her authority, and her sense of importance manifested itself in a manner that was by no means softened by having been that morning at her duty. Her tones were not so shrill, nor so loud as they would have been, had not their Reverences been within hearing; but what was wanting in loudness, was displayed in a firm and decided energy, that vented itself frequently in the course of the day upon the backs and heads of her sons, daughters, and servants, as they crossed her path in the impatience and bustle of her employment. It was truly ludicrous to see her, on encountering one of them in these fretful moments, give him a drive head-foremost against the wall, exclaiming, as she shook her fist at him, "Ho, you may bless your stars, that *they're* under the roof, or it wouldn't go so asy wid you; for if goodness hasn't said it, you'll make me lose my sowl this blessed and holy day: but this is still the case—the very time I go to my duty, the devil (between us and harm) is sure to throw fifty temptations across me, and to help him, you must come in my way—but wait till tomorrow, and if I don't pay you for this, I'm not here."

That a station is an expensive ordinance to the peasant who is honored by having one held in his house, no one who knows the characteristic hospitality of the Irish people can doubt. I have reason, however, to know that, within the last few years, stations in every sense have been very much improved, where they have not been abolished altogether. The priests now are not permitted to dine in the houses of their parishioners, by which a heavy tax has been removed from the people.

About four o'clock the penitents were at length all despatched; and those who were to be detained for dinner, many of whom had not eaten anything until then, in consequence of the necessity of receiving the Eucharist fasting, were taken aside to taste

* In the Roman Catholic Church the priest is at liberty to administer the last rites, even so long as it is possible that the body and soul may not have finally separated. Under these circumstances it occasionally happens that the Extreme Unction is administered *after* death, but still while the animal heat remains.

* Domestic Nomination was the right claimed by a portion of the Irish clergy to appoint their own bishops, independently of the Pope.

some of Phaddhy's poteen. At length the hour of dinner arrived, and along with it the redoubtable Parra More Slevin, Captain Wilson, and another nephew of Father Philemy's, who had come to know what detained his brother who had conducted the auxiliary priest to Phaddhy's. It is surprising on these occasions, to think how many uncles, nephews, and cousins, to the forty-second degree, find it needful to follow their Reverences on messages of various kinds; and it is equally surprising to observe with what exactness they drop in during the hour of dinner. Of course, any blood-relation or friend of the priests must be received with cordiality; and consequently they do not return without solid proofs of the good-natured hospitality of poor Paddy, who feels no greater pleasure than in showing his "dacency" to any one belonging to his Reverence.

I dare say it would be difficult to find a more motley and diversified company than sat down to the ungarnished fare which Katty laid before them. There were first Fathers Philemy, Con, and the Auxiliary from the far part of the diocese; next followed Captain Wilson, Peter Malone, and Father Philemy's two nephews; after these came Phaddhy himself, Parrah More Slevin, with about two dozen more of the most remarkable and uncouth personages that could sit down to table. There were besides about a dozen of females, most of whom by this time, owing to Katty's private kindness, were in a placid state of feeling. Father Philemy *ex officio*, filled the chair—he was a small man with cherub cheeks as red as roses, black twinkling eyes, and double chin; was of the fat-headed genus, and, if phrenologists be correct, must have given indications of early piety, for he was bald before his time, and had the organ of veneration standing visible on his crown; his hair from having once been black, had become an iron gray, and hung down behind his ears, resting on the collar of his coat according to the old school, to which, I must remark, he belonged, having been educated on the Continent. His coat had large double breasts, the lappels of which hung down loosely on each side, being the prototype of his waistcoat, whose double breasts fell downwards in the same manner—his black small-clothes had silver buckles at the knees, and the gaiters, which did not reach up so far, discovered a pair of white lamb's-wool stockings, somewhat retreating from their original color.

Father Con was a tall, muscular, able-bodied young man, with an immensely broad pair of shoulders, of which he was vain; his black hair was cropped close, except a thin portion of it which was trimmed quite evenly across his eyebrows; he was rather bow-limbed, and when walking looked upwards, holding out his elbows from his body, and letting the lower parts of his arms fall down, so that he went as if he carried a keg under each; his coat, though not well made, was of the best glossy broadcloth—and his long clerical boots went up about his knees like a dragoon's; there was an awkward stiffness about him, in very good keeping with a dark melancholy cast of countenance, in which, however, a man might discover an air of simplicity not to be found in the visage of his superior Father Philemy.

The latter gentleman filled the chair, as I said, and carved the goose; on his right sat Captain Wilson; on his left, the auxiliary—next to them Father Con, the nephews, Peter Malone, *et cetera*. To enumerate the items of the dinner is unnecessary, as our readers have a pretty accurate notion of them from what we have already said. We can only observe, that when Phaddhy saw it laid, and all the wheels of the system fairly set agoing, he looked at Parrah More with an air of triumph which he could not conceal. It is also unnecessary for us to give the conversation in full; nor, indeed, would we attempt giving any portion of it, except for the purpose of showing the spirit in which a religious ceremony such as it is, is too frequently closed.

The talk in the beginning was altogether confined to the clergymen and Mr. Wilson, including a few diffident contributions from "Peter Malone" and the "two nephews."

"Mr. M'Guirk," observed Captain Wilson, after the conversation had taken several turns, "I'm sure that in the course of your professional duties, sir, you must have had occasion to make many observations upon human nature, from the circumstance of seeing it in every condition and state of feeling possible; from the baptism of the infant, until the aged man receives the last rites of your church, and the soothing consolation of religion from your hand."

"Not a doubt of it, Phaddhy," said Father Philemy to Phaddhy, whom he had been addressing at the time, "not a doubt of it; and I'll do everything in my power to get him *in** too, and I am told he is bright."

"Uncle," said one of the nephews, "this gentleman is speaking to you."

"And why not?" continued his Reverence, who was so closely engaged with Phaddhy,

* That is—into Maynooth college—the great object of ambition to the son of an Irish peasant, or rather to his parent.

that he did not even hear the nephew's appeal—"a bishop—and why not? Has he not as good a chance of being a bishop as any of them? though, God knows, it is not always merit that gets a bishopric in any church, or I myself might ——But let *that* pass," said he, fixing his eyes on the bottle.

"Father Philemy," said Father Con, "Captain Wilson was addressing himself to you in a most especial manner."

"Oh! Captain, I beg ten thousand pardons, I was engaged talking with Phaddhy here about his son, who is a young shaving of our cloth, sir, he is intended for the Mission*—Phaddhy, I will either examine him myself, or make Father Con examine him by-and-by.—Well, Captain?"

The Captain now repeated what he had said.

"Very true, Captain, and we do see it in as many shapes as ever—Con, what do you call him?—put on him."

"Proteus," subjoined Con, who was famous at the classics.

Father Philemy nodded for the assistance, and continued—"but as for human nature, Captain, give it to me at a good rousing christening; or what is better again, at a jovial wedding between two of my own parishioners—say this pretty fair-haired daughter of Phaddhy Shemus Phaddhy's here, and long Ned Slevin, Parrah More's son there—eh Phaddhy, will it be a match?—what do you say, Parrah More? Upon my veracity I must bring that about."

"Why, then, yer Reverence," replied Phaddhy, who was now a little softened, and forgot his enmity against Parrah More for the present, "unlikelier things might happen."

"It won't be my fault," said Parrah More, "if my son Ned has no objection."

"*He* object!" replied Father Philemy, "if *I* take it in hands, let me see who'll dare to object; doesn't the Scripture say it? and sure we can't go against the Scripture."

"By the by," said Captain Wilson, who was a dry humorist, "I am happy to be able to infer from what you say, Father Philemy, that you are not, as the clergymen of your church are supposed to be, inimical to the Bible."

"Me an enemy to the Bible! no such thing, sir; but, Captain, begging your pardon, we'll have nothing more about the Bible; you see we are met here, as friends and good fellows, to enjoy ourselves after the severity of our spiritual duties, and we must relax a little; we can't always carry long faces like Methodist parsons—come, Parrah More, let the Bible take a nap, and give us a song."

His Reverence was now seconded in his motion by the most of all present, and Parrah More accordingly gave them a song. After a few songs more, the conversation went on as before.

"Now, Parrah More," said Phaddhy, "you must try *my wine*: I hope it's as good as what *you* gave his Reverence yesterday."

The words, however, had scarcely passed his lips, when Father Philemy burst out into a fit of laughter, clapping and rubbing his hands in a manner the most irresistible. "Oh, Phaddhy, Phaddhy!" shouted his Reverence, laughing heartily, "I *done* you for once—I done you, my man, *cute* as you thought yourself: why, you nager you, did you think to put us off with punch, and you have a stocking of hard guineas hid in a hole in the wall?"

"What does yer Rev'rence mane," said Phaddhy; "for myself can make no understanding out of it, at all at all?"

To this his Reverence only replied by another laugh.

"I gave his Reverence no wine," said Parrah More, in reply to Phaddhy's question.

"What!" said Phaddhy, "none yesterday, at the station held with you?"

"Not a bit of me ever thought of it."

"Nor no mutton?"

"Why, then, devil a morsel of mutton, Phaddhy; but we had a rib of beef."

Phaddhy now looked over to his Reverence rather sheepishly, with the smile of a man on his face who felt himself foiled. "Well, yer Reverence *has done* me, sure enough," he replied, rubbing his head—"I give it up to you, Father Philemy; but any how, I'm glad I got it, and you're all welcome from the core of my heart. I'm only sorry I haven't as much more now to treat you all like gintlemen; but there's some yet, and as much punch as will make all our heads come round."

Our readers must assist us with their own imaginations, and suppose the conversation to have passed very pleasantly, and the night, as well as the guests, to be somewhat *far gone*. The principal part of the conversation was borne by the three clergymen, Captain Wilson, and Phaddy; that of the two nephews and Peter Malone ran in an under current of its own; and in the preceding part of the night, those who occupied the bottom of the table, spoke to each

* The Church of Rome existing in any heretical country—that is, where she herself is not the state church—is considered a missionary establishment; and taking orders in her is termed "Going upon the Mission." Even Ireland is looked upon as *in partibus infidelium*, because Protestantism is established *by law*—hence the phrase above.

other rather in whispers, being too much restrained by that rustic bashfulness which ties up the tongues of those who feel that their consequence is overlooked among their superiors. According as the punch circulated, however, their diffidence began to wear off; and occasionally an odd laugh or so might be heard to break the monotony of their silence. The youngsters, too, though at first almost in a state of terror, soon commenced plucking each other; and a titter, or a suppressed burst of laughter, would break forth from one of the more waggish, who was put to a severe task in afterwards composing his countenance into sufficient gravity to escape detection, and a competent portion of chastisement the next day, for not being able to "behave himself with bether manners."

During these juvenile breaches of decorum, Katty would raise her arm in a threatening attitude, shake her head at them, and look up at the clergy, intimating more by her earnestness of gesticulation than met the ear. Several songs again went round, of which, truth to tell, Father Philemy's were by far the best; for he possessed a rich, comic expression of eye, which, added to suitable ludicrousness of gesture, and a good voice, rendered him highly amusing to the company. Father Con declined singing, as being decidedly serious, though he was often solicited.

"He!" said Father Philemy, "he has no more voice than a woolpack; but Con's a cunning fellow. What do you think, Captain Wilson, but he pretends to be too pious to sing, and gets credit for piety,—not because he is devout, but because he has a bad voice; now, Con, you can't deny it, for there's not a man in the three kingdoms knows it better than myself; you sit there with a face upon you that might go before the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet, when you ought to be as jovial as another."

"Well, Father Philemy," said Phaddhy, "as he won't sing, may be, wid submission, he'd examine Briney in his Latin, till his mother and I hear how's he doing at it."

"Ay, he's fond of dabbling at Latin, so he may try him—I'm sure I have no objection ——: so, Captain, as I was telling you——."

"Silence there below!" said Phaddhy to those at the lower end of the table, who were now talkative enough; "will yez whusht there till Father Con hears Briney a lesson in his Latin. Where are you, Briney? come here, ma bouchal."

But Briney had absconded when he saw that the tug of war was about to commence. In a few minutes, however, the father returned, pushing the boy before him, who, in his reluctance to encounter the ordeal of examination, clung to every chair, table, and person in his way, hoping that his restiveness might induce them to postpone the examination till another occasion. The father, however, was inexorable, and by main force dragged him from all his holds, and placed him before Father Con.

"What's come over you, at all at all, you unsignified *shingawn* you, to affront the gintleman in this way, and he kind enough to go for to give you an *examination?*—come now, you had betther not vex me, I tell you, but hould up your head, and spake out loud, that we can all hear you: now, Father Con, achora, you'll not be too hard upon him in the beginning, till he gets into it, for he's aisy dashed."

"Here, Briney," said Father Philemy, handing him his tumbler, "take a pull of this and if you have any courage at all in you it will raise it;—take a good pull."

Briney hesitated.

"Why, but you take the glass out of his Reverence's hand, sarrah," said the father—"what! is it without dhrinking his Reverence's health first?"

Briney gave a most melancholy nod at his Reverence, as he put the tumbler to his mouth, which he nearly emptied, notwithstanding his shyness.

"For my part," said his Reverence, looking at the almost empty tumbler, "I am pretty sure that that same chap will be able to take care of himself through life. And so, Captain,——" said he, resuming the conversation with Captain Wilson—for his notice of Briney was only parenthetical.

Father Con now took the book, which was Æsop's Fables, and, in accordance with Briney's intention, it opened exactly at the favorite fable of Gallus Gallinaceus. He was not aware, however, that Briney had kept that place open during the preceding part of the week, in order to effect this point. Father Philemy, however, was now beginning to relate another anecdote to the Captain, and the thread of his narrative twined rather ludicrously with that of the examination.

Briney, after a few hems, at length proceeded—"*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dung-hill cock——"

"So, Captain, I was just after coming out of Widow Moylan's—it was in the Lammas fair—and a large one, by the by, it was—so, sir, who should come up to me but Branagan. 'Well, Branagan,' said I, 'how does the world go now with you?'——"——

"*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——"

——"Says he. 'And how is that?' says I,——"

"*Gallus Gallinaceus*——"

HE USUALLY STOOD SHAKING AT US HIS ROD, SILENTLY PROPHETIC OF ITS APPLICATION ON THE FOLLOWING DAY.
—*Party Fight and Funeral*, p. 763, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

——"Says he, 'Hut tut, Branagan,' says I—'you're drunk.' 'That's the thing, sir,' says Branagan, 'and I want to explain it all to your Reverence.' 'Well,' said I, 'go on.'——"

"*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——"

——"Says he,——Let your *Gallus Gallinaceus* go to roost for this night, Con," said Father Philemy, who did not relish the interruption of his story; "I say, Phaddhy, send the boy to bed, and bring him down in your hand to my house on Saturday morning, and we will both examine him, but this is no time for it, and me engaged in conversation with Captain Wilson.—So, Captain——'Well, sir,' says Branagan, and he staggering, 'I took an oath against liquor, and I want your Reverence to break it,' says he. 'What do you mean?' I inquired. 'Why, please your Reverence,' said he, 'I took an oath against liquor, as I told you, not to drink more nor a pint of whiskey in one day, and I want your Reverence to break it for me, and make it only half a pint; for I find that a pint is too much for me; by the same token, that when I get that far, your Reverence, I disremember the oath entirely."

The influence of the bottle now began to be felt, and the conversation absolutely blew a gale, wherein hearty laughter, good strong singing, loud argument, and general good humor blended into one uproarious peal of hilarity, accompanied by some smart flashes of wit and humor which would not disgrace a prouder banquet. Phaddhy, in particular, melted into a spirit of the most unbounded benevolence—a spirit that would (if by any possible means he could effect it) embrace the whole human race; that is to say, he would raise them, man, woman, and child, to the same elevated state of happiness which he enjoyed himself. That, indeed, was happiness in perfection, as pure and unadulterated as the poteen which created it. How could he be otherwise than happy?—he had succeeded to a good property, and a stocking of hard guineas, without the hard labor of acquiring them; he had the "clargy" under his roof at last, partaking of a hospitality which he felt himself well able to afford them; he had settled with his Reverence for five years' arrears of sin, all of which had been wiped out of his conscience by the blessed absolving hand of the priest; he was training up Briney for the Mission, and though last, not least, he was—far gone in his seventh tumbler!

"Come, jinteels," said he, "spare nothing here—there's lashings of every thing; thrate yourselves daccut, and don't be saying tomorrow or next day, that ever my father's son was nagerly. Death alive, Father Con, what are you doin'? Why, then, bad manners to me if that'll sarve, any how."

"Phaddhy," replied Father Con, "I assure you I have done my duty."

"Very well, Father Con, granting all that, it's no sin to repate a good turn you know. Not a word I'll hear, yer Reverence—one tumbler along with myself, if it was only for ould times." He then filled Father Con's tumbler with his own hand, in a truly liberal spirit. "Arrah, Father Con, do you remember the day we had the leapin'-match, and the bout at the shoulder-stone?"

"Indeed, I'll not forget it, Phaddhy."

"And it's yourself that may say that; but I bleeve I rubbed the consate off of your Reverence—only that's betune ourselves, you persave."

"You did win the palm, Phaddhy, I'll not deny it; but you are the only man that ever *bet* me at either of the athletics."

"And I'll say this for yer Reverence, that you are one of the best and most able-bodied gintlemen I ever engaged with. Ah! Father Con, I'm past all that now—but no matter, here's yer Reverence's health, and a shake hands; Father Philemy, yer health, docthor: yer strange Reverence's health—Captain Wilson, not forgetting you, sir: Mr. Pether, yours; and I hope to see you soon with the robes upon you, and to be able to prache us a good sarmon. Parrah More—*wus dha lauc*,* *give me yer hand*, you steeple you; and I haven't the smallest taste of objection to what Father Philemy hinted at—ye'll observe. Kitty, you thief of the world, where are you? Your health, avourneen; come here, and give us your fist, Katty: bad manners to me if I could forget you after all;—the best crathur, your Reverence, under the sun, except when yer Reverence puts yer *comedher* on her at confession, and then she's a little sharp or so, not a doubt of it: but no matther, Katty ahagur, you do it all for the best. And Father Philemy, maybe it's myself didn't put the thrick upon you in the Maragy More, about Katty's death—ha, ha, ha! Jack M'Craner, yer health—all yer healths, and yer welcome here, if you war seven times as many. Briney, where are you, ma bouchal? Come up and shake hands wid yer father, as well as another—come up, acushla, and kiss me. Ah, Briney, my poor fellow, ye'll never be the cut of a man yer father was; but no matther, avourneen, ye'll be a betther man, I hope; and God knows you may asy be that, for Father Philemy, I'm not what I ought to be, yer Reverence; however, I may mend, and will, maybe, before a month of Sundays goes over me: but, for all

* The translation follows it.

that, Briney, I hope to see the day when you'll be sitting an ordained priest at my own table; if I once saw that, I could die contented—so mind yer larning, acushla, and his Reverence here will back you, and make intherest to get you into the college. Musha, God pity them crathurs at the door—aren't they gone yet? Listen to them coughin', for fraid we'd forget them: and throth and they won't be forgot this bout any how—Katty, avourneen, give them every one, big and little, young and ould, their skinful—don't lave a wrinkle in them; and see, take one of them bottles—the crathurs, they're starved sitting there all night in the cowld—and give them a couple of glasses a-piece—it's good, yer Reverence, to have the poor body's blessing at all times; and now, as I was saying, Here's all yer healths! *and from the very veins of my heart yer welcome here.*"

Our readers may perceive that Phaddhy

> "Was not only blest, but glorious,
> O'er a' the ills o' life victorious;"

for, like the generality of our peasantry, the *native* drew to the surface of his character those warm, hospitable, and benevolent virtues, which a purer system of morals and education would most certainly keep in full action, without running the risk, as in the present instance, of mixing bad habits with frank, manly, and generous qualities.

* * * * *

"I'll not go, Con—I tell you I'll not go till I sing another song. Phaddhy, you're a prince—but where's the use of lighting more candles now, man, than you had in the beginning of the night? Is Captain Wilson gone? Then, peace be with him; it's a pity he wasn't on the right side, for he's not the worst of them. Phaddhy, where are you?"

"Why, yer Reverence," replied Katty, "he's got a little unwell, and jist laid down his head a bit."

"Katty,' said Father Con, "you had better get a couple of the men to accompany Father Philemy home; for though the night's clear, he doesn't see his way very well in the dark—poor man, his eye-sight's failing him fast."

"Then, the more's the pity, Father Con. Here, Denis, let yourself and Mat go home wid Father Philemy."

"Good-night, Katty," said Father Con—"Good-night: and may our blessing *sanctify* you all."

"Good-night, Father Con, ahagur," replied Katty; "and for goodness' sake see that they take care of Father Philemy, for it's himself that's the blessed and holy crathur, and the pleasant gintleman out and out."

"Good-night, Katty," again repeated Father Con, as the cavalcade proceeded in a body—"Good-night!" And so ended the Station.

THE PARTY FIGHT AND FUNERAL.

We ought, perhaps, to inform our readers that the connection between a party fight and funeral is sufficiently strong to justify the author in classing them under the title which is prefixed to this story. The one being usually the natural result of the other, is made to proceed from it, as is, unhappily, too often the custom in real life among the Irish.

It has been long laid down as a universal principle, that self-preservation is the first law of nature. An Irishman, however, has nothing to do with this; he disposes of it as he does with the other laws, and washes his hands out of it altogether. But commend him to a fair, dance, funeral, or wedding, or to any other sport where there is a likelihood of getting his head or his bones broken, and if he survive, he will remember you with a kindness peculiar to himself to the last day of his life—will drub you from head to heel if he finds that any misfortune has kept you out of a row beyond the usual period of three months—will render the same service to any of your friends that stand in need of it; or, in short, will go to the world's end, or fifty miles farther, as he himself would say, to serve you, provided you can procure him a bit of decent fighting. Now, in truth and soberness, it is difficult to account for this propensity; especially when the task of ascertaining it is assigned to those of another country, or even to those Irishmen whose rank in life places them too far from the customs, prejudices, and domestic opinions of their native peasantry, none of which can be properly known without mingling with them. To my own knowledge, however, it proceeds in a great measure from *education*. And here I would beg leave to point out an omission of which the several boards of education have been guilty, and which, I believe,

no one but myself has yet been sufficiently acute and philosophical to ascertain, as forming a *sine qua non* in the national instruction of the lower orders of Irishmen.

The cream of the matter is this:—a species of ambition prevails in the Green Isle, not known in any other country. It is an ambition of about three miles by four in extent; or, in other words, is bounded by the limits of the parish in which the subject of it may reside. It puts itself forth early in the character, and a hardy perennial it is. In my own case, its first development was noticed in the hedge-school which I attended. I had not been long there, till I was forced to declare myself either for the Caseys or the Murphys, two tiny factions, that had split the school between them. The day on which the ceremony of my declaration took place was a solemn one. After school, we all went to the bottom of a deep valley, a short distance from the school-house; up to the moment of our assembling there, I had not taken my stand under either banner: that of the Caseys was a sod of turf, stuck on the end of a broken fishing-rod—the eagle of the Murphy's was a Cork red potato, hoisted in the same manner. The turf was borne by an urchin, who afterwards distinguished himself in fairs and markets as a *builla batthah** of the first grade, and from this circumstance he was nicknamed *Parrah Rackhan*.† The potato was borne by little Mickle M'Phauden Murphy, who afterwards took away Katty Bane Sheridan, without asking either her own consent or her father's. They were all then boys, it is true, but they gave a tolerable promise of that eminence which they subsequently attained.

When we arrived at the bottom of the glen, the Murphys and the Caseys, including their respective followers, ranged themselves on either side of a long line, which was drawn between the belligerent powers with the but-end of one of the standards. Exactly on this line was I placed. The word was then put to me in full form—"Whether will you side with the dacent Caseys, or the blackguard Murphys?" "Whether will you side with the dacent Murphys, or the blackguard Caseys?" "The potato for ever!" said I, throwing up my caubeen, and running over to the Murphy standard. In the twinkling of an eye we were at it; and in a short time the deuce an eye some of us had to twinkle. A battle royal succeeded, that lasted near half an hour, and it would probably have lasted above double the time, were it not for the appearance of the "master," who was seen by a little shrivelled *vidette*, who wanted an arm, and could take no part in the engagement. This was enough—we instantly radiated in all possible directions, so that by the time he had descended through the intricacies of the glen to the field of battle, neither victor nor vanquished was visible, except, perhaps, a straggler or two as they topped the brow of the declivity, looking back over their shoulders, to put themselves out of doubt as to their visibility by the master. They seldom looked in vain, however, for there he usually stood, shaking up his rod, silently prophetic of its application on the following day. This threat, for the most part, ended in smoke; for except he horsed about forty or fifty of us, the infliction of impartial justice was utterly out of his power.

But besides this, there never was a realm in which the evils of a divided cabinet were more visible: the truth is, the monarch himself was under the influence of female government—an influence which he felt it either contrary to his inclination or beyond his power to throw off. "Poor Norah, long may *you reign!*" we often used to exclaim, to the visible mortification of the "master," who felt the benevolence of the wish bottomed upon an indirect want of allegiance to himself. Well, it was a *touching* scene!—how we used to stand with the waistbands of our small-clothes cautiously grasped in our hands, with a timid show of resistance, our brave red faces slobbered over with tears, as we stood marked for execution! Never was there a finer specimen of deprecation in eloquence than we then exhibited—the supplicating look right up into the master's face—the touching modulation of the whine—the additional tightness and caution with which we grasped the waistbands with one hand, when it was necessary to use the other in wiping our eyes and noses with the polished sleeve-cuff—the sincerity and vehemence with which we promised never to be guilty again, still shrewdly including the condition of present impunity for our offence:—"this—one—time—master, if ye plaise, sir;" and the utter hopelessness and despair which were legible in the last groan, as we grasp the "master's" leg in utter recklessness of judgment, were all perfect in their way. Reader, have you ever got a reprieve from the gallows? I beg pardon, my dear sir; I only meant to ask, are you capable of entering into what a personage of that description might be supposed to feel, on being informed, after the knot had been neatly tied under the left ear, and the cap drawn over his eyes, that her majesty had granted him a full pardon? But you remember your own schoolboy days, and that's enough.

* Cudgel-player. † Paddy the Rioter.

The nice discrimination with which Norah used to time her interference was indeed surprising. God help us! limited was our experience, and shallow our little judgments, or we might have known what the master meant, when with upraised arm hung over us, his eye was fixed upon the door of the kitchen, waiting for Norah's appearance.

Long, my fair and virtuous countrywomen, I repeat it to you all, as I did to Norah—may you reign in the hearts and affections of your husbands (but nowhere else), the grace, ornaments, and happiness of their hearths and lives, you jewels, you! You are paragons of all that's good, and your feelings are highly creditable to yourselves and to humanity.

When Norah advanced, with her brawny, uplifted arm (for she was a powerful woman) and forbidding aspect, to interpose between us and the avenging terrors of the birch, do you think that she did not reflect honor on her sex and the national character! I sink the base allusion to the *miscaun** of fresh butter, which we had placed in her hands that morning, or the dish of eggs, or of meal, which we had either begged or stolen at home, as a present for her; disclaiming, at the same time, the rascally idea of giving it as a bribe, or from any motive beneath the most lofty minded and disinterested generosity on our part.

Then again, never did a forbidding face shine with so winning and amicable an expression as did hers on that merciful occasion. The sun dancing a hornpipe on Easter Sunday morning, or the full moon sailing as proud as a peacock in a new halo head-dress, was a very disrespectable sight, compared to Norah's red beaming face, shrouded in her dowd cap with long ears, that descended to her masculine and substantial neck. Owing to her influence, the whole economy of the school was good; for we were permitted to cuff one another, and do whatever we pleased, with impunity, *if* we brought the meal, eggs, or butter; except some scapegoat who was not able to accomplish this, and he generally received on his own miserable carcase what was due to us all.

Poor Jack Murray! His last words on the scaffold, for being concerned in the murder of Pierce the gauger, were, that he got the first of his bad habits under Pat Mulligan and Norah—that he learned to steal by secreting at home, butter and meal to paste up the master's eyes to his bad conduct—and that his fondness for quarrelling arose from being permitted to head a faction at school; a most ungrateful return for the many acts of grace which the indulgence of Norah caused to be issued in his favor.

I was but a short time under Pat, when, after the general example, I had my cudgel, which I used to carry regularly to a certain furze bush within fifty perches of the "seminary," where I hid it till after "dismiss." I grant it does not look well in me to become my own panegyrist; but I can at least declare, that there were few among the Caseys able to resist the prowess of this right arm, puny as it was at the period in question. Our battles were obstinate and frequent; but as the quarrels of the two families and their relations on each side, were as bitter and pugnacious in fairs and markets as ours were in school, we hit upon the plan of holding our Lilliputian engagements upon the same days on which our fathers and brothers contested. According to this plan, it very often happened that the corresponding parties were successful, and as frequently, that whilst the Caseys were well drubbed in the fair, their sons were victorious at school, and *vice versa*.

For my part, I was early trained in cudgelling, and before I reached my fourteenth year, could pronounce as sage and accurate an opinion upon the merits of a *shillelagh*, as it is called, or cudgel, as a veteran of sixty could at first sight. Our plan of preparing them was this: we sallied out to any place where there was an underwood of blackthorn or oak, and, having surveyed the premises with the eye of a connoisseur, we selected the straightest root-growing piece which we could find: for if not root-growing we did not consider it worth cutting, knowing from experience that a mere branch, how straight and fair soever it might look, would be apt to snap in the twist and tug of war. Having cut it as close to the root as possible, we then lopped off the branches, and put it up the chimney to season. When seasoned, we took it down, and wrapping it in brown paper, well steeped in hog's lard or oil, we buried it in a horse dunghill, paying it a daily visit for the purpose of making it straight by doubling back the bends or angles across the knee, in a direction contrary to their natural tendency. Having daily repeated this until we had made it straight, and renewed the oil wrapping paper until the staff was perfectly saturated, we then rubbed it well with a woollen cloth, containing a little black-lead and grease, to give it a polish. This was the last process, except that if we thought it too light at the top, we used to bore a hole in the lower end with a red-hot iron spindle, into which we poured melted lead, for the purpose of giving it the knock-down weight.

There were very few of Paddy Mulligan's scholars without a choice collection of such

* A portion of butter, weighing from one pound to six or eight, made in the shape of a prism.

cudgels, and scarcely one who had not, before his fifteenth year, a just claim to be called the hero of a hundred fights, and the heritor of as many bumps on the cranium as would strike both Gall and Spurzheim speechless.

Now this, be it known, was, and in some districts yet is, an integral part of an Irish peasant's *education*. In the northern parts of Ireland, where the population of the Catholics on the one side, and of Protestant and Dissenters on the other, is nearly equal, I have known the respective scholars of Catholic and Protestant schools to challenge each other and meet half-way to do battle, in vindication of their respective creeds; or for the purpose of establishing the character of their respective masters as the more learned man; for if we were to judge by the nature of the education then received, we would be led to conclude that a more commercial nation than Ireland was not on the face of the earth, it being the indispensable part of every scholar's business to become acquainted with the *three sets of Bookkeeping*.

The boy who was the handiest and the most daring with the cudgel at Paddy Mulligan's school was Denis Kelly, the son of a wealthy farmer in the neighborhood. He was a rash, hot-tempered, good-natured lad, possessing a more than common share of this blackthorn ambition; on which account he was cherished by his relations as a boy that was likely at a future period to be able to walk over the course of the parish, in fair, market, or patron. He certainly grew up a stout, able young fellow; and before he reached nineteen years, was unrivalled at the popular exercises of the peasantry. Shortly after that time he made his *debut* in a party-quarrel, which took place in one of the Christmas *Margamores*,* and fully sustained the anticipations which were formed of him by his relations. For a year or two afterwards no quarrel was fought without him; and his prowess rose until he had gained the very pinnacle of that ambition which he had determined to reach. About this time I was separated from him, having found it necessary, in order to accomplish my objects in life, to reside with a relation in another part of the country.

The period of my absence, I believe, was about fifteen years, during which space I heard no account of him whatsoever. At length, however, that inextinguishable attachment which turns the affections and memory to the friends of our early days—to those scenes which we traversed when the heart was light and the spirits buoyant—determined me to make a visit to my native place, that I might witness the progress of time and care upon those faces that were once so familiar to me; that I might again look upon the meadows, and valleys, and groves, and mountains, where I had so often played, and to which I still found myself bound by a tie that a more enlightened view of life and nature only made stronger and more enduring. I accordingly set off, and arrived late in the evening of a December day, at a little town within a few miles of my native home. On alighting from the coach and dining, I determined to walk home, as it was a fine frosty night. The full moon hung in the blue unclouded firmament in all her lustre, and the stars shone out with that tremulous twinkling motion so peculiarly remarkable in frost. I had been absent, I said, about fifteen years, and felt that the enjoyment of this night would form an era in the records of my memory and my feelings. I find myself indeed utterly incapable of expressing what I experienced; but those who have ever been in similar circumstances will understand what I mean. A strong spirit of practical poetry and romance was upon me; and I thought that a commonplace approach in the open day would have rendered my return to the scenes of my early life a very stale and mudifying matter.

I left the inn at seven o'clock, and as I had only five miles to walk, I would just arrive about nine, allowing myself to saunter on at the rate of two miles and half per hour. My sensations, indeed, as I went along, were singular; and as I took a solitary road that went across the mountains, the loneliness of the walk, the deep gloom of the valleys, the towering height of the dark hills, and the pale silvery light of a sleeping lake, shining dimly in the distance below, gave me such a distinct notion of the sublime and beautiful, as I have seldom since experienced. I recommend every man who has been fifteen years absent from his native fields to return by moonlight.

Well, there is a mystery yet undiscovered in our being, for no man can know the full extent of his feelings or his capacities. Many a slumbering thought, and sentiment, and association reposes within him, of which he is utterly ignorant, and which, except he come in contact with those objects whose influence over his mind can alone call them into being, may never be awakened, or give him one moment of either pleasure or pain. There is, therefore, a great deal in the position which we hold in society, and simply in situation. I felt this on *that* night: for the tenor of my reflections was new and original, and my feelings had a warmth and freshness in them, which nothing but the

* Big markets.

situation in which I then found myself could give them. The force of association, too, was powerful; for, as I advanced nearer home, the names of hills, and lakes, and mountains, that I had utterly forgotten, as I thought, were distinctly revived in my memory, and a crowd of youthful thoughts and feelings, that I imagined my intercourse with the world and the finger of time had blotted out of my being, began to crowd afresh on my fancy. The name of a townland would instantly return with its appearance; and I could now remember the history of families and individuals that had long been effaced from my recollection.

But what is even more singular is, that the superstitious terrors of my boyhood began to come over me as formerly, whenever a spot noted for supernatural appearances met my eye. It was in vain that I exerted myself to expel them, by throwing the barrier of philosophic reasoning in their way; they still clung to me, in spite of every effort to the contrary. But the fact is, that I was, for the moment, the slave of a morbid and feverish sentiment, that left me completely at the mercy of the dark and fleeting images that passed over my fancy. I now came to a turn where the road began to slope down into the depths of a valley that ran across it. When I looked forward into the bottom of it, all was darkness impenetrable, for the moon-beams were thrown off by the height of the mountains that rose on each side of it. I felt an indefinite sensation of fear, because at that moment I recollected that it had been, in my younger days, notorious as the scene of an apparition, where the spirit of a murdered pedlar had never been known to permit a solitary traveler to pass without appearing to him, and walking cheek-by-jowl along with him to the next house on the way, at which spot he usually vanished. The influence of my feelings, or, I should rather say, the physical excitement of my nerves, was by no means slight, as these old traditions recurred to me; although, at the same time, my moral courage was perfectly unimpaired, so that, notwithstanding this involuntary apprehension, I felt a degree of novelty and curiosity in descending the valley: "If it appear," said I, "I shall at least satisfy myself as to the truth of apparitions."

My dress consisted of a long, dark surtout, the collar of which, as the night was keen, I had turned up about my ears, and the corners of it met round my face. In addition to this I had a black silk handkerchief tied across my mouth to keep out the night air, so that, as my dark fur traveling cap came down over my face, there was very little of my countenance visible. I now had advanced half way into the valley, and all about me was dark and still: the moonlight was not nearer than the top of the hill which I was descending; and I often turned round to look upon it, so silvery and beautiful it appeared in the distance. Sometimes I stopped for a few moments, admiring its effect, and contemplating the dark mountains as they stood out against the firmament, then kindled into magnificent grandeur by the myriads of stars that glowed in its expanse. There was perfect silence and solitude around me; and, as I stood alone in the dark chamber of the mountains, I felt the impressiveness of the situation gradually supersede my terrors. A sublime sense of religious awe descended on me; my soul kindled into a glow of solemn and elevated devotion, which gave me a more intense perception of the presence of God than I had ever before experienced. "How sacred—how awful," thought I, "is this place!—how impressive is this hour!—surely I feel myself at the footstool of God! The voice of worship is in this deep, soul-thrilling silence, and the tongue of praise speaks, as it were, from the very solitude of the mountains!" I then thought of Him who went up into the mountain-top to pray, and felt the majesty of those admirable descriptions of the Almighty, given in the Old Testament, blend in delightful harmony with the beauty and fitness of the Christian dispensation, that brought light and immortality to light. "Here," said I, "do I feel that I am indeed immortal, and destined for scenes of a more exalted and comprehensive existence!"

I then proceeded further into the valley, completely freed from the influence of old and superstitious associations. A few perches below me a small river crossed the road, over which was thrown a little stone bridge of rude workmanship. This bridge was the spot on which the apparition was said to appear; and as I approached it, I felt the folly of those terrors which had only a few minutes before beset me so strongly. I found my moral energies recruited, and the dark phantasms of my imagination dispelled by the light of religion, which had refreshed me with a deep sense of the Almighty presence. I accordingly walked forward, scarcely bestowing a thought upon the history of the place, and had got within a few yards of the bridge, when on resting my eye accidentally upon the little elevation formed by its rude arch, I perceived a black coffin placed at the edge of the road, exactly upon the bridge itself!

It may be evident to the reader, that, however satisfactory the force of philosophical reasoning might have been upon the subject of the solitude, I was too much the creature

of sensation for an hour before, to look on such a startling object with firm nerves. For the first two or three minutes, therefore, I exhibited as finished a specimen of the dasturdly, as could be imagined. My hair absolutely raised my cap some inches off my head; my mouth opened to an extent which I did not conceive it could possibly reach; I thought my eyes shot out from their sockets, and my fingers spread out and became stiff, though powerless. The "*obstupui*" was perfectly realized in me, for, with the exception of a single groan, which I gave on first seeing the object, I found that if one word would save my life, or transport me to my own fireside, I could not utter it. I was also rooted to the earth, as if by magic; and although instant tergiversation and flight had my most hearty concurrence, I could not move a limb, nor even raise my eyes off the sepulchral-looking object which lay before me. I now felt the perspiration fall from my face in torrents, and the strokes of my heart fell audibly on my ear. I even attempted to say, "God preserve me!" but my tongue was dumb and powerless, and could not move. My eye was still upon the coffin, when I perceived that, from being motionless, it instantly began to swing,—first in a lateral, then in a longitudinal direction, although it was perfectly evident that no human hand was nearer it than my own. At length I raised my eyes off it, for my vision was strained to an aching intensity, which I thought must have occasioned my eye-strings to crack. I looked instinctively about me for assistance—but all was dismal, silent, and solitary: even the moon had disappeared among a few clouds that I had not noticed in the sky.

As I stood in this state of indescribable horror, I saw the light gradually fade away from the tops of the mountains, giving the scene around me a dim and spectral ghastliness, which, to those who were never in such a situation, is altogether inconceivable.

At length I thought I heard a noise as it were of a rushing tempest, sweeping from the hills down into the valley; but on looking up, I could perceive nothing but the dusky desolation that brooded over the place. Still the noise continued; again I saw the coffin move; I then felt the motion communicated to myself, and found my body borne and swung backwards and forwards, precisely according to the motion of the coffin. I again attempted to utter a cry for assistance, but could not: the motion in my body still continued, as did the approaching noise in the hills. I looked up a second time in the direction in which the valley wound off between them, but judge of what I must have suffered, when I beheld one of the mountains moving, as it were, from its base, and tumbling down towards the spot on which I stood! In the twinkling of an eye the whole scene, hills and all, began to tremble, to vibrate, and to fly round me, with a rapid, delirious motion; the stars shot back into the depths of heaven, and disappeared; the ground on which I stood began to pass from beneath my feet; a noise like the breaking of a thousand gigantic billows again burst from every direction, and I found myself instantly overwhelmed by some deadly weight, which prostrated me on the earth, and deprived me of sense and motion.

I know not how long I continued in this state; but I remember that, on opening my eyes the first object that presented itself to me, was the sky glowing as before with ten thousand stars, and the moon walking in her unclouded brightness through the heavens. The whole circumstance then rushed back upon my mind, but with a sense of horror very much diminished; I arose, and on looking towards the spot, perceived the coffin in the same place. I then stood, and endeavoring to collect myself, viewed it as calmly as possible; it was, however, as motionless and distinct as when I first saw it. I now began to reason upon the matter, and to consider that it was pusillanimous in me to give way to such boyish terrors. The confidence, also, which my heart, only a short time before this, had experienced in the presence and protection of the Almighty, again returned, and, along with it, a degree of religious fortitude, which invigorated my whole system. "Well," thought I, "in the name of God I shall ascertain what you are, let the consequence be what it may." I then advanced until I stood exactly over it, and raising my foot gave it a slight kick. "Now," said I, "nothing remains but to ascertain whether it contains a dead body or not;" but on raising the end of it, I perceived by its lightness, that it was empty. To investigate the cause of its being left in this solitary spot was, however, not within the compass of my philosophy, so I gave that up. On looking at it more closely, I noticed a plate, marked with the name and age of the person for whom it was intended, and on bringing my eyes near the letters, I was able, between fingering and reading, to make out the name of my old cudgel-fighting school-fellow, Denis Kelly.

This discovery threw a partial light upon the business; but I now remembered to have heard of individuals who had seen black, unearthly coffins, inscribed with the names of certain living persons; and that these were considered as ominous of the

death of those persons. I accordingly determined to be certain that this was a real coffin; and as Denis's house was not more than a mile before me, I decided on carrying it that far, "If he be dead," thought I, "it will be all right, and if not, we will see more about it." My mind, in fact, was diseased by terror. I instantly raised the coffin, and as I found a rope lying on the ground under it, I strapped it about my shoulders and proceeded: nor could I help smiling when I reflected upon the singular transition which the man of sentiment and sensation so strangely underwent;—from the sublime contemplation of the silent mountain solitude and the spangled heavens to the task of carrying a coffin! It was an adventure, however, and I was resolved to see how it would terminate.

There was from the bridge an ascent in the road, not so gradual as that by which I descended on the other side; and as the coffin was rather heavy, I began to repent of having anything to do with it; for I was by no means experienced in carrying coffins. The carriage of it was, indeed, altogether an irksome and unpleasant concern; for owing to my ignorance of using the rope that tied it skilfully, it was every moment sliding down my back, dragging along the stones, or bumping against my heels: besides, I saw no sufficient grounds I had for entering upon the ludicrous and odd employment of carrying another man's coffin, and was several times upon the point of washing my hands out of it altogether. But the novelty of the incident, and the mystery in which it was involved, decided me in bringing it as far as Kelly's house, which was exactly on my way home.

I had yet half a mile to go; but I thought it would be best to strap it more firmly about my body before I could start again: I therefore set it standing on its end, just at the turn of the road, until I should breathe a little, for I was rather exhausted by a trudge under it of half a mile and upwards. Whilst the coffin was in this position, I standing exactly behind it (Kelly had been a tall man, consequently it was somewhat higher than I was), a crowd of people, bearing lights, advanced round the corner; and the first object which presented itself to their vision, was the coffin in that position, whilst I was totally invisible behind it. As soon as they saw it, there was an involuntary cry of consternation from the whole crowd; at this time I had the coffin once more strapped firmly by a running knot to my shoulders, so that I could loose it whenever I pleased. On seeing the party, and hearing certain expressions which dropped from them, I knew at once that there had been some unlucky blunder in the business on their part; and I would have given a good deal to be out of the circumstances in which I then stood. I felt that I could not possibly have accounted for my situation, without bringing myself in for as respectable a portion of rank cowardice as those who ran away from the coffin; for that it was left behind in a fit of terror, I now entertained no doubt whatever, particularly when I remembered the traditions connected with the spot in which I found it.

"*Manim a Yea agus a wurrah!*"* exclaimed one of them, "if the black man hasn't brought it up from the bridge! *Dher a larna heena,*† he did; for it was above the bridge we first seen him: jist for all the world—the Lord be about us—as Antony and me war coming out on the road at the bridge, there he was standing—a headless man, all black, without face or eyes upon him—and then we left the coffin and cut acrass the fields home."

"But where is he now, Eman?" said one of them, "are you sure you seen him?"

"Seen him!" both exclaimed, "do you think we'd take to our scrapers like two hares, only we did; arrah, bad manners to you, do you think the coffin could walk up wid itself from the bridge to this, only he brought it?—isn't that enough?"

"Thrue for yez," the rest exclaimed, "but what's to be done?"

"Why to bring the coffin home, now that we're all together," another observed; "they say he never appears to more than two at wanst, so he won't be apt to show himself now, when we're together."

"Well, boys, let two of you go down to it," said one of them, "and we'll wait here till yez bring it up."

"Yes," said Eman Dhu, "do you go down, Owen, as you have the Scapular‡ on you, and the jug of holy water in your hand, and let Billy M'Shane, here repeat the *confeethur*§ along wid you."

"Isn't it the same thing, Eman," replied Owen, "if I shake the holy water on you, and whoever goes wid you? sure you know that if only one dhrop of it touched you, the devil himself couldn't harm you!"

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* My soul to God and the Virgin.

† By the *very* book—meaning the Bible, which, in the Irish, is not simply called *the* book, but the *very* book, or the book *itself*.

‡ The scapular is one of the highest religious orders, and is worn by both priest and layman. It is considered by the people a safeguard against evil, both spiritual and physical.

§ The *Confiteor* is a prayer, or rather a general confession of sin, said by the penitent on going to confess his offences to the priest. It will be found at full length in "The Station."

"And what needs yourself be afraid, then," retorted Eman; "and you has the Scapular on you to the back of that? Didn't you say, s you war coming out, that if it *was* the ɛil, you'd disparse him?"

"You had betther not be mintioning his name, you *omadhaun*," replied the other; "if I was your age, and hadn't a wife and childre on my hands, it's myself that would trust in God, and go down manfully; but the people are hen-hearted now, besides what they used to be in my time."

During this conversation, I had resolved, if possible, to keep up the delusion, until I could get myself extricated with due secrecy out of this ridiculous situation; and I was glad to find that, owing to their cowardice, there was some likelihood of effecting my design.

"Ned," said one of them to a little man, "go down and speak to it, as it can't harm *you*."

"Why sure," said Ned, with a tremor in his voice, "I can speak to it where I am, widout going within rache of it. Boys, stand close to me: hem—In the name of—but don't you think I had betther spake to it in the Latin I *sarve mass* * wid; it can't but answer that, for the *sowl* of it, seeing it's a blest language?"

"Very well," the rest replied; "try that Ned; give it the best and ginteelest grammar you have, and maybe it may thrate us dacent."

Now it so happened that, in my schoolboy days, I had joined a class of young fellows who were learning what is called the "*Sarvin' of Mass*" and had impressed it so accurately on a pretty retentive memory, that I never forgot it. At length, Ned pulled out his beads, and bedewed himself most copiously with the holy water. He then shouted out, with a voice which resembled that of a man in an ague fit, "*Dom-i-n-us vo-bis-cum?*" "*Et cum spiritu tuo*," I replied, in a husky sepulchral tone, from behind the coffin. As soon as I uttered these words, the whole crowd ran back instinctively with fright; and Ned got so weak, that they were obliged to support him.

"Lord have marcy on us!" said Ned; "boys, isn't it an awful thing to speak to a spirit? my hair is like I dunna what, it's sticking up so stiff upon my head."

"Spake to it in English, Ned," said they, "till we hear what it will say. Ax it does anything trouble it; or whether its *sowl's* in Purgatory."

"Wouldn't it be betther," observed another, "to ax it who murthered it; maybe it wants to discover that?"

"In the—na-me of Go-o-d-ness," said Ned, down to me, "what are you?"

"I'm the soul," I replied in the same voice, "of the pedlar that was murdered on the bridge below."

"And—who—was—it, sur, wid—submission, that—murdhered—you?"

To this I made no reply.

"I say," continued Ned, "in—the—name—of—G-o-o-d-ness—who was it—that took the liberty of murdhering you, dacent man?"

"Ned Corrigan," I answered, giving his own name.

"Hem! God presarve us! Ned Corrigan!" he exclaimed. "What Ned, for there's two of them—is it myself or the *other* vagabone?"

"Yourself, you murderer!" I replied.

"Ho!" said Ned, getting quite stout, "is that you, neighbor? Come, now, walk out wid yourself out of that coffin, you vagabone you, whoever you are."

"What do you mane, Ned, by spaking to it that-a-way?" the rest inquired.

"Hut," said Ned, "it's some fellow or other that's playing a thrick upon us. Sure I never knew either act nor part of the murdher, nor of the murdherers; and you know, if it was anything of that nature, it couldn't tell me a lie, and me a Scapularian along wid axing it in God's name, with Father Feasthalagh's Latin."

"Big tare-an'-ouns!" said the rest; "if we thought it was any man making fun of us, but we'd crop the ears off his head, to tache him to be joking!"

To tell the truth, when I heard this suggestion, I began to repent of my frolic; but I was determined to make another effort to finish the adventure creditably.

"Ned," said they, "throw some of the holy water on us all, and in the name of St. Pether and the Blessed Virgin, we'll go down and examine it in a body."

This they considered a good thought, and Ned was sprinkling the water about him in all directions, whilst he repeated some jargon which was completely unintelligible. They then began to approach the coffin at dead-march time, and I felt that this was the only moment in which my plan could succeed; for had I waited until they came down all would have been discovered. As soon, therefore, as they began to move towards me, I also began, with equal solemnity, to retrograde towards *them*; so that, as the

* The person who serves mass, as it is called, is he who makes the responses to the priest during that ceremony. As the mass is said in Latin the serving of it must necessarily fall upon many who are ignorant of that language, and whose pronunciation of it is, of course, extremely ludicrous.

coffin was between us, it seemed to move without human means.

"Stop, for God's sake, stop," shouted Ned; "it's movin'! It has made the coffin alive; don't you see it thravelling this way widout hand or foot, barring the boords?"

There was now a halt to ascertain the fact: but I still retrograded. This was sufficient; a cry of terror broke from the whole group, and, without waiting for further evidence, they set off in the direction they came from, at full speed, Ned flinging the jug of holy water at the coffin, lest the latter should follow, or the former encumber him in his flight. Never was there so complete a discomfiture; and so eager were they to escape, that several of them came down on the stones; and I could hear them shouting with desperation, and imploring the more advanced not to leave them behind. I instantly disentangled myself from the coffin, and left it standing exactly in the middle of the road, for the next passenger to give it a lift as far as Denis Kelly's, if he felt so disposed. I lost no time in making the best of my way home; and on passing poor Denis's house I perceived, by the bustle and noise within, that he was dead.

I had given my friends no notice of this visit; my reception was consequently the warmer, as I was not expected. That evening was a happy one, which I shall long remember. At supper I alluded to Kelly, and received from my brother a full account, as given in the following narrative, of the circumstances which caused his death.

"I need not remind you, Toby, of our schoolboy days, nor of the principles usually imbibed at such schools as that in which the two tiny factions of the Caseys and the Murphys qualified themselves, among the latter of whom you cut so distinguished a figure. You will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that these two factions are as bitter as ever, and that the boys who at Pat Mulligan's school belabored each other, in imitation of their brothers and fathers, continue to set the same iniquitous example to their children; so that this groundless and hereditary enmity is likely to descend to future generations; unless, indeed, the influence of a more enlightened system of education may check it. But, unhappily, there is a strong suspicion of the object proposed by such a system; so that the advantages likely to result from it to the lower orders of the people will be slow and distant."

"But, John," said I, "now that we are upon that subject, let me ask what really *is* the bone of contention between Irish factions?"

"I assure you," he replied, "I am almost as much at a loss, Toby, to give you a satisfactory answer, as if you asked me the elevation of the highest mountain on the moon; and I believe you would find equal difficulty in ascertaining the cause of their feuds from the factions themselves. I really am convinced they know not, nor, if I rightly understand them, do they much care. Their object is to fight, and the turning of a straw will at any time furnish them with sufficient grounds for that. I do not think, after all, that the enmity between them is purely personal: they do not hate each other individually; but having originally had one quarrel upon some trifling occasion, the beaten party cannot bear the stigma of defeat without another trial of strength. Then, if they succeed, the *onus* of retrieving lost credit is thrown upon the party that was formerly victorious. If they fail a second time, the double triumph of their conquerors excites them to a greater determination to throw off the additional disgrace; and this species of alternation perpetuates the evil.

"These habits, however, familiarize our peasantry to acts of outrage and violence—the bad passions are cultivated and nourished, until crimes, which peaceable men look upon with fear and horror, lose their real magnitude and deformity in the eyes of Irishmen. I believe this kind of undefined hatred between either parties or nations, is the most dangerous and fatal spirit which can pervade any portion of society. If you hate a man for an obvious and palpable injury, it is likely that when he cancels that injury by an act of subsequent kindness, accompanied by an exhibition of sincere sorrow, you will cease to look upon him as your enemy; but where the hatred is such that, while feeling it, you cannot, on a sober examination of your heart, account for it, there is little hope that you will ever be able to stifle the enmity that you entertain against him. This, however, in politics and religion, is what is frequently designated as principle—a word on which men, possessing higher and greater advantages than the poor ignorant peasantry of Ireland, pride themselves. In sects and parties, we may mark its effects among all ranks and nations. I, therefore, seldom wish, Toby, to hear a man assert that he is of this party or that, from *principle;* for I am usually inclined to suspect that he is not, in this case, influenced by *conviction.*

"Kelly was a man who, but for these scandalous proceedings among us, might have been now alive and happy. Although his temperament was warm, yet that warmth communicated itself to his good as well as to his evil qualities. In the beginning his fam-

ly were not attached to any faction—and when I use the word *faction*, it is in contradistinction to the word *party*—for faction, you know, is applied to a feud or grudge between Roman Catholics exclusively. But when he was young, he ardently attached himself to the Murphys; and, having continued among them until manhood, he could not abandon them, consistently with that sense of mistaken honor which forms so prominent a feature in the character of the Irish peasantry. But although the Kellys were not *faction-men*, they were bitter *party-men*, being the ringleaders of every quarrel which took place between the Catholics and Protestants, or, I should rather say, between the Orangemen and Whiteboys.

"From the moment Denis attached himself to the Murphys, until the day he received the beating which subsequently occasioned his death, he never withdrew from them. He was in all their battles; and in course of time, induced his relations to follow his example; so that, by general consent, they were nicknamed 'the Errigle Slashers.' Soon after you left the country, and went to reside with my uncle, Denis married a daughter of little Dick Magrath's, from the Race-road, with whom he got a little money. She proved a kind, affectionate wife; and, to do him justice, I believe he was an excellent husband. Shortly after his marriage his father died, and Denis succeeded him in his farm; for you know that, among the peasantry, the youngest generally gets the landed property—the elder children being obliged to provide for themselves according to their ability, as otherwise a population would multiply upon a portion of land inadequate to its support.

"It was supposed that Kelly's marriage would have been the means of producing a change in him for the better, but it did not. He was, in fact, the slave of a low, vain ambition, which constantly occasioned him to have some quarrel or other on his hands; and, as he possessed great physical courage and strength, he became the champion of the parish. It was in vain that his wife used every argument to induce him to relinquish such practices; the only reply he was in the habit of making, was a good-humored slap on the back and a laugh, saying,

"'That's it, Honor; sure and isn't that the Magraths, all over, that would let the manest spalpeen that ever chewed cheese thramp upon them, without raising a hand in their own defence; and I don't blame you for being a coward, seeing that you have their blood in your veins—not but that there ought to be something betther in you, afther all; for it's the M'Karrons, by your mother's side, that had the good dhrop of their own in them, anyhow—but you're a Magrath, out and out.'

"'And, Denis,' Honor would reply, 'it would be a blessed day for the parish, if all in it were as peaceable as the same Magraths. There would be no sore heads, nor broken bones, nor fighting, nor slashing of one another in fairs and markets, when people ought to be minding their business. You're ever and always at the Magraths, bekase they don't join you agin the Caseys or the Orangemen, and more fools they'd be to make or meddle between you, having no spite agin either of them; and it would be wiser for you to be *sed* by the Magraths, and *red* your hands out of sich ways altogether. What did ever the Murphys do to sarve you or any of your family, that you'd go to make a great man of yourself fighting for them? Or what did the poor Caseys do to make you go agin the honest people? Arrah, bad manners to me, if you know what you're about, or if *sonse** or grace can ever come of it; and mind my words, Denis, if God hasn't said it, you'll live to rue your folly for the same work.'

"At this Denis would laugh heartily. 'Well said, Honor *Magrath*, but not *Kelly*, Well, it's one comfort that our childher aren't likely to follow your side of the house, any way. Come here, Lanty; come over, acushla, to your father! Lanty, ma bouchal, what 'ill you do when you grow a man?"

"'I'll buy a horse of my own to ride on, daddy.'

"'A horse, Lanty! and so you will, ma bouchal; but that's not it—sure that's not what I mane, Lanty. What 'ill you do to the Caseys?"

"'Ho, ho! the Caseys! I'll bate the blackguards wid your blackthorn, daddy!'

"'Ha, ha, ha! that's my stout man, my brave little soger! *Wus dha lamh aciek!—give me your hand, my son!* Here, Nelly,' he would say to the child's eldest sister, 'give him a brave whang of bread, to make him able to bate the Caseys. Well, Lanty, who more will you leather, ahagur?'

"'All the Orangemen; I'll kill all the Orangemen!'

"This would produce another laugh from the father, who would again kiss and shake hands with his son, for these early manifestations of his own spirit.

"'Lanty, ma bouchal,' he would say, 'thank God, you're not a *Magrath;* 'tis you that's a *Kelly*, every blessed inch of you! and if you turn out as good a *buillagh batthah* as

* Good luck.

your father afore you, I'll be contint, avourneen!'

"'God forgive you, Denis,' the wife would reply, 'it's long before you'd think of larning him his prayers, or his catechiz, or anything that's good! Lauty, agra, come over to myself, and never heed what that man says; for, except you have some poor body's blessing, he'll bring you to no good.'

"Sometimes, however, Kelly's own natural good sense, joined with the remonstrances of his wife, prevailed for a short time, and he would withdraw himself from the connection altogether; but the force of habit and of circumstances was too strong in him, to hope that he could ever overcome it by his own firmness, for he was totally destitute of religion. The peaceable intervals of his life were therefore very short.

"One summer evening I was standing in my own garden, when I saw a man galloping up towards me at full speed. When he approached, I recognized him as one of the Murphy faction, and perceived that he was cut and bleeding.

"'Murphy,' said I, 'What's the matter!'

"'Hard fighting, sir,' said he, 'is the matter. The Caseys gathered all their faction, bekase they heard that Denis Kelly has given us up, and they're sweeping the street wid us. I'm going hot foot for Kelly, sir, for even the very name of him will turn the tide in our favor. Along wid that, I have sent in a score of the Duggans, and, if I get in Denis, plase God we'll clear the town of them!'

"He then set off, but pulled up abruptly, and said,

"'Arrah, Mr. Darcy, maybe you'd be civil enough to lind me the loan of a sword, or bagnet, or gun, or anything that way, that would be serviceable to a body on a pinch?'

"'Yes!' said I, 'and enable you to commit murder? No, no, Murphy; I'm sorry it's not in my power to put a final stop to such dangerous quarrels!'

"He then dashed off, and in the course of a short time I saw him and Kelly, both on horseback, hurrying into the town in all possible haste, armed with their cudgels. The following day, I got my dog and gun, and sauntered about the hills, making a point to call upon Kelly. I found him with his head tied up, and his arm in a sling.

"'Well, Denis,' said I, 'I find you have kept your promise of giving up quarrels!'

"'And so I did, sir,' said Denis; 'but, sure you wouldn't have me for to go desart them, when the Caseys war three to one over them? No; God be thanked, I'm not so mane as that, anyhow. Besides, they welted both my brothers within an inch of their lives.'

"'I think they didn't miss yourself,' said I.

"'You may well say they did not, sir,' he replied: 'and, to tell God's truth, they thrashed us right and left out of the town, although we rallied three times, and came in agin. At any rate, it's the first time for the last five years that they dare go up and down the street, calling out for the face of a Murphy, or a Kelly; for they're as bitter now agin *us* as agin the Murphys themselves.'

"'Well, I hope, Denis,' I observed, 'that what occurred yesterday will prevent you from entering into their quarrels in future. Indeed, I shall not give over, until I prevail on you to lead a quiet and peaceable life, as the father of a rising family ought to do.'

"'Denis,' said the wife, when I alluded to the children, looking at him with a reproachful and significant expression—'Denis, do you hear *that!* — the *father* of a family, Denis! Oh, then, God look down on that family; but it's—Musha, God bless you and yours, sir,' said she to me, dropping that part of the subject abruptly; 'it's kind of you to trouble yourself about him, at all at all: it's what them that has a better right to do it, doesn't do.'

"'I hope,' said I, 'that Denis's own good sense will show him the folly and guilt of his conduct, and that he will not, under any circumstances, enter into their battles in future. Come, Denis, will you promise me this?'

"'If any man,' replied Denis, 'could make me do it, it's yourself, sir, or any one of your family; but if the priest of the parish was to go down on his knees before me, I wouldn't give it up till we give them vagabone Caseys one glorious battherin,' which, plase God, we'll do, and are well able to do, before a month of Sundays goes over us. Now, sir, you needn't say another word,' said he, seeing me about to speak; 'for by Him that made me we'll do it! If any man, I say, could persuade me agin it, you could; but, if we don't pay them full interest for what we got, why my name's not Denis Kelly—ay, sweep them like varmint out of the town, body and sleeves!'

"I saw argument would be lost on him, so I only observed, that I feared it would eventually end badly.

"'Och, many and many's the time, Mr. Darcy,' said Honor, 'I prophesied the same thing; and, if God hasn't said it, he'll be coming home a corpse to me some day or other; for he got as much bating, sir, as would be enough to kill a horse; and, to tell you God's truth, sir, he's breeding up his childher——'

"'Honor,' said Kelly, irritated, 'whatever I do, do I lave it in your power to say that

I'm a bad husband? so don't *rise* me by your talk, for I don't like to be provoked. I *know* it's wrong, but what can I do? Would you have me for to show the *Garran-bane*,* and lave them like a cowardly thraitor, now that the other faction is coming up to be their match? No; let what will come of it, I'll never do the mane thing—death before dishonor!'

"In this manner Kelly went on for years; sometimes, indeed, keeping quiet for a short period, but eventually drawn in, from the apprehension of being reproached with want of honor and truth, to his connection. This, truly, is an imputation which no peasant could endure; nor, were he thought capable of treachery, would he be safe from the vengeance of his own party. Many a time have I seen Kelly reeling home, his head and face sadly cut, the blood streaming from him, and his wife and some neighbor on each side of him—the poor woman weeping and deploring the senseless and sanguinary feuds in which her husband took so active a part.

"About three miles from this, down at the Long Ridge, where the Shannons live, dwelt a family of the Grogans, cousins to Denis. They were anything but industrious, although they might have lived very independently, having held a farm on what they called an *old take*, which means a long lease taken out when lands were cheap. It so happened, however, that, like too many of their countrymen, they paid little attention to the cultivation of their farm; the consequence of which neglect was, that they became embarrassed, and overburdened with arrears. Their landlord was old Sam Simmons, whose only fault to his tenants was an excess of indulgence, and a generous disposition wherever he could possibly get an opportunity to scatter his money about him, upon the spur of a benevolence which, it would seem, never ceased goading him to acts of the most Christian liberality and kindness. Along with these excellent qualities, he was remarkable for a most rooted aversion to law and lawyers; for he would lose one hundred pounds rather than recover that sum by legal proceedings, even when certain that five pounds would effect it; but he seldom or never was known to pardon a breach of the peace.

"I have always found that an *excess* of indulgence in a landlord never fails ultimately to injure and relax the industry of the tenant; at least, this was the effect which *his* forbearance produced on them. But the most extraordinary good-nature has its limits, and so had his; after repeated warning, and the most unparalleled patience on his part, he was at length compelled to determine on at once removing them from his estate, and letting his land to some more efficient and deserving tenant. He accordingly desired them to remove their property from the premises, as he did not wish, he said, to leave them without the means of entering upon another farm, if they felt so disposed. This they refused to do; adding, that they would, at least, put him to the expense of ejecting them. He then gave orders to his agent to seize; but they, in the mean time, had secreted their effects by night among their friends and relations, sending a cow to this one, and a horse to that; so that, when the bailiff came to levy his execution, he found very little, except the empty walls. They were, however, ejected without ceremony, and driven altogether off the farm, for which they had actually paid nothing for the three preceding years. In the mean time the farm was advertised to be let, and several persons had offered themselves as tenants; but what appeared very remarkable was, that the Roman Catholics seldom came a second time to make any further inquiry about it; or, if they did, Simmons observed that they were sure to withdraw their proposals, and ultimately decline having anything to do with it.

"This was a circumstance which he could not properly understand; but the fact was, that the peasantry were almost to a man members of a widely-extending system of agrarian combination, the secret influence of which intimidated such of their own religion as intended to take it, and prevented them from exposing themselves to the penalty which they knew those who should dare to occupy it must pay. In a short time, however, the matter began to be whispered about, until it spread gradually, day after day, through the parish, that those who already had proposed, or intended to propose, were afraid to enter upon the land on any terms. Hitherto, it is true, these threats floated about only in the vague form of rumor.

"The farm had been now unoccupied for about a year; party spirit ran very high among the peasantry, and no proposals came in, or were at all likely to come. Simmons then got advertisements printed, and had them posted up in the most conspicuous parts of this and the neighboring parishes. It was expected, however, that they would be torn down; but, instead of that, there was a written notice posted up immediate-

* The white horse, *i. e.*, be wanting in mettle. Tradition affirms that James the Second escaped on a white horse from the battle of the Boyne; and from this circumstance a white horse has become the emblem of cowardice.

ly under each, which ran in the following words:—

"'TAKE NOTESS.

"'Any man that'll dare to take the farm belonging to smooth Sam Simmons, and sitivated at the long ridge, will be flayed alive.

"'MAT MIDNIGHT.

"'B. N.—It's it that was latterrally occupied by the Grogans.'

"This occasioned Simmons and the other magistrates of the barony to hold a meeting, at which they subscribed to the amount of fifty pounds as a reward for discovering the author or authors of the threatening notice; but the advertisement containing the reward, which was posted in the usual places through the parish, was torn down on the first night after it was put up. In the meantime, a man, nicknamed Vengeance—Vesey Vengeance, in consequence of his daring and fearless spirit, and his bitterness in retaliating injury—came to Simmons, and proposed for the farm. The latter candidly mentioned the circumstances of the notice, and fairly told him that he was running a personal risk in taking it.

"'Leave that to me, sir,' said Vengeance; if you will set me the farm at the terms I offer, I am willing to become your tenant; and let them that posted up the notices go to old Nick, or, if they annoy me, let them take care I don't send them there. I am a *true blue*, sir—*a purple man**—have lots of fire-arms, and plenty of stout fellows in the parish ready and willing to back me; and, by the light of day! if they make or meddle with me or mine, we will hunt them in the face of the world, like so many mad dogs, out of the country: what are they but a pack of *ribles*,† that would cut our throats, if they dared?'

"'I have no objection,' said Simmons, 'that you should express a firm determination to defend your life and protect your property; but I utterly condemn the spirit with which you seem to be animated. Be temperate and sober, but be firm. I will afford you every assistance and protection in my power, both as a magistrate and a landlord; but if you speak so incautiously, the result may be serious, if not fatal, to yourself.'

"'Instead of that,' said Vengeance, 'the more a man appears to be afeard, the more danger he is in, as I know by what I have seen; but, at any rate, if they injure me, I wouldn't ask better sport than taking down the ribles—the bloody-minded villains! Isn't it a purty thing that a man darn't put one foot past the other only as *they* wish? By the light o' day, I'll pepper them!'

"Shortly after this, Vengeance, braving all their threats, removed to the farm, and set about its cultivation with skill and vigor. He had not been long there, however, when a notice was posted one night on his door, giving him ten days to clear off from this interdicted spot, threatening, in case of noncompliance, to make a bonfire of the house and offices, inmates included. The reply which Vengeance made to this was fearless and characteristic. He wrote another notice, which he posted on the chapel-door, stating that he would not budge an inch—recommending, at the same time, such as intended paying him a nightly visit to be careful that they might not chance to go home with their heels foremost. This, indeed, was setting them completely at defiance, and would, no doubt have been fatal to Vesey, were it not for a circumstance which I will now relate:—In a little dell, below Vesey's house, lived a poor woman, called Doran, a widow; she inhabited a small hut, and was principally supported by her two sons, who were servants, one to a neighboring farmer, a Roman Catholic, and the other to Dr. Ableson, rector of the parish. He who had been with the rector lost his health shortly before Vengeance succeeded the Grogans as occupier of the land in question, and was obliged to come home to his mother. He was then confined to his bed, from which, indeed, he never rose.

"This boy had been his mother's principal support—for the other was unsettled, and paid her but little attention, being like most of those in his situation, fond of drinking, dancing, and attending fairs. In short, he became a Ribbonman, and consequently was obliged to attend their nightly meetings. Now it so happened that for a considerable time after the threatening notice had been posted on Vengeance's door, he received no annoyance, although the period allowed for his departure had been long past, and the purport of the paper uncomplied with. Whether this proceeded from an apprehension on the part of the Ribbonmen of receiving a warmer welcome than they might wish, or whether they deferred the execution of their threat until Vengeance might be off his guard, I cannot determine; but the fact is, that some months had elapsed and Vengeance remained hitherto unmolested.

"During this interval the distress of Widow Doran had become known to the in-

* These terms denote certain stages of initiation in the Orange system.

† Rebels.

mates of his family, and his mother—for she lived with him—used to bring down each day some nourishing food to the sick boy. In these kind offices she was very punctual; and so great was the poverty of the poor widow, and so destitute the situation of her sick son, that, in fact, the burden of their support lay principally upon Vengeance's family.

"Vengeance was a small, thin man, with fair hair, and fiery eyes; his voice was loud and shrill, his utterance rapid, and the general expression of his countenance irritable. His motions were so quick, that he rather seemed to run than walk. He was a civil, obliging neighbor, but performed his best actions with a bad grace; a firm, unflinching friend, but a bitter and implacable enemy. Upon the whole he was generally esteemed and respected—though considered as an eccentric character, for such indeed he was. On hearing of Widow Doran's distress, he gave orders that a portion of each meal should be regularly sent down to her and her son; and from that period forward they were both supported principally from his table.

"In this way some months had passed, and still Vengeance was undisturbed in his farm. It often happened, however, that Doran's other son came to see his brother; and during these visits it was but natural that his mother and brother should allude to the kindness which they daily experienced from Vesey.

"One night, about twelve o'clock, a tap came to Widow Doran's door, who happened to be attending the invalid, as he was then nearly in the last stage of his illness. When she opened it, the other son entered, in an evident hurry, having the appearance of a man who felt deep and serious anxiety.

"'Mother,' said he, 'I was very uneasy entirely about Mick, and just started over to see him, although they don't know at home that I'm out, so I can't stay a crack; but I wish you would go to the door for two or three minutes, as I have something to say to *him*.'

"'Why, thin, Holy Mother!—Jack, a-hagur, is there anything the matther, for you look as if *you had seen something?*'*

"'Nothing worse than myself, mother,' he replied; 'nor there's nothing the matther at all—only I have a few words to say to Mick here, that's all.'

"The mother accordingly removed herself out of hearing.

"'Mick,' says the boy, 'this is a bad business—I wish to God I was clear and clane out of it.'

"'What is it?' said Mick, alarmed.

"'Murther, I'm afeard, if God doesn't turn it off of them, somehow.

"'What do you mane, man, at all?' said the invalid, raising himself, in deep emotion, on his elbow, from his poor straw bed.

"'Vengeance,' said he—'Vengeance, man—he's going to get it. I was out with the boys on Sunday evening, and *at last* it's agreed on to visit him to-morrow night. I'm sure and sartin he'll never escape, for there's more *in* for him than taking the farm, and daring them so often as he did—he shot two fingers off of a brother-in-law of Jem Reilly's one night that they war *on* for threshing him, and that's coming home to him along with the rest.'

"'In the name of God, Jack,' inquired Mick, 'what do they intend to do to him?'

"'Why,' replied Jack, 'it's agreed to put a coal in the thatch, in the first place; and although they were afeared to name what he's to get besides, I doubt they'll make a spatchcock of *himself*. They won't meddle with any other of the family, though—but *he's down* for it.'

"'Are *you* to be one of them?' asked Mick.

"'I was the third man named,' replied the other, 'bekase, they said, I knew the place.'

"'Jack,' said his emaciated brother, with much solemnity, raising himself up in the bed—'Jack, if you have act or part in that bloody business, God in his glory you'll never see. Fly the country—cut off a finger or toe—break your arm—or do something that may prevent you from being there. Oh, my God!' he exclaimed, whilst the tears fell fast down his pale cheeks—'to go to murder the man, and lave his little family widout a head or a father over them, and his wife a widow! To burn his place, widout rhime, or rason, or offince! Jack, if you go, I'll die cursing you. I'll appear to you—I'll let you rest neither night nor day, sleeping nor waking, in bed or out of bed. I'll haunt you, till you'll curse the very hour you war born.'

"'Whist, Micky,' said Jack, 'you're frightening me: I'll not go—will that satisfy you?'

"'Well, dhrop down on your two knees, there,' said Micky, 'and swear before the God that has his eye upon you this minute, that you'll have no hand in injuring him or his, while you live. If you don't do this, I'll not rest in my grave, and maybe I'll be a corpse before mornin.'

"'Well, Micky,' said Jack, who though

* This phrase means—you look as if you had seen a ghost; it is a very common one.

wild and unthinking, was a lad whose heart and affections were good, 'it would be hard for me to refuse you that much, and you not likely to be long wid me—I will;' and he accordingly knelt down and swore solemnly, in words which his brother dictated to him, that he would not be concerned in the intended murder.

"'Now, give me your hand, Jack,' said the invalid; 'God bless you—and so He will. Jack, if I depart before I see you again, I'll die happy. That man has supported me and my mother for near the last three months, bad as you all think him. Why, Jack, we would both be dead of hunger long ago, only for his family; and, my God! to think of such a murdhering intention makes my blood run cowld'——

"'You had better give him a hint, then,' said Jack, 'some way, or he'll be done for, as sure as you're stretched on that bed; but don't mintion names, if you wish to keep me from being murdhered for what I did. I must be off now, for I stole out of the barn;* and only that Atty Laghy's gone along wid the master to the —— fair, to help him to sell the two coults, I couldn't get over at all.'

"'Well, go home, Jack, and God bless you, and so He will, for what you did this night.'

"Jack accordingly departed, after bidding his mother and brother farewell.

"When the old woman came in, she asked her son if there was anything wrong with his brother, but he replied that there was not.

"'Nothing at all,' said he—'but will you get up airly in the morning, plase God, and tell Vesey Johnston that I want to see him; and—that—I have a great dale to say to him?'

"'To be sure I will, Micky; but, Lord guard us, what ails you, avourneen, you look so frightened?'

"'Nothing at all, at all, mother; but will you go where I say airly to-morrow, for me?'

"'It's the first thing I'll do, God willin',' rephed the mother. And the next morning Vesey was down with the invalid very early, for the old woman kept her word and paid him a timely visit.

"'Well, Micky, my boy,' said Vengeance, as he entered the hut, 'I hope you're no worse this morning.'

"'Not worse, sir,' replied Mick; "nor, indeed, am I anything better either, but much the same way. Sure it's I that knows very well that my time here is but short.'

"'Well, Mick, my boy,' said Vengeance, 'I hope you're prepared for death—and that you expect forgiveness, like a Christian. Look up, my boy, to God at once, and pitch the priests and their craft to ould Nick, where they'll all go at the long-run'

"'I b'lieve,' said Mick, with a faint smile, 'that you're not very fond of the priests, Mr. Johnston; but if you knew the power they possess as well as I do, you wouldn't spake of them so bad, anyhow.'

"'Me fond of them!' replied the other; 'why, man, they're a set of the most gluttonous, black-looking hypocrites that ever walked on neat's leather; and ought to be hunted out of the country—hunted out of the country, by the light of day! every one of them; for they do nothing but egg up the people against the Protestants.'

"'God help you, Mr. Johnston,' replied the invalid, 'I pity you from my heart for the opinion you hould about them. I suppose if you were sthruck dead on the spot wid a blast from the fairies, that you think a priest couldn't cure you by one word's spaking?'

"'Cure me!' said Vengeance, with a laugh of disdain; 'by the light of day! if I caught one of them curing me, I'd give him the purtiest chase you ever saw in your life, across the hills.'

"'Don't you know,' said Mick, 'that priest Dannelly cured Bob Beaty of the falling sickness—until he broke the vow that was laid upon him, of not going into a church, and the minute he crossed the church-door, didn't he dhrop down as bad as ever—and what could the minister do for him?'

"'And don't *you* know,' rejoined Vengeance, 'that that's all a parcel of the most lying stuff possible; lies—lies—all lies—and vagabondism? Why, Mick, you Papishes worship the priests; you think they can bring you to heaven at a word. By the light of day, they must have good sport laughing at you, when they get among one another. Why don't they teach you and give you the Bible to read, the ribelly rascals? but they're afraid you'd know too much then.'

"'Well, Mr. Johnston,' said Mick, 'I b'lieve you'll never have a good opinion of them, at any rate.'

"'Ay, when the sky falls,' replied Vengeance; 'but you're now on your death bed, and why don't you pitch them to ould Nick, and get a Bible? Get a Bible, man; there's a pair of them in my house, that's never used at all—except my mother's, and she's at it night and day. I'll send one of them down to you: turn yourself to God—to your Redeemer, that died on the mount of Jehoshaphat, or somewhere about Jerusalem, for your sins—and don't go out of the world

* Laboring servants in Ireland usually sleep in barns.

from the hand of a rascally priest, with a band about your eyes, as if you were at blind-man's-buff, for, by the light of day, you're as blind as a bat in a religious way.'

"'There's no use in sending me a Bible,' replied the invalid, 'for I can't read it: but, whatever you may think, I'm very willing to lave my salvation with my priest.'

"'Why, man,' observed Vengeance, 'I thought you were going to have sense at last, and that you sent for me to give you some spiritual consolation.'

"'No, sir,' replied Mick; 'I have two or three words to spake to you.'

"'Come, come, Mick, now that we're on a spiritual subject, I'll hear nothing from you till I try whether it's possible to give you a true insight into religion. Stop, now, and let us lay our heads together, that we may make out something of a dacenter creed for you to believe in than the one you profess. Tell me the truth, do you believe in the priests?'

"'How?' replied Mick; 'I believe that they're holy men—but I know they can't save me widout the Redeemer and His blessed mother.'

"'By the light above us, you're shuffling, Mick—I say you *do* believe in them—now, don't tell me to the contrary—I say you're shuffling as fast as possible.'

"'I tould you truth, sir,' replied Mick; 'and if you don't believe me, I can't help it.'

"'Don't trust in the priests, Mick; that's the main point to secure your salvation.'

"Mick, who knew his prejudices against the priests, smiled faintly, and replied—

"'Why, sir, I trust in them as bein' able to make inthercession wid God for me, that's all.'

"'They make intercession! By the stool I'm sitting on, a single word from one of them would ruin you. They, a set of ribles, to make interest for you in heaven! Didn't they rise the rebellion in Ireland?—answer me that.'

"'This is a subject, sir, we would never agree on,' replied Mick.

"'Have you the Ten Commandments?' inquired Vesey.

"'I doubt my mimory's not clear enough to have them in my mind,' said the lad, feeling keenly the imputation of ignorance, which he apprehended from Vesey's blunt observations.

"Vesey, however, had penetration enough to perceive his feelings, and, with more delicacy than could be expected from him, immediately moved the question.

"'No matter, Mick,' said he, 'if you would give up the priests, we would get over that point: as it is, I will give you a lift in the Commandments; and, as I said a while ago, if you take my advice, I'll work up a creed for you that you may depend upon. But now, for the Commandments—let me see.

"'First: Thou shalt have no other gods but me. Don't you see, man how that peppers the priests?

"'Second: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.

"'Third: That shalt not make to thyself—no, hang it no!—I'm out—that's the Second—very right. Third: Honor thy father and thy mother—you understand that, Mick? It means that you are bound to—to—just so—to honor your father and your mother, poor woman.'

"'My father—God be good to him!—is dead near fourteen years, sir,' replied Mick.

"'Well, in that case, Mick, you see all that's left for you is to honor your mother—although I'm not certain of that either; the Commandments make no allowance at all for death, and in that case why, living or dead, the surest way is to respect and obey them—that is, if the thing were'nt impossible. I wish we had blind George M'Girr here, Mick; although he's as great a rogue as ever escaped hemp, yet he'd beat the devil himself at a knotty point.'

"'His breath would be bad about a dying man,' observed Mick.

"'Ay, or a living one,' said Vesey; 'however, let us get on—we were at the Third. Fourth: Thou shalt do no murder.'

"At the word murder, Mick started, and gave a deep groan, whilst his eyes and features assumed a gaunt and hollow expression, resembling that of a man struck with an immediate sense of horror and affright.

"'Oh! for heaven's sake, sir, stop there,' said Doran, 'that brings to my mind the business I had with you, Mr. Johnston.'

"'What is it about?' inquired Vengeance, in his usual eager manner.

"'Do you mind,' said Mick, 'that a paper was stuck one night upon your door, threatening you, if you wouldn't lave that farm you're in?'

"'I do, the blood-thirsty villains! but they knew a trick worth two of coming near me.'

"'Well,' said Mick, 'a strange man, that I never seen before, came into me last night, and tould me, if I'd see you, to say that you would get a visit from the boys this night, and to take care of yourself.'

"'Give me the hand, Mick,' said Vengeance,—'give me the hand; in spite of the priests, by the light of day you're an honest fellow. This night you say, they're to come? And what are the bloody wretches to do, Mick. But I needn't ask that, for I suppose it's to murder myself, and to burn my place.'

"'I'm afeard, sir, you're not far from the truth,' replied Mick; but, Mr. Johnston, for God's sake don't mintion my name; for, if you do, I'll get myself what they were laying out for you, be burned in my bed maybe.'

"'Never fear, Mick,' replied Vengeance; 'your name will never cross my lips.'

"'It's a great thing,' said Mick, 'that would make me turn informer: but sure, only for your kindness and the goodness of your family, the Lord spare you to one another! mightn't I be dead long ago? I couldn't have one minute's peace if you or yours came to any harm when I could prevint it.'

"'Say no more, Mick,' said Vengeance, taking his hand again; 'I know that, leave the rest to me; but how do you find yourself, my poor fellow? You look weaker than you did, a good deal.'

"'Indeed I'm going very fast, sir,' replied Mick; 'I know it'll soon be over with me.'

"'Hut, no, man,' said Vengeance, drawing his hand rapidly across his eyes, and clearing his voice, 'not at all—don't say so; would a little broth serve you? or a bit of fresh meat?—or would you have a fancy for anything that I could make out for you? I'll get you wine, if you think it would do you good."

"'God reward you,' said Mick feebly—'God reward you, and open your eyes to the truth. Is my mother likely to come in, do you think?'

"'She must be here in a few minutes,' the other replied; 'she was waiting till they'd churn, that she might bring you down a little fresh milk and butter.'

"'I wish she was wid me,' said the poor lad, 'for I'm lonely wantin' her—her voice and the very touch of her hands goes to my heart. Mother, come to me, and let me lay my head upon your breast, agra máchree, for I think it will be for the last time: we lived lonely, avourneen, wid none but ourselves—sometimes in happiness, when the nabors 'ud be kind to us—and sometimes in sorrow, when there 'ud be none to help us. It's over now, mother, and I'm lavin' you for ever!'

"Vengeance wiped his eyes—'Rouse yourself, Mick,' said he, 'rouse yourself.'

"'Who is that sitting along with you on the stool?' said Mick.

"'No one,' replied his neighbor; 'but what's the matter with you, Mick?—your face is changed.'

"Mick, however, made no reply; but after a few slight struggles, in which he attempted to call upon his mother's name, he breathed his last. When Vengeance saw that he was dead—looked upon the cold, miserable hut in which this grateful and affectionate young man was stretched—and then reflected on the important service he had just rendered him, he could not suppress his tears.

"After sending down some of the females to assist his poor mother in laying him out, Vengeance went among his friends and acquaintances, informing them of the intelligence he had received, without mentioning the source from which he had it. After dusk that evening, they all flocked, as privately as possible, to his house, to the number of thirty or forty, well provided with arms and ammunition. Some of them stationed themselves in the out-houses, some behind the garden edge, and others in the dwelling-house."

When my brother had got thus far in his narrative, a tap came to the parlor-door, and immediately a stout-looking man, having the appearance of a laborer, entered the room.

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "what's the matter?"

"Why, sir," said Lachlin, scratching his head, "I had a bit of a favor to ax, if it would be plasin' to you to grant it to me."

"What is that," said my brother.

"Do you know, sir," said he, "I haven't been at a wake—let us see—this two or three years, anyhow; and, if you'd have no objection, why, I'd slip up awhile to Denis Kelly's; he's a distant relation of my own, sir; and blood's thicker than wather you know."

"I'm just glad you came in, Lachlin," said my brother, "I didn't think of you; take a chair here, and never heed the wake to-night, but sit down and tell us about the attack on Vesey Vengeance, long ago. I'll get you a tumbler of punch; and, instead of going to the wake to night, I will allow you to go to the funeral to-morrow."

"Ah, sir," said Lachlin, "you know whenever the punch is consarned, I'm aisily persuaded; but not making little of your tumbler, sir," said the shrewd fellow, "I would get two or three of them if I went to the wake."

"Well, sit down," said my brother, handing him one, "and we won't permit you to get thirsty while you're talking, at all events."

"In troth, you haven't your heart in the likes of it," said Lachlin.

"Gintlemen, your healths—*your* health, sir, and we're happy to see you wanst more. Why, thin, I remember you, sir, when you were a gorsoon, passing to school wid your satchel on your back; but, I'll be bound you're by no means as soople now as you were thin. Why, sir," turning to my brother "he could fly or kick football with the rabbits.—Well, this is raal stuff!"

"Now, Lachlin," said my brother, "give us an account of the attack you made on Vesey Vengeance's house, at the Long Ridge, when all his party were chased out of the town."

"Why, thin, sir, I ought to be ashamed to mintion it; but you see, gintleman, there was no getting over being connected wid them; but I hope your brother's *safe*, sir!"

"Oh, perfectly safe, Lachlin; you may rest assured he'll never mention it."

"Well, sir," said Lachlin, addressing himself to me, "Vesey Vengeance was—."

"Lachlin," said my brother, "he knows all about Vesey; just give an account of the attack."

"The attack, sir! no, but the chivey we got over the mountains. Why, sir, we met in an ould empty house, you see, that belonged to the Farrells of Ballyboulteen, that went over to America that spring. There war none wid us, you may be sure, but them that war *up;* * and in all we might be about sixty or seventy. The Grogans, one way or another, got it up first among them, bekase they expected Mr. Simmons would take them back when he'd find that no one else dare ventherupon their land. There war at that time two fellows down from the county Longford, in their neighborhood, of the name of Collier—although that wasn't their right name—they were here upon their keeping, for the murder of a proctor in their own part of the country. One of them was a tall, powerful fellow, with sandy hair, and red brows; the other was a slender chap, that must have been drawn into it by his brother—for he was very mild and innocent, and always persuaded us agin evil. The Grogans brought lashings of whiskey, and made them that war to go foremost amost drunk—these war the two Colliers, some of the strangers from behind the mountains, and a son of Widdy Doran's, that knew every inch about the place, for he was bred and born jist below the house a bit. He wasn't wid us, however, in regard of his brother being *under boord* that night; but, instid of him, Tim Grogan went to show the way up the little glin to the house, though, for that matther, the most of us knew it as well as he did; but we didn't like to be the first to put a hand to it, if we could help it.

"At any rate, we sot in Farrell's empty house, drinking whiskey, till they war all gathered, when about two dozen of them got the damp soot from the chimley, and rubbed it over their faces, making them so black, that their own relations couldn't know them. We then went across the country in little lots, of about six or ten, or a score, and we war glad that the wake was in Widdy Doran's, seeing that if any one would meet us, we war going to it you know, and the blackening of the faces would pass for a frolic; but there was no great danger of being met for it was now long beyant midnight.

"Well, gintlemen, it puts me into a tremble, even at this time, to think of how little we cared about doing what we were bent upon. Them that had to manage the business war more than half drunk; and, hard fortune to me! but you would think it was to a wedding they went—some of them singing songs against the law—some of them quite merry, and laughing as if they had found a mare's nest. The big fellow, Collier, had a dark lanthern wid a half-burned turf in it to light the bonfire, as they said; others had guns and pistols—some of them charged and some of them not; some had bagnets, and ould rusty swords, pitchforks, and so on. Myself had nothing in my hand but the flail I was thrashing wid that day; and to tell the thruth, the divil a step I would have gone with them, only for fraid of my health; for, as I said awhile agone, if any discovery was made afterwards, them that promised to go, and turned tail, would be marked as the informers. Neither was I so blind, but I could see that there war plenty there that would stay away if they durst.

"Well, we went on till we came to a little dark corner below the house, where we met and held a council of war upon what we should do. Collier and the other strangers from behind the mountains war to go first, and the rest were to stand round the house at a distance—he carried the lanthern, a bagnet, and a horse-pistol; and half a dozen more war to bring over bottles of straw from Vengeance's own haggard, to hould up to the thatch. It's all past and gone now—but three of the Reillys were desperate against Vesey that night, particularly one of them that he had shot about a year and a half before—that is, peppered two of the right-hand fingers of him, one night in a scuffle, as Vesey came home from an Orange lodge. Well, all went on purty fair; we had got as far as the out-houses, where we stopped, to see if we could hear any noise; but all was quiet as you plase.

"'Now, Vengeance,' says Reilly, swearing a terrible oath out of him—'you murdering Orange villain, you're going to get your pay,' says he.

"'Ay,' says Grogan, 'what he often threatened to others he'll soon meet himself, plase God—come, boys,' says he, 'bring the straw and light it, and just lay it up, my darlings, nicely to the thatch here, and ye'll see what a glorious bonfire we'll have of the black Orange villain's blankets in less than no time.'

* That is, had been made members of a secret society.

"Some of us could hardly stand this; 'Stop, boys,' cried one of Dan Slevin's sons—'stop, Vengeance is bad enough, but his wife and children never offinded us—we'll not burn the place.'

"'No,' said others, spaking out when they heard any body at all having courage to do so—'it's too bad, boys, to burn the place; for if we do,' says they, 'some of the innocent may be burned before they get from the house, or even before they waken out of their sleep.'

"'Knock at the door first,' says Slevin, 'and bring Vengeance out; let us cut the ears off of his head and lave him.'

"'Damn him!' says another, 'let us not take the vagabone's life; it's enough to take the ears from him, and to give him a *prod* or two of a bagnet on the ribs; but don't kill him.'

"'Well, well,' says Reilly, 'let us knock at the door, and get himself and the family out,' says he, 'and then we'll see what can be done wid him.'

"'Tattheration to me,' says the big Longford fellow, 'if he had sarved me, Reilly, as he did you, but I'd roast him in the flames of his own house,' says he.

"'I'd have *you* to know,' says Slevin, 'that you have no command here, Collier. I'm captain at the present time,' says he; 'and more nor what I wish shall not be done. Go over,' says he to the black faces, 'and rap him up.'

"Accordingly they began to knock at the door, commanding Vengeance to get up and come out to them.

"'Come, Vengeance,' says Collier, 'put on you, my good fellow, and come out till two or three of your neighbors, that wish you well, gets a sight of your purty face, you babe of grace!'

"'Who are you that wants me at all?' says Vengeance from within.

"'Come out, first,' says Collier; 'a few friends that has a crow to pluck with you; walk out, avourneen; or if you'd rather be roasted alive, why you may stay where you are,' says he.

"'Gentlemen,' says Vengeance, 'I have never, to my knowledge, offended any of you; and I hope you won't be so cruel as to take an industrious, hard-working man from his family, in the clouds of the night, to do him an injury. Go home, gentlemen, in the name of God, and let me and mine alone. You're all mighty dacent gentlemen, you know, and I'm determined never to make or meddle with any of you. Sure, I know right well it's purtecting me you would be, dacent gentlemen. But I don't think there's any of my neighbors there, or they wouldn't stand by and see me injured.'

"'Thrue for you, avick,' says they, giving, at the same time, a terrible patterrara agin the door, with two or three big stones.

"'Stop, stop!' says Vengeance, 'don't break the door, and I'll open it. I know you're merciful, dacent gentlemen—I know your merciful.'

"So the thief came and unbarred it quietly, and the next minute about a dozen of them that war within the house let slap at us. As God would have had it, the crowd didn't happen to be forenent the door, or numbers of them would have been shot, and the night was dark, too, which was in our favor. The first volley was scarcely over, when there was another slap from the outhouse; and after that another from the gardens; and after that, to be sure, we took to our scrapers. Several of them were very badly wounded; but as for Collier, he was shot dead, and Grogan was taken prisoner, with five more, on the spot. There never was such a chase as we got; and only that they thought there was more of us in it, they might have tuck most of us prisoners.

"'Fly, boys!' says Grogan as soon as they fired out of the house—'we've been sould,' says he, 'but I'll die game, any how,'—and so he did, poor fellow; for although he and the other four war transported, one of them never sould the pass or stagged. Not but that they might have done it, for all that, only that there was a whisper sent to them, that if they *did*, a single soul belonging to one of them wouldn't be left living. The Grogans were cousins of Denis Kelly's, that's now laid out there above.

"From the time this tuck place till after the 'sizes, there wasn't a stir among them on any side; but when that war over, the boys began to prepare. Denis, heavens be his bed, was there in his glory. This was in the spring 'sizes, and the May fair soon followed. Ah! that was the bloody sight, I'm tould—for I wasn't at it—atween the Orangemen and them. The Ribbonmen war bate though, but not till after there was a desperate fight on both sides. I was tould that Denis Kelly that day knocked down five-and-twenty men in about three-quarters of an hour; and only that long John Grimes hot him a *polthoge* on the sconce with the butt-end of the gun, it was thought the Orangemen would be beat. That blow broke his skull, and was the manes of his death. He was carried home senseless."

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "if you didn't see it, I did. I happened to be looking out of John Carson's upper window—for it wasn't altogether safe to contemplate it within reach of the missiles. It was certainly a dreadful and barbarous sight. You have

often observed the calm, gloomy silence that precedes a thunder-storm; and had you been there that day, you might have witnessed its illustration in a scene much more awful. The thick living mass of people extended from the corner-house, nearly a quarter of a mile, at this end of the town, up to the parsonage on the other side. During the early part of the day, every kind of business was carried on in a hurry and an impatience, which denoted the little chance they knew there would be for transacting it in the evening.

"Up to the hour of four o'clock the fair was unusually quiet, and, on the whole, presented nothing in any way remarkable; but after that hour you might observe the busy stir and hum of the mass settling down into a deep, brooding, portentous silence, that was absolutely fearful. The females, with dismay and terror pictured in their faces, hurried home; and in various instances you might see mothers, and wives, and sisters, clinging about the sons, husbands, and brothers, attempting to drag them by main force from the danger which they knew impended over them. In this they seldom succeeded: for the person so urged was usually compelled to tear himself from them by superior strength.

"The pedlars and basket-women, and such as had tables and standings erected in the streets, commenced removing them with all possible haste. The shopkeepers, and other inhabitants of the town, put up their shutters, in order to secure their windows from being shattered. Strangers, who were compelled to stop in town that night, took shelter in the inns and other houses of entertainment where they lodged: so that about five o'clock the street was completely clear, and free for action.

"Hitherto there was not a stroke—the scene became even more silent and gloomy, although the moral darkness of their ill-suppressed passions was strongly contrasted with the splendor of the sun, that poured down a tide of golden light upon the multitude. This contrast between the natural brightness of the evening, and the internal gloom of their hearts, as the beams of the sun rested upon the ever-moving crowd, would, to any man who knew the impetuosity with which the spirit of religious hatred was soon to rage among them, produce novel and singular sensations. For, after all, Toby, there is a mysterious connection between natural and moral things, which often invest both nature and sentiment with a feeling that certainly would not come home to our hearts if such a connection did not exist. A rose-tree beside a grave will lead us from sentiment to reflection; and any other association, where a painful or melancholy thought is clothed with a garb of joy or pleasure, will strike us more deeply in proportion as the contrast is strong. On seeing the sun or moon struggling through the darkness of surrounding clouds, I confess, although you may smile, that I feel for the moment a diminution of enjoyment—something taken, as it were, from the sum of my happiness.

"Ere the quarrel commenced, you might see a dark and hateful glare scowling from the countenances of the two parties, as they viewed and approached each other in the street—the eye was set in deadly animosity, and the face marked with an ireful paleness, occasioned at once by revenge and apprehension. Groups were silently hurrying with an eager and energetic step to their places of rendezvous, grasping their weapons more closely, or grinding their teeth in the impatience of their fury. The veterans on each side were surrounded by their respective followers, anxious to act under their direction; and the very boys seemed to be animated with a martial spirit, much more eager than that of those who had greater experience in party quarrels.

"Jem Finigan's public-house was the head-quarters and rallying-point of the Ribbonmen; the Orangemen assembled in that of Joe Sherlock, the master of an Orange lodge. About six o'clock the crowd in the street began gradually to fall off to the opposite ends of the town—the Roman Catholics towards the north, and the Protestants towards the south. Carson's window, from which I was observing their motions, was exactly half way between them, so that I had a distinct view of both. At this moment I noticed Denis Kelly coming forward from the closely condensed mass formed by the Ribbonmen: he advanced with his cravat off, to the middle of the vacant space between the parties, holding a fine oak cudgel in his hand. He then stopped, and addressing the Orangemen, said,

"'Where's Vengeance and his crew now? Is there any single Orange villain among you that dare come down and meet me here like a man? Is John Grimes there? for if he is, before we begin to take you *out of a faxe*, to hunt you altogether out of the town, ye Orange villains I would be glad that he'd step down to Denis Kelly here for two or three minutes; I'll not keep him longer.'

"There was now a stir and a murmur among the Orangemen, as if a rush was about to take place towards Denis; but Grimes, whom I saw endeavoring to curb them in, left the crowd, and advanced toward him.

"At this moment an instinctive movement among both masses took place; so that when Grimes had come within a few yards of Kelly, both parties were within two or three perches of them. Kelly was standing, apparently off his guard, with one hand thrust carelessly into the breast pocket of his waistcoat, and the cudgel in the other; but his eye was fixed calmly upon Grimes as he approached. They were both powerful, fine men—brawny, vigorous, and active; Grimes had somewhat the advantage of the other in height; he also fought with his left hand, from which circumstance he was nicknamed *Kitthouge*. He was a man of a dark, stern-looking countenance; and the tones of his voice were deep, sullen, and of appalling strength.

"As they approached each other, the windows on each side of the street were crowded; but there was not a breath to be heard in any direction, nor from either party. As for myself, my heart palpitated with anxiety. What *they* might have felt I do not know: but they must have experienced considerable apprehension; for as they were both the champions of their respective parties, and had never before met in single encounter, their characters depended on the issue of the contest.

"'Well, Grimes,' said Denis, 'sure I've often wished for this same meetin,' man, betune myself and you; I have what you're goin' to get, *in* for you this long time; but you'll get it now, avick, plase God——'

"'It was not to scould I came, you Popish, ribly rascal,' replied Grimes, 'but to give you what you're long——'

"Ere the word had been out of his mouth, however, Kelly sprung over to him; and making a feint, as if he intended to lay the stick on his ribs, he swung it past without touching him and, bringing it round his own head like lightning, made it tell with a powerful back-stroke, right on Grimes's temple, and in an instant his own face was sprinkled with the blood which sprung from the wound. Grimes staggered forwards towards his antagonist, seeing which, Kelly sprung back, and was again meeting him with full force, when Grimes, turning a little, clutched Kelly's stick in his right hand, and being left-handed himself, ere the other could wrench the cudgel from him, he gave him a terrible blow upon the back part of the head, which laid Kelly in the dust.

"There was then a deafening shout from the Orange party; and Grimes stood until Kelly should be in the act of rising, ready then to give him another blow. The coolness and generalship of Kelly, however, were here very remarkable; for, when he was just getting to his feet, 'Look at your party coming down upon me!' he exclaimed to Grimes, who turned round to order them back, and, in the interim, Kelly was upon his legs.

"I was surprised at the coolness of both men; for Grimes was by no means inflated with the boisterous triumph of his party—nor did Denis get into a blind rage on being knocked down. They approached again, their eyes kindled into savage fury, tamed down into the wariness of experienced combatants; for a short time they stood eyeing each other, as if calculating upon the contingent advantages of attack or defence. This was a moment of great interest; for, as their huge and powerful frames stood out in opposition, strung and dilated by the impulse of passion and the energy of contest, no judgment, however experienced, could venture to anticipate the result of the battle, or name the person likely to be victorious. Indeed it was surprising how the natural sagacity of these men threw their attitudes and movements into scientific form and symmetry. Kelly raised his cudgel, and placed it transversely in the air, between himself and his opponent; Grimes instantly placed his against it—both weapons thus forming a St. Andrew's cross—whilst the men themselves stood foot to foot, calm and collected. Nothing could be finer than their proportions, nor superior to their respective attitudes; their broad chests were in a line; their thick, well-set necks laid a little back, as were their bodies, without, however, losing their balance; and their fierce but calm features, grimly but placidly scowling at each other, like men who were prepared for the onset.

"At length Kelly made an attempt to repeat his former feint, with variations; for whereas he had sent the first blow to Grimes's right temple, he took measures now to reach the left; his action was rapid, but equally quick was the eye of his antagonist, whose cudgel was up in ready guard to meet the blow. It met it; and with such surprising power was it sent and opposed, that both cudgels, on meeting, bent across each other into curves. An involuntary huzza followed this from their respective parties—not so much on account of the skill displayed by the combatants as in admiration of their cudgels, and of the judgment with which they must have been selected. In fact, it was the staves, rather than the men, that were praised; and certainly the former did their duty. In a moment their shillelaghs were across each other once more, and the men resumed their former attitudes; their savage determination, their kindled eyes, the blood which disfigured the face of Grimes, and begrimed also the countenance of his

antagonist into a deeper expression of ferocity, occasioned many a cowardly heart to shrink from the sight. There they stood, gory and stern, ready for the next onset; it was first made by Grimes, who tried to practise on Kelly the feint which Kelly had before practised on him. Denis, after his usual manner, caught the blow in his open hand, and clutched the staff, with an intention of holding it until he might visit Grimes, now apparently unguarded, with a levelling blow; but Grimes's effort to wrest the cudgel from his grasp, drew all Kelly's strength to that quarter, and prevented him from availing himself of the other's defenceless attitude. A trial of muscular power ensued, and their enormous bodily strength was exhibited in the stiff tug for victory. Kelly's address prevailed; for while Grimes pulled against him with all his collected vigor, the former suddenly let go his hold, and the latter, having lost his balance, staggered back; lightning could not be more quick than the action of Kelly, as, with tremendous force, his cudgel rung on the unprotected head of Grimes, who fell, or rather was shot to the ground, as if some superior power had dashed him against it; and there he lay for a short time, quivering under the blow he had received.

"A peal of triumph now arose from Kelly's party; but Kelly himself, placing his arms a-kimbo, stood calmly over his enemy, awaiting his return to the conflict. For nearly five minutes he stood in this attitude, during which time Grimes did not stir; at length Kelly stooped a little, and peering closely into his face, exclaimed—

"'Why, then, is it acting you are?—any how, I wouldn't put it past you, you cunning vagabone; 'tis lying to take breath he is—get up, man, I'd scorn to touch you till you're on your legs; not all as one, for sure it's yourself would show me no such forbearance. Up with you, man alive, I've none of your thrachery in me. I'll not *rise* my cudgel till you're on your guard.'

"There was an expression of disdain, mingled with a glow of honest, manly generosity on his countenance, as he spoke, which made him at once the favorite with such spectators as were not connected with either of the parties. Grimes arose, and it was evident that Kelly's generosity deepened his resentment more than the blow which had sent him so rapidly to the ground; however, he was still cool, but his brows knit, his eye flashed with double fierceness, and his complexion settled into a dark blue shade, which gave to his whole visage an expression fearfully ferocious. Kelly hailed this as the first appearance of passion; *his* brow expanded as the other approached, and a dash of confidence, if not of triumph, softened in some degree the sternness of his features.

"With caution they encountered again each collected for a spring, their eyes gleaming at each other like those of tigers. Grimes made a motion as if he would have struck Kelly with his fist; and, as the latter threw up his guard against the blow, he received a stroke from Grimes's cudgel in the under part of the right arm. This had been directed at his elbow, with an intention of rendering the arm powerless: it fell short, however, yet was sufficient to relax the grasp which Kelly had of his weapon. Had Kelly been a novice, this stratagem alone would have soon vanquished him; his address, however, was fully equal to that of his antagonist. The staff dropped instantly from his grasp, but a stout thong of black polished leather, with a shining tassel at the end of it, had bound it securely to his massive wrist; the cudgel, therefore, only dangled from his arm, and did not, as the other expected, fall to the ground, or put Denis to the necessity of stooping for it—Grimes's object being to have struck him in that attitude.

"A flash of indignation now shot from Kelly's eye, and with the speed of lightning he sprung within Grimes's weapon, determined to wrest it from him. The grapple that ensued was gigantic. In a moment Grimes's staff was parallel with the horizon between them, clutched in the powerful grasp of both. They stood exactly opposite, and rather close to each other; their arms sometimes stretched out stiff and at full length, again contracted, until their faces, glowing and distorted by the energy of the contest, were drawn almost together. Sometimes the prevailing strength of one would raise the staff slowly, and with gradually developed power, up in a perpendicular position: again the reaction of opposing strength would strain it back, and sway the weighty frame of the antagonist, crouched and set into desperate resistance, along with it; whilst the hard pebbles under their feet were crumbled into powder, and the very street itself furrowed into gravel by the shock of their opposing strength. Indeed, so well matched a pair never met in contest: their strength, their wind, their activity, and their natural science appeared to be perfectly equal.

"At length, by a tremendous effort, Kelly got the staff twisted nearly out of Grimes's hand, and a short shout, half encouraging, half indignant, came from Grimes's party. This added shame to his other passions, and threw an impulse of almost superhuman strength into him: he recovered his advan-

tage, but nothing more; they twisted—they heaved their great frames against each other—they struggled—their action became rapid—they swayed each other this way and that—their eyes like fire—their teeth locked, and their nostrils dilated. Sometimes they twined about each other like serpents, and twirled round with such rapidity, that it was impossible to distinguish them—sometimes, when a pull of more than ordinary power took place, they seemed to cling together almost without motion, bending down until their heads nearly touched the ground, their cracking joints seeming to stretch by the effort, and the muscles of their limbs standing out from the flesh, strung into amazing tension.

"In this attitude were they, when Denis, with the eye of a hawk, spied a disadvantage in Grimes's position; he wheeled round, placed his broad shoulder against the shaggy breast of the other, and giving him what is called an 'inside crook,' strained him, despite of every effort, until he got him off his shoulder, and off the point of resistance. There was a cry of alarm from the windows, particularly from the females, as Grimes's huge body was swung over Kelly's shoulder, until it came down in a crash upon the hard gravel of the street, while Denis stood in triumph, with his enemy's staff in his hand. A loud huzzah followed this from all present except the Orangemen, who stood bristling with fury and shame for the temporary defeat of their champion.

"Denis again had his enemy at his mercy; but he scorned to use his advantage ungenerously; he went over, and placing the staff in his hands—for the other had got to his legs—retrograded to his place, and desired Grimes to defend himself.

"After considerable manœuvring on both sides, Denis, who appeared to be the more active of the two, got an open on his antagonist, and by a powerful blow upon Grimes's ear, sent him to the ground with amazing force. I never saw such a blow given by mortal; the end of the cudgel came exactly upon the ear, and as Grimes went down, the blood spurted out of his mouth and nostrils; he then kicked convulsively several times as he lay upon the ground, and that moment I really thought he would never have breathed more.

"The shout was again raised by the Ribbonmen, who threw up their hats, and bounded from the ground with the most vehement exultation. Both parties then waited to give Grimes time to rise and renew the battle; but he appeared perfectly contented to remain where he was: for there appeared no signs of life or motion in him.

"'Have you got your *gruel*, boy?' said Kelly, going over to where he lay;—'Well, you met Denis Kelly, at last, didn't you? and there you lie; but plase God, the most of your sort will soon lie in the same state. Come, boys,' said Kelly, addressing his own party, 'now for bloody Vengeance and his crew, that thransported the Grogans and the Caffries, and murdered Collier. Now, boys, have at the murderers, and let us have satisfaction for all!'

"A mutual rush instantly took place; but, ere the Orangemen came down to where Grimes lay, Kelly had taken his staff, and handed it to one of his own party. It is impossible to describe the scene that ensued. The noise of the blows, the shouting, the yelling, the groans, the scalped heads, and gory visages, gave both to the ear and eye an impression that could not easily be forgotten. The battle was obstinately maintained on both sides for nearly an hour, and with a skill of manœuvring, attack, and retreat, that was astonishing.

"Both parties arranged themselves against each other, forming something like two lines of battle, and these extended along the town nearly from one end to the other. It was curious to remark the difference in the persons and appearances of the combatants. In the Orange line the men were taller, and of more powerful frames; but the Ribbonmen were more hardy, active, and courageous. Man to man, notwithstanding their superior bodily strength, the Orangemen could never fight the others; the former depend too much upon their fire and side-arms, but they are by no means so well trained to the use of the cudgel as their enemies. In the district where the scene of this fight is laid, the Catholics generally inhabit the mountainous part of the country, to which, when the civil feuds of worse times prevailed, they had been driven at the point of the bayonet; the Protestants and Presbyterians, on the other hand, who came in upon their possessions, occupy the richer and more fertile tracts of the land; being more wealthy, they live with less labor, and on better food. The characteristic features produced by these causes are such as might be expected—the Catholic being, like his soil, hardy, thin, and capable of bearing all weathers; and the Protestants, larger, softer, and more inactive.

"Their advance to the first onset was far different from a faction fight. There existed a silence here, that powerfully evinced the inextinguishable animosity with which they encountered. For some time they fought in two compact bodies, that remained unbroken so long as the chances of victory were doubtful. Men went down, and were up, and went

down in all directions, with uncommon rapidity; and as the weighty phalanx of Orangemen stood out against the nimble line of their mountain adversaries, the intrepid spirit of the latter, and their surprising skill and activity soon gave symptoms of a gradual superiority in the conflict. In the course of about half an hour, the Orange party began to give way in the northern end of the town; and as their opponents pressed them warmly and with unsparing hand, the heavy mass formed by their numbers began to break, and this decomposition ran up their line until in a short time they were thrown into utter confusion. They now fought in detached parties; but these subordinate conflicts, though shorter in duration than the shock of the general battle, were much more inhuman and destructive; for whenever any particular gang succeeded in putting their adversaries to flight, they usually ran to the assistance of their friends in the nearest fight—by which means they often fought three to one. In these instances the persons inferior in numbers suffered such barbarities, as it would be painful to detail.

"There lived a short distance out of the town a man nicknamed Jemsy Boccagh, on account of his lameness—he was also sometimes called 'Hop-an'-go-constant,' who fell the first victim to party spirit. He had got arms on seeing his friends likely to be defeated, and had the hardihood to follow, with charged bayonet, a few Ribbonmen, whom he attempted to intercept, as they fled from a large number of their enemies, who had got them separated from their comrades. Boccagh ran across a field, in order to get before them in the road, and was in the act of climbing a ditch, when one of them, who carried a spade-shaft, struck him a blow on the head, which put an end to his existence.*

"This circumstance imparted, of course, fiercer hatred to both parties,—triumph inspiring the one, a thirst for vengeance nerving the other. Kelly inflicted tremendous punishment in every direction; for scarcely a blow fell from him which did not bring a man to the ground. It absolutely resembled a military engagement, for the number of combatants amounted at least to four thousand men. In many places the street was covered with small pools and clots of blood, which flowed from those who lay insensible—while others were borne away bleeding, groaning, or staggering, having been battered into a total unconsciousness of the scene about them.

"At length the Orangemen gave way, and their enemies, yelling with madness and revenge, began to beat them with unrestrained fury. The former, finding that they could not resist the impetuous tide which burst upon them, fled back past the church, and stopped not until they had reached an elevation, on which lay two or three heaps of stones, that had been collected for the purpose of paving the streets. Here they made a stand, and commenced a vigorous discharge of them against their pursuers. This checked the latter; and the others, seeing them hesitate and likely to retreat from the missiles, pelted them with such effect, that the tables became turned, and the Ribbonmen made a speedy flight back into the town.

"In the meantime several Orangemen had gone into Sherlock's, where a considerable number of arms had been deposited, with an intention of resorting to them in case of a defeat at the cudgels. These now came out, and met the Ribbonmen on their flight from those who were pelting them with the stones. A dreadful scene ensued. The Ribbonmen, who had the advantage in numbers, finding themselves intercepted before by those who had arms, and pursued behind by those who had recourse to the stones, fought with uncommon bravery and desperation. Kelly, who was furious, but still collected and decisive, shouted out in Irish, lest the opposite party might understand him, 'Let every *two* men seize upon *one* of those who have the arms.'

"This was attempted, and effected with partial success; and I have no doubt but the Orangemen would have been ultimately beaten and deprived of their weapons, were it not that many of them, who had got their pistols out of Sherlock's, discharged them among their enemies, and wounded several. The Catholics could not stand this; but wishing to retaliate as effectually as possible, lifted stones wherever they could find them, and kept up the fight at a distance, as they retreated. On both sides, wherever a solitary foe was caught straggling from the rest, he was instantly punished with a most cruel and blood-thirsty spirit.

"It was just about this time that I saw Kelly engaged with two men, whom he kept at bay with great ease—retrograding, however, as he fought, towards his own party. Grimes, who had for some time before this recovered and joined the fight once more, was returning, after having pursued several of the Ribbonmen past the market-house,

* Fact. The person who killed him escaped to America where he got himself naturalized, and when the British government claimed him, he pleaded his privilege of being an American citizen, and he was consequently not given up. Boccagh was a very violent Orangeman, and a very offensive one.

where he spied Kelly thus engaged. With a Volunteer gun in his hand, and furious with the degradation of his former defeat, he ran over and struck him with the butt-end of it upon the temple—and Denis fell. When the stroke was given, an involuntary cry of 'Murder,—foul, foul!' burst from those who looked on from the windows; and long John Steele, Grimes's father-in-law, in indignation, raised his cudgel to knock him down for this treacherous and malignant blow;—but a person out of Neal Cassidy's back-yard hurled a round stone, about six pounds in weight, at Grimes's head, that felled him to the earth, leaving him as insensible, and nearly in as dangerous a state as Kelly,—for his jaw was broken.

"By this time the Catholics had retreated out of the town, and Denis might probably have received more punishment, had those who were returning from the pursuit recognized him; but James Wilson, seeing the dangerous situation in which he lay, came out, and, with the assistance of his servant-man, brought him into his own house. When the Orangemen had driven their adversaries off the field, they commenced the most hideous yellings through the streets—got music, and played party tunes—offered any money for the face of a Papist; and any of that religion who were so unfortunate as to make their appearance, were beaten in the most relentless manner. It was precisely the same thing on the part of the Ribbonmen; if a Protestant, but above all, an Orangeman, came in their way, he was sure to be treated with barbarity; for the retaliation on either side was dreadfully unjust—the innocent suffering as well as the guilty. Leaving the window, I found Kelly in a bad state below stairs.

"'What's to be done?' said I to Wilson.

"'I know not,' replied he, 'except I put him between us on my jaunting car, and drive him home.'

"This appeared decidedly the best plan we could adopt; so, after putting to the horse, we placed him on the car, sitting one on each side of him, and, in this manner, left him at his own house.

"'Did you run no risk,' said I, 'in going among Kelly's friends, whilst they were under the influence of party feeling and exasperated passion?'

"'No,' said he; 'we had rendered many of them acts of kindness, and had never exhibited any spirit but a *friendly* one towards them; and such individuals, but only such, *might walk through a crowd of enraged Catholics or Protestants quite unmolested.*'

'The next morning Kelly's landlord, Sir W. R——, and two magistrates, were at his house, but he lay like a log, without sense or motion. Whilst they were there, the surgeon arrived, and, after examining his head, declared that the skull was fractured. During that and the following day, the house was surrounded by crowds, anxious to know his state; and nothing might be heard amongst most of them but loud and undisguised expressions of the most ample revenge. The wife was frantic; and, on seeing me, hid her face in her hands, exclaiming,

"'Ah, sir, I knew it would come to this; and you, too, tould him the same thing. *My* curse and *God's* curse on it for quarrelling! Will it never stop in the country till they rise some time and murdher one another out of the face?'

"As soon as the swelling in his head was reduced, the surgeon performed the operation of trepanning, and thereby saved his life; but his strength and intellect were gone, and he just lingered for four months, a feeble, drivelling simpleton, until, in consequence of a cold, which produced inflammation in the brain, he died, as hundreds have died before, the victim of party spirit."

Such was the account which I heard of my old school-fellow, Denis Kelly; and, indeed, when I reflected upon the nature of the education he received, I could not but admit that the consequences were such as might naturally be expected to result from it.

The next morning a relation of Mrs. Kelly's came down to my brother, hoping that, as they wished to have as decent a funeral as possible, he would be so kind as to attend it.

"Musha, God knows, sir," said the man, "it's poor Denis, heavens be his bed! that had the regard and reverence for every one, young and ould, of your father's family; and it's himself that would be the proud man, if he was living, to see you, sir, riding after his coffin."

"Well," said my brother, "let Mrs. Kelly know that I shall certainly attend, and so will my brother, here, who has come to pay me a visit. Why, I believe, Tom, you forget him!"

"Your brother, sir! Is it Master Toby, that used to cudgel the half of the country when he was at school? Gad's my life, *Masther* Toby (I was now about thirty-six), but it's your four quarters, sure enough! Arrah, thin, sir, who'd think it—you're grown so full and stout?—but, faix, you'd always the bone in you! Ah, Masther Toby!" said he, "he's lying cowld, this morning, that would be the happy man to lay his eyes wanst more upon you. Many an' many's the winther's evening did he spind, talking about the time when you and he were

*bouchals** together, and of the pranks you played at school, but especially of the time you both leathered the four Grogans, and tuck the apples from them—my poor fellow! —and now to be stretched a corpse, lavin' his poor widdy and childher behind him!"

I accordingly expressed my sorrow for Denis's death, which, indeed, I sincerely regretted, for he possessed materials for an excellent character, had not all that was amiable and good in him been permitted to run wild.

As soon as my trunk and traveling-bag had been brought from the inn, where I had left them the preceding night, we got our horses, and, as we wished to show particular respect to Denis's remains, rode up, with some of our friends, to the house. When we approached, there were large crowds of the country-people before the door of his well-thatched and respectable-looking dwelling, which had three chimneys, and a set of sash-windows, clean and well glazed. On our arrival, I was soon recognized and surrounded by numbers of those to whom I had formerly been known, who received and welcomed me with a warmth of kindness and sincerity, which it would be in vain to look for among the peasantry of any other nation.

Indeed, I have uniformly observed, that when no religious or political feeling influences the heart and principles of an Irish peasant, he is singularly sincere and faithful in his attachments, and has always a bias to the generous and the disinterested. To my own knowledge, circumstances frequently occur, in which the ebullition of party spirit is, although temporary, subsiding after the cause that produced it has passed away, and leaving the kind peasant to the natural, affectionate, and generous impulses of his character. But poor *Paddy*, unfortunately, is as combustible a material in politics or religion as in fighting—thinking it his duty to take the weak † side, without any other consideration than because it *is* the weak side.

When we entered the house I was almost suffocated with the strong fumes of tobacco-smoke, snuff, and whiskey; and as I had been an old school-fellow of Denis's, my appearance was the signal for a general burst of grief among his relations, in which the more distant friends and neighbors of the deceased joined, to keep up the *keening*.

I have often, indeed always, felt that there is something extremely touching in the Irish cry; in fact, that it breathes the very spirit of wild and natural sorrow. The Irish peasantry, whenever a death takes place, are exceedingly happy in seizing upon any contingent circumstances that may occur, and making them subservient to the excitement of grief for the departed, or the exaltation and praise of his character and virtues. My entrance was a proof of this—I had scarcely advanced to the middle of the floor, when my intimacy with the deceased, our boyish sports, and even our quarrels, were adverted to with a natural eloquence and pathos, that, in spite of my firmness, occasioned me to feel the prevailing sorrow. They spoke, or chaunted mournfully, in Irish; but the substance of what they said was as follows:—

"Oh, Denis, Denis, avourneen! you're lying low, this morning of sorrow!—lying low are you, and does not know who it is (alluding to me) that is standing over you, weeping for the days you spent together in your youth! It's yourself, *acushla agus asthore machree* (the pulse and beloved of my heart), that would stretch out the right hand warmly to welcome him to the place of his birth, where you had both been so often happy about the green hills and valleys with each other! He's here now, standing over you; and it's he, of all his family, kind and respectable as they are, that was your own favorite, Denis, *avourneen chelish!* He alone was the companion that you loved!—with no other could you be happy!—For him did you fight, when he wanted a friend in your young quarrels! and if you had a dispute with him, were you not sorry for it? Are you not now stretched in death before him, and will he not forgive you?"

All this was uttered, of course, extemporaneously, and without the least preparation. They then passed on to an enumeration of his virtues as a father, a husband, son, and brother—specified his worth as he stood related to society in general, and his kindness as a neighbor and a friend.

An occurrence now took place which may serve, in some measure, to throw light upon many of the atrocities and outrages which take place in Ireland. Before I mention it, however, I think it necessary to make a few observations relative to it. I am convinced that those who are intimately acquainted with the Irish peasantry will grant that there

* Boys.

† A gentleman once told me an anecdote, of which he was an eye-witness. Some peasants, belonging to opposite factions, had met under peculiar circumstances; there were, however, two on one side, and four on the other—in this case, there was likely to be no fight; but, in order to balance the number, one of the more numerous party joined the weak side—"bekase, boys, it would be a burnin' shame, so it would, for four to kick two; and, except I join them, by the powers, there's no chance of there being a bit of sport, or a row, at all at all!" Accordingly, he did join them, and the result of it was, that he and his party were victorious, so honestly did he fight.

is not on the earth a class of people in whom the domestic affections of blood-relationship are so pure, strong, and sacred. The birth of a child will occasion a poor man to break in upon the money set apart for his landlord, in order to keep the christening, surrounded by his friends and neighbors, with due festivity. A marriage exhibits a spirit of joy, an exuberance of happiness and delight, to be found only in the Green Island; and the death of a member of a family is attended with a sincerity of grief, scarcely to be expected from men so much the creatures of the more mirthful feelings. In fact, their sorrow is a solecism in humanity—at once deep and loud—mingled up, even in its deepest paroxysms, with a laughter-loving spirit. It is impossible that an Irishman, sunk in the lowest depths of affliction, could permit his grief to flow in all its sad solemnity, even for a day, without some glimpse of his natural humor throwing a faint and rapid light over the gloom within him. No: there is an amalgamation of sentiments in his mind which, as I said before, would puzzle any philosopher to account for. Yet it would be wrong to say, though his grief has something of an unsettled and ludicrous character about it, that he is incapable of the most subtle and delicate shades of sentiment, or the deepest and most desolating intensity of sorrow. But he laughs off those heavy vapors which hang about the moral constitution of the people of other nations, giving them a morbid habit, which leaves them neither strength nor firmness to resist calamity—which they feel less keenly than an Irishman, exactly as a healthy man will feel the pangs of death with more acuteness than one who is wasted away by debility and decay. Let any man witness an emigration, and he will satisfy himself that this is true. I am convinced that Goldsmith's inimitable description of one in his "Deserted Village," was a picture drawn from actual observation. Let him observe the emigrant, as he crosses the Atlantic, and he will find, although he joins the jest, and the laugh, and the song, that he will seek a silent corner, or a silent hour, to indulge the sorrow which he still feels for the friends, the companions, and the native fields that he has left behind him. This constitution of mind is beneficial: the Irishman seldom or never hangs himself, because he is capable of too much real feeling to permit himself to become the slave of that which is factitious. There is no void in his affections or sentiments, which a morbid and depraved sensibility could occupy; but his feelings, of what character soever they may be, are strong, because they are fresh and healthy. For this reason, I maintain, that when the domestic affections come under the influence of either grief or joy, the peasantry of no nation are capable of feeling so deeply. Even on the ordinary occasions of death, sorrow, though it alternates with mirth and cheerfulness, in a manner peculiar to themselves, lingers long in the unseen recesses of domestic life: *any hand, therefore, whether by law or violence, that plants a wound* HERE, *will suffer to the death.*

When my brother and I entered the house, the body had just been put into the coffin; and it is usual after this takes place, and before it is nailed down, for the immediate relatives of the family to embrace the deceased, and take their last look and farewell of his remains. In the present instance, the children were brought over, one by one, to perform that trying and melancholy ceremony. The first was an infant on the breast, whose little innocent mouth was held down to that of its dead father; the babe smiled upon his still and solemn features, and would have played with his grave-clothes, but that the murmur of unfeigned sorrow, which burst from all present, occasioned it to be removed. The next was a fine little girl, of three or four years, who inquired where they were going to bring her daddy, and asked if he would not soon come back to *her*.

"My daddy's sleeping a long time," said the child, "but I'll waken him till he sings me 'Peggy Slevin.' I like my daddy best, bekase I sleep wid him—and he brings me good things from the fair; he bought me this ribbon," said she, pointing to a ribbon which he had purchased for her.

The rest of the children were sensible of their loss, and truly it was a distressing scene. His eldest son and daughter, the former about fourteen, the latter about two years older, lay on the coffin, kissing his lips, and were with difficulty torn away from it.

"Oh!" said the boy, "he is going from us, and night or day we will never see him or hear him more! Oh! father—father—is that the last sight we are ever to see of your face? Why, father dear, did you die, and leave us forever?—forever—wasn't your heart good to us, and your words kind to us—Oh! your last smile is smiled—your last kiss given—and your last kind word spoken to your children that you loved, and that loved you as we did. Father, core of my heart, are you gone forever, and your voice departed? Oh! the murdherers, oh! the murdherers, the murdherers!" he exclaimed, "that killed my father; for only for them, he would be still wid us: but, by the God that's over me, if I live, night or day I will not rest, till I have blood for blood: nor do

I care who hears it, nor if I was hanged the next minute."*

As these words escaped him, a deep and awful murmur of suppressed vengeance burst from his relations. At length their sorrow became too strong to be repressed; and as it was the time to take their last embrace and look of him, they came up, and after fixing their eyes on his face in deep affliction, their lips began to quiver, and their countenances became convulsed. They then burst out simultaneously into a tide of violent grief, which, after having indulged in it for some time, they checked. But the resolution of revenge was stronger than their grief, for, standing over his dead body, they repeated, almost word for word, the vow of vengeance which the son had just sworn. It was really a scene dreadfully and terribly solemn; and I could not avoid reflecting upon the mystery of nature, which can, from the deep power of domestic affection, cause to spring a determination to crime of so black a dye. Would to God that our peasantry had a clearer sense of moral and religious duties, and were not left so much as they are to the headlong impulse of an ardent temperament and an impetuous character; and would to God that the clergy who superintend their morals, had a better knowledge of human nature, and a more liberal education!

During all this time the heart-broken widow sat beyond the coffin, looking upon what passed with a stupid sense of bereavement; and when they had all performed this last ceremony, it was found necessary to tell her that the time was come for the procession of the funeral, and they only waited for her to take, as the rest did, her last look and embrace of her husband. When she heard this, it pierced her like an arrow; she became instantly collected, and her complexion assumed a dark shade of despairing anguish, which it was an affliction even to look upon. She then stooped over the coffin, and kissed him several times, after which she ceased sobbing, and lay silently with her mouth to his.

The character of a faithful wife sorrowing for a beloved husband has that in it which compels both respect and sympathy. There was not at this moment a dry eye in the house. She still lay silent on the coffin; but, as I observed that her bosom seemed not to heave as it did a little before, I was convinced that she had become insensible. I accordingly beckoned to Kelly's brother, to whom I mentioned what I had suspected; and, on his going over to ascertain the truth, he found her as I had said. She was then brought to the air, and after some trouble recovered; but I recommended them to put her to bed, and not to subject her to any unnecessary anguish, by a custom which was really too soul-piercing to endure. This, however, was, in her opinion, the violation of an old rite, sacred to her heart and affections—she would not hear of it for an instant. Again she was helped out between her brother and brother-in-law; and, after stooping down, and doing as the others had done——

"Now," said she, "I will sit here, and keep him under my eye as long as I can—surely you won't blame me for it; you all know the kind husband he was to me, and the good right I have to be sorry for him! Oh!" she added, "is it thrue at all?—is he, my own Denis, the young husband of my early—and my first love, in good airnest, dead, and going to leave me here—me, Denis, that you loved so tindherly, and our childher, that your brow was never clouded aginst? Can I believe myself or is it a dhrame? Denis, *avick machree! avick machree!** your hand was dreaded, and a good right it had, for it was the manly hand, that was ever and always raised in defence of them that wanted a friend; abroad, in the faction-fight, against the oppressor, your name was ever feared, *acushla?*—but *at home*—AT HOME—*where was your fellow?* Denis, agrah, do you know the lips that's spaking to you?—your young bride—your heart's light—Oh! I remember the day you war married to me like yesterday. Oh! avourneen, then and since wasn't the heart of your own Honor bound up in you—yet not a word even to me. Well, agrah, machree, 'tisn't your fault, it's the first time you ever refused to spake to your own Honor. But you're dead, avourneen, or it wouldn't be so—you're dead before my eyes—husband of my heart, and all my hopes and happiness goes into the coffin and the grave along wid you, forever!"

All this time she was rocking herself from side to side, her complexion pale and ghastly as could be conceived, and the tears streaming from her eyes. When the coffin was about to be closed, she retired until it was nailed down, after which she returned with her bonnet and cloak on her, ready to accompany it to the grave. I was astonished—for I thought she could not have walked two steps without assistance; but it was the custom, and to neglect it, I found, would have thrown the imputation of insincerity upon her grief. While they were preparing to bring the coffin out, I could hear the chat and conversation of those who were standing in

* Such were the words.

* Son of my heart! Son of my heart!

crowds before the door, and occasionally a loud, vacant laugh, and sometimes a volley of them, responsive to the jokes of some rustic wit, probably the same person who acted master of the revels at the wake.

Before the coffin was finally closed, Ned Corrigan, whom I had put to flight the preceding night, came up, and repeated the *De Profundis*,* in very strange Latin, over the corpse. When this was finished, he got a jug of holy water, and after dipping his thumb in it, first made the sign of the cross upon his own forehead, and afterwards sprinkled it upon all present, giving my brother and myself an extra compliment, supposing, probably, that we stood most in need of it. When this was over, he sprinkled the corpse and the coffin in particular most profusely. He then placed two pebbles from Lough Derg,† and a bit of holy candle, upon the breast of the corpse, and having said a *Pater* and *Ave*, in which he was joined by the people, he closed the lid and nailed it down.

"Ned," said his brother, "are his feet and toes loose?"

"Musha, but that's more than myself knows," replied Ned—"Are they, Katty?" said he, inquiring from the sister of the deceased.

"Arrah, to be sure, avourneen!" answered Katty—"do you think we would lave him to be tied that way, when he'd be risin' out of his last bed at the day of judgment? Wouldn't it be too bad to have his toes tied thin, avourneen?"

The coffin was then brought out and placed upon four chairs before the door, to be keened; and, in the mean time, the friends and well-wishers of the deceased were brought into the room to get each a glass of whiskey, as a token of respect. I observed also, that such as had not seen any of Kelly's relations until then, came up, and shaking hands with them, said—"I'm sorry for your loss!" This expression of condolence was uniform, and the usual reply was, "Thank you, Mat, or Jim!" with a pluck of the skirt, accompanied by a significant nod, to follow. They then got a due share of whiskey; and it was curious, after they came out, their faces a little flushed, and their eyes watery with the strong, ardent spirits, to hear with what heartiness and alacrity they entered into Denis's praises.

When he had been keened in the street, there being no hearse, the coffin was placed upon two handspikes, which were fixed across, but parallel to each other under it. These were borne by four men, one at the end of each, with the point of it crossing his body a little below his stomach; in other parts of Ireland, the coffin is borne upon a bier on the shoulders, but this is more convenient and less distressing.

When we got out upon the road, the funeral was of great extent—for Kelly had been highly respected. On arriving at the *meera* which bounded the land he had owned, the coffin was laid down, and a loud and wailing *keene* took place over it. It was again raised, and the funeral proceeded in a direction which I was surprised to see it take, and it was not until an acquaintance of my brother's had explained the matter that I understood the cause of it. In Ireland when a murder is perpetrated, it is sometimes usual, as the funeral proceeds to the grave-yard, to bring the corpse to the house of him who committed the crime, and lay it down at his door, while the relations of the deceased kneel down, and, with an appaling solemnity, utter the deepest imprecations, and invoke the justice of heaven on the head of the murderer. This, however, is generally omitted if the residence of the criminal be completely out of the line of the funeral, but if it be possible, by any circuit, to approach it, this dark ceremony is never omitted. In cases where the crime is doubtful, or unjustly imputed, those who are thus visited come out, and laying their right hand upon the coffin, protest their innocence of the blood of the deceased, calling God to witness the truth of their asseverations; but, in cases where the crime is clearly proved against the murderer, the door is either closed, the ceremony repelled by violence, or the house abandoned by the inmates until the funeral passes.*

The death of Kelly, however, could not be actually, or, at least, directly considered a murder, for it was probable that Grimes did not inflict the stroke with an intention to take away his life, and, besides, Kelly survived it four months. Grimes's house was not more than fifteen perches from the road: and when the corpse was opposite the little bridleway that led up to it, they laid it down for a moment, and the relations of Kelly surrounded it, offering up a short prayer, with uncovered heads. It was then borne toward the house, whilst the keening commenced in a loud and wailing cry, accompanied with clapping of hands, and every other

* The *De profundis* is the psalm which, in the Roman Catholic Church, is repeated over the dead.

† Those who make a station at Lough Derg are in the habit of bringing home some of its pebbles, which are considered to be sacred and possessed of many virtues.

* Many of these striking and startling old customs have nearly disappeared, and indeed it is better that they should.

symptom of external sorrow. But, independent of their compliance with this ceremony, as an old usage, there is little doubt that the appearance of anything connected with the man who certainly occasioned Kelly's death, awoke a keener and more intense sorrow for his loss. The wailing was thus continued until the coffin was laid opposite Grimes's door; nor did it cease then, but, on the contrary, was renewed with louder and more bitter lamentations.

As the multitude stood compassionating the affliction of the widow and orphans, it was the most impressive and solemn spectacle that could be witnessed. The very house seemed to have a condemned look; and, as a single wintry breeze waved a tuft of long grass that grew on a seat of turf at the side of the door, it brought the vanity of human enmity before my mind with melancholy force. When the keening ceased, Kelly's wife, with her children, knelt, their faces towards the house of their enemy, and invoked, in the strong language of excited passion, the justice of heaven upon the head of the man who had left her a widow, and her children fatherless. I was anxious to know if Grimes would appear to disclaim the intention of murder; but I understood that he was at market—for it happened to be market-day.

"Come out!" said the widow—"come out, and look at the sight that's here before you! Come and view *your own work!* Lay but your hand upon the coffin, and the blood of him you murdhered will spout, before God and these Christian people, in your guilty face! But, oh! may the Almighty God bring *this home to you!**—May you never lave this life, John Grimes, till worse nor has overtaken me and mine fall upon you and yours! May our curse light upon you this day!—the curse, I say, of the widow and the orphans, that your bloody hand has made us, may it blast you! May you, and all belonging to you wither off of the 'airth! Night and day, sleeping and waking—like snow off the ditch, may you melt, until your name and your place be disremimbered, except to be cursed by them that will hear of you and your hand of murdher! Amin, we pray God this day!—and the widow and orphans' prayer will not fall to the ground while your guilty head is above it! Childhre, do you all say it?"

At this moment a deep, terrific murmur, or rather ejaculation, corroborative of assent to this dreadful imprecation, pervaded the crowd in a fearful manner; their countenances darkened, their eyes gleamed, and their scowling visages stiffened into an expression of determined vengeance.

When these awful words were uttered, Grimes's wife and daughters approached the window in tears, sobbing, at the same time, loudly and bitterly.

"You're wrong," said the wife—"you're wrong, Widow Kelly, in saying that my husband *murdhered* him:—he did *not* murdher him; for when you and yours were far from him, I heard John Grimes declare before the God who's to judge him, that he had no thought or intention of taking his life; he struck him in anger, and the blow did him an injury that was not intended. Don't curse him, Honor Kelly," said she, "don't curse him so fearfully; but, above all, don't curse me and my innocent childher, for *we* never harmed you, nor wished you ill! *But it was this party work did it!* Oh, my God!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands in utter bitterness of spirit, "when will it be ended between friends and neighbors, that ought to live in love and kindness together instead of fighting in this bloodthirsty manner!"

She then wept more violently, as did her daughters.

"May God give me mercy in the last day, Mrs. Kelly, as I pity from my heart and soul you and your orphans," she continued; "but don't curse us, for the love of God—for you know we should forgive our enemies, as we ourselves, that are the enemies of God, hope to be forgiven."

"May God forgive me, then, if I have wronged you or your husband," said the widow, softened by their distress; "but you know, that whether he intended his life or not, the stroke he gave him has left my childher without a father, and myself dissolate. Oh, heavens above me!" she exclaimed, in a scream of distraction and despair, "is it possible—is it thrue—that my manly husband—the best father that ever breathed the breath of life—my own Denis, is lying dead—murdhered before my eyes? Put your hands on my head, some of you—put your hands on my head, or it will go to pieces. Where are you, Denis—where are you, the strong of hand, and the tender of heart? Come to me, darling, I want you in my distress. I want comfort, Denis; and I'll take it from none but yourself, for kind was your word to me in all my afflictions!"

All present were affected; and, indeed, it was difficult to say, whether Kelly's wife or Grimes's was more to be pitied at the moment. The affliction of the latter and of her daughters was really pitiable; their sobs were loud, and the tears streamed down their

* Does not this usage illustrate the proverb of the guilt being brought home to a man, when there is no doubt of his criminality?

checks like rain. When the widow's exclamations had ceased, or rather were lost in the loud cry of sorrow which were uttered by the keeners and friends of the deceased—they, too, standing somewhat apart from the rest, joined in it bitterly; and the solitary wail of Mrs. Grimes, differing in character from that of those who had been trained to modulate the most profound grief into strains of a melancholy nature, was particularly wild and impressive. At all events, her Christian demeanor, joined to the sincerity of her grief, appeased the enmity of many; so true is it that a soft answer turneth away wrath. I could perceive, however, that the resentment of Kelly's male relations did not appear to be in any degree moderated.

The funeral again proceeded, and I remarked that whenever a strange passenger happened to meet it, he always turned back, and accompanied it for a short distance, after which he resumed his journey, it being considered unlucky to omit this usage on meeting a funeral. Denis's residence was not more than two miles from the churchyard, which was situated in the town where he had received the fatal blow. As soon as we had got on about the half of this way, the priest of the parish met us, and the funeral, after proceeding a few perches more, turned into a green field, in the corner of which stood a table with the apparatus for saying mass spread upon it.

The coffin was then laid down once more, immediately before this temporary altar; and the priest, after having robed himself, the wrong or the sable side of the vestments out, as is usual in the case of death, began to celebrate mass for the dead, the congregation all kneeling. When this was finished, the friends of the deceased approached the altar, and after some private conversation, the priest turned round, and inquired aloud—

"Who will give *Offerings?*"

The people were acquainted with the manner in which this matter is conducted, and accordingly knew what to do. When the priest put the question, Denis's brother, who was a wealthy man, came forward, and laid down two guineas on the altar; the priest took this up, and putting it on a plate, set out among the multitude, accompanied by two or three of those who were best acquainted with the inhabitants of the parish. He thus continued putting the question, distinctly, after each man had paid; and according as the money was laid down, those who accompanied the priest pronounced the name of the person who gave it, so that all present might hear it. This is also done to enable the friends of the deceased to know not only those who show them this mark of respect, but those who neglect it, in order that they may treat them in the same manner on similar occasions. The amount of money so received is very great; for there is a kind of emulation among the people, as to who will act with most decency and spirit, that is exceedingly beneficial to the priest. In such instances the difference of religion is judiciously overlooked; for although the prayers of Protestants are declined on those occasions, yet it seems the same objection does not hold good against their money, and accordingly they pay as well as the rest. When the priest came round to where I stood, he shook hands with my brother, with whom he appeared to be on very friendly and familiar terms; he and I were then introduced to each other.

"Come," said he, with a very droll expression of countenance, shaking the plate at the same time up near my brother's nose,—"Come, Mr. D'Arcy, down with your offerings, if you wish to have a friend with St. Peter when you go as far as the gates; down with your money, sir, and you shall be remembered, depend upon it."

"Ah," said my brother, pulling out a guinea, "I would with the greatest pleasure; but I fear this guinea is not orthodox. I'm afraid it has a heretical mark upon it."

"In that case," replied his Reverence laughing heartily, "your only plan is to return it to the bosom of the church, by laying it on the plate here—it will then be *within the pale*, you know."

This reply produced a great deal of good-humor among that part of the crowd which immediately surrounded them—not excepting his nearest relations, who laughed heartily.

"Well," said my brother, as he laid it on the plate, "how many prayers will you offer up in my favor for this?"

"Leave *that* to myself," said his Reverence, looking at the *money*; "it will be before you, I say, when you go to St. Peter."

He then held the plate over to me in a droll manner; and I added another guinea to my brother's gift; for which I had the satisfaction of having my name called out so loud, that it might be heard a quarter of a mile off.

"God bless you, sir," said the priest, "and I thank you."

"John," said I, when he left us, "I think that is a pleasant and rather a sensible man?"

"He's as jovial a soul," replied my brother, "as ever gave birth to a jest, and he sings a right good song. Many a convivial hour have he and I spent together; and a more hospitable man besides, never yet existed. Al-

though firmly attached to his own religion, he is no bigot; but, on the contrary, an excellent, liberal, and benevolent man."

When the offerings were all collected, he returned to the altar, repeated a few additional prayers in prime style—as rapid as lightning; and after hastily shaking the holy water on the crowd, the funeral moved on. It was now two o'clock, the day clear and frosty, and the sun unusually bright for the season. During mass, many were added to those who formed the funeral train at the outset; so that, when we got out upon the road, the procession appeared very large. After this, few or none joined it; for it is esteemed by no means "*decent*" to do so *after* mass, because, in that case, the matter is ascribed to an evasion of the offerings; but those whose delay has not really been occasioned by this motive, make it a point to pay them at the grave-yard, or after the interment, and sometimes even on the following day—so jealous are the peasantry of having any degrading suspicion attached to their generosity.

The order of the funeral now was as follows:—Foremost the women—next to them the corpse, surrounded by the relations—the eldest son, in deep affliction, "led the coffin," as chief mourner, holding in his hand the corner of a sheet or piece of linen, fastened to the *mort-cloth*, called moor-cloth. After the coffin came those who were on foot, and in the rear were the equestrians. When we were a quarter of a mile from the churchyard, the funeral was met by a dozen of singing-boys, belonging to a chapel choir, which the priest, who was fond of music, had some time before formed. They fell in, two by two, immediately behind the corpse, and commenced singing the *Requiem*, or Latin hymn for the dead.

The scene through which we passed at this time, though not clothed with the verdure and luxuriant beauty of summer, was, nevertheless, marked by that solemn and decaying splendor which characterizes a fine country, lit up by the melancholy light of a winter setting sun. It was, therefore, much more in character with the occasion. Indeed I felt it altogether beautiful; and, as the "dying day-hymn stole aloft," the dim sunbeams fell, through a vista of naked, motionless trees, upon the coffin, which was borne with a slower and more funereal pace than before, in a manner that threw a solemn and visionary light upon the whole procession. This, however, was raised to something dreadfully impressive, when the long train, thus proceeding with a motion so mournful, was seen, each, or at least the majority of them, covered with a profusion of crimson ribbons, to indicate that the corpse they bore owed his death to a deed of murder.* The circumstance of the sun glancing his rays upon the coffin was not unobserved by the peasantry, who considered it as a good omen to the spirit of the departed.

As we went up the street which had been the scene of the quarrel that proved so fatal to Kelly, the coffin was again laid down on the spot where he received his death-blow; and, as was usual, the wild and melancholy *keene* was raised. My brother saw many of Grimes's friends among the spectators, but he himself was not visible. Whether Kelly's party saw then or not, we could not say; if they did, they seemed not to notice them, for no expression of revenge or indignation escaped them.

At length we entered the last receptacle of the dead. The coffin was now placed upon the shoulders of the son and brothers of the deceased, and borne round the church-yard; whilst the priest, with his stole upon him, preceded it, reading prayers for the eternal repose of the soul. Being then laid beside the grave, a "De profundis" was repeated by the priest and the mass-server; after which a portion of fresh clay, carried from the fields, was brought to his Reverence, who read a prayer over it, and consecrated it. This is a ceremony which is never omitted at the interment of a Roman Catholic. When it was over, the coffin was laid into the grave, and the blessed clay shaken over it. The priest now took the shovel in his own hands, and threw in the three first shovelfuls—one in the name of the Father, one in the name of the Son, and one in the name of the Holy Ghost. The sexton then took it, and in a short time Denis Kelly was fixed for ever in his narrow bed.

While these ceremonies were going forward, the churchyard presented a characteristic picture. Beside the usual groups who straggle through the place, to amuse themselves by reading the inscriptions on the tombs, you might see many individuals kneeling on particular graves, where some relation lay—for the benefit of whose soul they offered up their prayers with an attachment and devotion which one cannot but admire. Sometimes all the surviving members of the family would assemble, and repeat a *Rosary* for the same purpose. Again, you might see an unhappy woman beside a newly-made grave, giving way to lamentation and sorrow for the loss of a husband, or of some beloved child. Here, you might observe the "last bed" ornamented with hoops, decked

* Certainly this wearing of red ribbons gives a very dreadful aspect to a funeral procession. It is not many years since it was witnessed in my native parish.

in white paper, emblematic of the virgin innocence of the individual who slept below; —there, a little board-cross informing you that "this monument was erected by a disconsolate husband to the memory of his beloved wife." But that which excited greatest curiosity was a sycamore-tree, which grew in the middle of the burying-ground.

It is necessary to inform the reader, that in Ireland many of the church-yards are exclusively appropriated to the interment of Roman Catholics, and, consequently, the corpse of no one who had been a Protestant would be permitted to pollute or desecrate them. This was one of them: but it appears that by some means or other, the body of a Protestant *had* been interred in it—and hear the consequence! The next morning heaven marked its disapprobation of this awful visitation by a miracle; for, ere the sun rose from the east, a full-grown sycamore had shot up out of the heretical grave, and stands there to this day, a monument at once of the profanation and its consequence. Crowds were looking at this tree, feeling a kind of awe, mingled with wonder, at the deed which drew down such a visible and lasting mark of God's displeasure. On the tombstones near Kelly's grave, men and women were seated, smoking tobacco to their very heart's content; for, with that profusion which characterizes the Irish in everything, they had brought out large quantities of tobacco, whiskey, and bunches of pipes. On such occasions it is the custom for those who attend the wake or the funeral to bring a full pipe home with them; and it is expected that, as often as it is used, they will remember to say "God be merciful to the soul of him that this pipe was over."

The crowd, however, now began to disperse; and the immediate friends of the deceased sent the priest, accompanied by Kelly's brother, to request that we would come in, as the last mark of respect to poor Denis's memory, and take a glass of wine and a cake.

"Come, Toby," said my brother, "we may as well go in, as it will gratify them; we need not make much delay, and we will still be at home in sufficient time for dinner."

"Certainly you will," said the Priest; "for you shall both come and dine with me to-day."

"With all my heart," said my brother; "I have no objection, for I know you give it good."

When we went in, the punch was already reeking from immense white jugs, that couldn't hold less than a gallon each.

"Now," said his Reverence, very properly, "you have had a decent and creditable funeral, and have managed every thing with great propriety; let me request, therefore, that you will not get drunk, nor permit yourselves to enter into any disputes or quarrels; but be moderate in what you take, and go home peaceably."

"Why, thin, your Reverence," replied the widow, "he's now in his grave, and, thank God, it's he that had the dacent funeral all out—ten good gallons did we put over you, asthore, and it's yourself that liked the dacent thing, any how—but sure, sir, it would shame him where he's lyin', if we disregarded him so far as to go home widout bringing in our friends, that didn't desart us in our throuble, an' thratin' them for their kindness."

While Kelly's brother was filling out all their glasses, the priest, my brother, and I, were taking a little refreshment. When the glasses were filled, the deceased's brother raised his in his hand, and said,—

"Well, gintlemen," addressing us, "I hope you'll pardon me for not drinking your healths first; but people, you know, can't break through an ould custom, at any rate—so I give poor Denis's health that's in his *warm* grave, and God be merciful to his sowl."*

The priest now winked at me to give them their own way; so we filled our glasses, and joined the rest in drinking "Poor Denis's health, that's now in his warm grave, and God be merciful to his soul."

When this was finished, they then drank ours, and thanked us for our kindness in attending the funeral. It was now past five o'clock; and we left them just setting into a hard bout of drinking, and rode down to his Reverence's residence.

"I saw you smile," said he, on our way, "at the blundering toast of Mat Kelly; but it would be labor in vain to attempt setting them right. What do they know about the distinctions of more refined life? Besides, I maintain, that what they said was as well calculated to express their affection, as if they had drunk honest Denis's *memory*. It is, at least, unsophisticated. But did you hear," said he, "of the apparition that was seen last night, on the mountain road above Denis's?"

"I did not *hear* of it," I replied, equivocating a little.

"Why," said he, "it is currently reported that the spirit of a murdered pedlar, which haunts the hollow of the road at Drumfurrar bridge, chased away the two servant men as they were bringing home the coffin, and that finding it a good fit, he got into it, and

* A fact.

walked half a mile along the road, with the wooden surtout upon him; and, finally, that to wind up the frolic, he left it on one end half-way between the bridge and Denis's house, after putting a crowd of the countrymen to flight. I suspect some droll knave has played them a trick. I assure you, that a deputation of them, who declared that they saw the coffin move along of itself, waited upon me this morning, to know whether they ought to have put him into the coffin, or gotten another."

"Well," said my brother, in reply to him, "after dinner we will probably throw some light upon that circumstance; for I believe my brother here knows something about it."

"So, sir," said the priest, "I perceive you have been amusing yourself at their expense."

I seldom spent a pleasanter evening than I did with Father Molloy (so he was called), who was, as my brother said, a shrewd, sensible man, possessed of convivial powers of the first order. He sang us several good songs; and, to do him justice, he had an excellent voice. He regretted very much the state of party and religious feeling, which he did every thing in his power to suppress.

"But," said he, "I have little co-operation in my efforts to communicate knowledge to my flock, and implant better feelings among them. You must know," he added, "that I am no great favorite with them. On being appointed to this parish by my bishop, I found that the young man who was curate to my predecessor had formed a party against me, thinking, by that means, eventually to get the parish himself. Accordingly, on coming here, I found the chapel doors closed on me: so that a single individual among them would not recognize me as their proper pastor. By firmness and spirit, however, I at length succeeded, after a long struggle against the influence of the curate, in gaining admission to the altar; and, by a proper representation of his conduct to the bishop, I soon made my gentleman knock under. Although beginning to gain ground in the good opinion of the people, I am by no means yet a favorite. The curate and I scarcely speak; but I hope that in the course of time, both he and they will begin to find, that by kindness and a sincere love for their welfare on my part, good-will and affection will ultimately be established among us. At least, there shall be nothing left undone, so far as I am concerned, to effect it."

It was now near nine o'clock, and my brother was beginning to relate an anecdote concerning the clergyman who had preceded Father Molloy in the parish, when a messenger from Mr. Wilson, already alluded to, came up in breathless haste, requesting the priest, for God's sake, to go down into town instantly, as the Kellys and the Grimeses were engaged in a fresh quarrel.

"My God!" he exclaimed—"when will this work have an end? But, to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I apprehended it; and I fear that something still more fatal to the parties will yet be the consequence. Mr. D'Arcy, you must try what you can do with the Grimeses, and I will manage the Kellys."

We then proceeded to the town, which was but a very short distance from the Priest's house; and, on arriving, found a large crowd before the door of the house in which the Kellys had been drinking, engaged in hard conflict. The priest was on foot, and had brought his whip with him, it being an argument, in the hands of a Roman Catholic pastor, which tells so home that it is seldom gainsaid. Mr. Molloy and my brother now dashed in amongst them: and by remonstrance, abuse, blows, and entreaty, they with difficulty succeeded in terminating the fight. They were also assisted by Mr. Wilson and other persons, who dared not, until their appearance, run the risk of interfering between them. Wilson's servant, who had come for the priest, was still standing beside me, looking on; and, while my brother and Mr. Molloy were separating the parties, I asked him how the fray commenced.

"Why, sir," said he, "it bein' market-day, the Grimeses chanced to be in town, and this came to the ears of the Kellys, who were drinking in Cassidy's here, till they got tipsy; some of them then broke out, and began to go up and down the street, shouting for the face of a murdhering Grimes. The Grimeses, sir, happened at the time to be drinking with a parcel of their friends in Joe Sherlock's, and hearing the Kellys calling out for them, why, as the dhrop, sir, was *in* on both sides, they were soon at it. Grimes has given one of the Kelly's a great bating; but Tom Grogan, Kelly's cousin, a little before we came down, I'm tould, has knocked the seven senses out of him, with the pelt of a brick-bat in the stomach."

Soon after this, however, the quarrel was got under; and, in order to prevent any more bloodshed that night, my brother and I got the Kellys together, and brought them as far as our residence, on their way home. As they went along, they uttered awful vows, and determinations of the deepest revenge, swearing repeatedly that they would shoot Grimes from behind a ditch, if they could not in any other manner have his blood. They seemed highly intoxicated; and several of them were cut and abused in a dreadful

manner; even the women were in such a state of excitement and alarm, that grief for the deceased was, in many instances, forgotten. Several of both sexes were singing; some laughing with triumph at the punishment they had inflicted on the enemy; others of them, softened by what they had drunk, were weeping in tones of sorrow that might be heard a couple of miles off. Among the latter were many of the men, some of whom, as they staggered along, with their frieze big coats hanging off one shoulder, clapped their hands, and roared like bulls, as if they intended, by the loudness of their grief then, to compensate for their silence when sober. It was also quite ludicrous to see the men kissing each other, sometimes in this maudlin sorrow, and at others when exalted into the very madness of mirth. Such as had been cut in the scuffle, on finding the blood trickle down their faces, would wipe it off—then look at it, and break out into a parenthetical volley of curses against the Grimeses; after which, they would resume their grief, hug each other in mutual sorrow, and clap their hands as before. In short, such a group could be seen nowhere but in Ireland.

When my brother and I had separated from them, I asked him what had become of Vengeance, and if he were still in the country.

"No," said he; "with all his courage and watchfulness, he found that his life was not safe; he, accordingly, sold off his property, and collecting all his ready cash, emigrated to America, where, I hear, he is doing well."

"God knows," I replied, "I shouldn't be surprised if one-half of the population were to follow his example, for the state of society here, among the lower orders, is truly deplorable." "Ay, but you are to consider now," he replied, "that you have been looking at the worst of it. If you pass an unfavorable opinion upon our countrymen when in the public house or the quarrel, you ought to remember what they are under their own roofs, and in all the relations of private life."

The "Party Fight," described in the foregoing sketch, is unhappily no fiction, and it is certain that there are thousands still alive who have good reason to remember it. Such a fight, or I should rather say battle—for such in fact it was—did not take place in a state of civil society, if I can say so, within the last half century in this country. The preparations for it were secretly being made for two or three months previous to its occurrence, and however it came to light, it so happened that each party became cognizant of the designs of the other. This tremendous conflict, of which I was an eye-witness,—being then but about twelve years of age—took place in the town, or rather city, of Clogher, in my native county of Tyrone. The reader may form an opinion of the bitterness and ferocity with which it was fought on both sides when he is informed that the Orangemen on the one side, and the Ribbonmen on the other, had called in aid from the surrounding counties of Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Derry; and, if I mistake not, also from Louth. In numbers, the belligerents could not have been less than from four to five thousand men. The fair day on which it occurred is known simply as "the Day of the great Fight."

THE LOUGH DERG PILGRIM.

In describing the habits, superstitions, and feelings of the Irish people, it would be impossible to overlook a place which occupies so prominent a position in their religious usages as the celebrated Purgatory of St. Patrick, situated in a lake that lies among the bleak and desolate looking mountains of Donegal.

It may also be necessary to state to the reader, that the following sketch, though appearing in this place, was the first production from my pen which ever came before the public. The occasion of its being written was this:—I had been asked to breakfast by the late Rev. Cæsar Otway, some time I think in the winter of 1829. About that time, or a little before, he had brought out his admirable work called, "Sketches in Ireland, descriptive of interesting portions of Donegal, Cork, and Kerry." Among the remarkable localities of Donegal, of course it was natural to suppose, that "*Lough Derg*," or the celebrated "*Purgatory of St. Patrick*," would not be omitted. Neither was it; and nothing can exceed the accuracy and truthful vigor with which he describes its situation and appearance. In the course of conversation, however, I discovered that he had never been present during the season of making the Pilgrimages, and was consequently ignorant of the religious ceremonies which take place in it. In consequence, I

gave him a pretty full and accurate account of them, and of the Station which I myself had made there. After I had concluded, he requested me to put what I had told him upon paper, adding, "I will dress it up and have it inserted in the next edition."

I accordingly went home, and on the fourth evening afterwards brought him the Sketch of the Lough Derg Pilgrim as it now appears, with the exception of some offensive passages which are expunged in this edition. —Such was my first introduction to literary life.

And here I cannot omit paying my sincere tribute of grateful recollection to a man from whom I have received so many acts of the warmest kindness. To me he was a true friend in every sense of the word. In my early trials his purse and his advice often supported, soothed, and improved me. In a literary point of view I am under the deepest obligations to his excellent judgment and good taste. Indeed were it not for him, I never could have struggled my way through the severe difficulties with which in my early career I was beset.

> "Green be the turf above thee,
> Friend of my early days;
> None knew thee but to love thee,
> Or named thee but to praise."

But to my theme, which will be better understood, as will my description of the wild rites performed on the shores of its most celebrated island, by the following extracts, taken from this able and most vivid describer of Irish scenery:

"The road from the village of Petigo leading towards Lough Derg, runs along a river tumbling over rocks; and then after proceeding for a time over a boggy valley, you ascend into a dreary and mountainous tract, extremely ugly in itself, but from which you have a fine view indeed of the greatest part of the lower lake of Lough Erne, with its many elevated islands, and all its hilly shores, green, wooded, and cultivated, with the interspersed houses of its gentry, and the comfortable cottages of its yeomanry—the finest yeomanry in Ireland—men living in comparative comfort, and having in their figures and bearing that elevation of character which a sense of loyalty and independence confers. I had at length, after traveling about three miles, arrived where the road was discontinued, and by the direction of my guide, ascended a mountain-path that brought me through a wretched village, and led to the top of a hill. Here my boy left me, and went to look for the man who was to ferry us to Purgatory, and on the ridge where I stood I had leisure to look around. To the south-west lay Lough Erne, with all its isles and cultivated shores; to the north-west lay Lough Derg, and truly never did I mark such a contrast. Lough Derg under my feet—the lake, the shores, the mountains, the accompaniments of all sorts presented the very landscape of desolation; its waters expanding in their highland solitude, amidst a wide waste of moors, without one green spot to refresh the eye, without a house or tree—all mournful in the brown hue of its far-stretching bogs, and the gray uniformity of its rocks; the surrounding mountains even partook of the sombre character of the place; their forms without grandeur, their ranges continuous and without elevation. The lake itself was certainly as fine as rocky shores and numerous islands could make it: but it was encompassed with such dreariness; it was deformed so much by its purgatorial island; the associations connected with it were of such a degrading character, that really the whole prospect before me struck my mind with a sense of painfulness, and I said to myself, 'I am already in Purgatory.' A person who has never seen the picture that was now under my eye, who had read of a place consecrated by the devotion of ages, towards which the tide of human superstition had flowed for twelve centuries, might imagine that St. Patrick's Purgatory, secluded in its sacred island, would have all the venerable and gothic accompaniments of olden time; and its ivied towers and belfried steeples, its carved windows, and cloistered arches, its long dark aisles and fretted vaults would have risen out of the water, rivalling Iona or Lindisfarn; but nothing of the sort was to be seen. The island, about half a mile from the shore, presented nothing but a collection of hideous slated houses and cabins, which gave you an idea that they were rather erected for the purpose of toll-houses or police-stations than any thing else.

"I was certainly in an interesting position. I looked southerly towards Lough Erne, with the Protestant city of Enniskillen rising amidst its waters, like the island queen of all the loyalty, and industry, and reasonable worship that have made her sons the admiration of past and present time; and before me, to the north, Lough Derg, with its far-famed isle, reposing there as the monstrous birth of a dreary and degraded superstition, the enemy of mental cultivation, and destined to keep the human understanding in the same dark unproductive state as the moorland waste that lay outstretched around. I was soon joined by my guide and by two men carrying oars, with whom I descended from the ridge on which I was perched, to-

wards the shores of the lake, where there was a sort of boat, or rather toll-house, at which the pilgrims paid a certain sum before they were permitted to embark for the island. In a few minutes we were afloat; and while sitting in the boat I had time to observe my ferrymen: one was a stupid countryman, who did not speak; the other was an old man with a woollen night-cap under his hat, a brown snuff-colored coat, a nose begrimed with snuff, a small gray eye enveloped amidst wrinkles that spread towards his temples in the form of birds' claws, and gave to his countenance a sort of leering cunning that was extremely disagreeable. I found he was the clerk of the island chapel; that he was a sort of master of the ceremonies in purgatory, and guardian and keeper of it when the station time was over and priests and pilgrims had deserted it. I could plainly perceive that he had *smoked* me out as a Protestant, that he was on his guard against me as a spy, and that his determination was to get as much and to give as little information as he could; in fact, he seemed to have the desire to obtain the small sum he expected from me with as little exposure of his cause, and as little explanation of the practices of his *craft* as possible. The man informed me that the station time was over about a month, and he confirmed my guide's remark that the Pope's jubilee had much diminished the resort of pilgrims during the present season. He informed me also that the whole district around the lough, together with all its islands, belonged to Colonel L——, a relation of the Duke of Wellington; and that this gentleman, as landlord, had leased the ferry of the island to certain persons who had contracted to pay him £260 a year; and to make up this sum, and obtain a suitable income for themselves, the ferrymen charged each pilgrim five pence. Therefore, supposing that the contractors make cent. per cent. by their contract, which it may be supposed they do, the number of pilgrims to this island may be estimated at 13,000; and, as my little guide afterwards told me (although the cunning old clerk took care to avoid it), that each pilgrim paid the priest from 1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d., therefore we may suppose that the profit to the prior of Lough Derg and his priests was no small sum.

"In a short time I arrived at the island, and as stepping out of the boat I planted my foot on the rocks of this scene of human absurdity, I felt ashamed for human nature, and looked on myself as one of the millions of fools that have, century after century, degraded their understandings by coming hither. The island I found to be of an oval shape. The buildings on it consisted of a slated house for the priests, two chapels, and a long range of cabins on the rocky surface of the island, which may contain about half an acre; there were also certain round walls about two feet high, enclosing broken stone and wooden crosses; these were called saints' beds, and around these circles, on the sharp and stony rocks, the pilgrims go on their naked knees. Altogether I may briefly sum up my view of this place, and say that it was filthy, dreary, and altogether detestable—it was a positive waste of time to visit it, and I hope I shall never behold it again." *

The following is extracted from Bishop Henry Jones's account, published in 1647:

"The island called St. Patrick's Purgatory is altogether rocky, and rather level; within the compass of the island, in the water towards the north-east, about two yards from the shore, stand certain rocks, the least of which, and next the shore, is the one St. Patrick knelt on for the third part of the night in prayer, he did another third in his cell, which is called his bed, and another third in the cave or purgatory; in this stone there is a cleft or print, said to be made by St. Patrick's knees; the other stone is much greater and further off in the lake, and covered with water, called Lachavanny: this is esteemed of singular virtue; standing thereon healeth pilgrims' feet, bleeding as they are with cuts and bruises got in going barefoot round the blessed beds.

"The entrance into the island is narrow and rocky; these rocks they report to be the guts of a great serpent metamorphosed into stones. When Mr. Copinger, a gentleman drawn thither by the fame of the place, visited it, there was a church covered with shingles dedicated to St. Patrick, and it was thus furnished: at the east end was a high altar covered with linen, over which did hang the image of our Lady with our Saviour in her arms; on the right did hang the picture of the three kings offering their presents to our Saviour; and on the left the picture of our Saviour on the cross; near the altar, and on

* FIRE AT LOUGH DERG.—On the 15th August, 1842, the station at this celebrated place was brought to a conclusion; but in the course of the night it was discovered that some of the houses were on fire, and four dwellings which, we believe, were recently erected, were altogether consumed. The people of the neighboring country directed their efforts chiefly to the preservation of the prior's house, which adjoined those in flames, and by pouring a continued supply of water against its windows, succeeded in saving it. The night being calm, and the wind in a favorable direction, the injury sustained was less than must have existed under different circumstances. The houses burnt were occupied as lodgings for pilgrims when on station.

the south side, did stand on the ground an old worm-eaten image of St. Patrick; and behind the altar was another of the same fabric, but still older in appearance, called St. Arioge; and on the right hand another image called St. Volusianus.

"Between the church and the cave there is a small rising ground, and on a heap of stones lay a little stone cross, part broken, part standing; and in the east of the church was another cross made of twigs interwoven: this is known by the name of St. Patrick's altar, on which lie three pieces of a bell, which they say St. Patrick used to carry in his hand. Here also was laid a certain knotty bone of some bigness, hollow in the midst like the nave of a wheel, and out of which issue, as it were, natural spokes: this was shown as a great rarity, being part of a great serpent's tail—one of those monsters the blessed Patrick expelled out of Ireland.

"Towards the narrowest part of the island were six circles—some call them saints' beds, or beds of penance. Pilgrims are continually praying and kneeling about these beds; and they are compassed around with sharp stones and difficult passages for the *accommodation* of such as go barefooted.

"In the farthest part northward of the island, are certain beds of stone cast together as memorials for some that are elsewhere buried; but who trust to the prayers and *merits* of those who daily resort to this Purgatory. Lastly, in this island are several Irish cabins covered with thatch, and another for shriving or confession; and there are separate places assigned for those who come from the four provinces of Ireland.

"In all, the pilgrims remain on the island nine days; they eat but once in the twenty-four hours, of oatmeal and water. They have liberty to refresh themselves with the water of the lake, which, as Roth says, 'is of such virtue, that though thou shouldst fill thyself with it, yet will it not offend; but is as if it flowed from some mineral.'

"The pilgrims at night lodge or lie on straw, without pillow or pallet, rolling themselves in their mantles, and wrapping their heads in their breeches; only on some one of the eight nights they must lie on one of the saints' beds, whichever they like."

I was, at the time of performing this station, in the middle of my nineteenth year—of quick perception—warm imagination—a mind peculiarly romantic—a morbid turn for devotion, and a candidate for the priesthood, having been made slightly acquainted with Latin, and more slightly still with Greek. At this period, however, all my faculties merged like friendly streams into the large current of my devotion. Of religion I was completely ignorant, although I had sustained a very conspicuous part in the devotions of the family, and signalized myself frequently by taking the lead in a rosary. I had often out-prayed and out-fasted an old circulating pilgrim, who occasionally visited our family; a feat on which few would have ventured; and I even arrived to such a pitch of perfection at praying, that with the assistance of young and powerful lungs, I was fully able to distance him at any *English* prayer in which we joined. But in Latin, I must allow, that owing to my imperfect knowledge of its pronunciation, and to some twitches of conscience I felt on adventuring to imitate him by overleaping this impediment, he was able to throw me back a considerable distance in his turn; so that when we both started for a *De profundis*, I was always sure to come in second. Owing to all this I was considered a young man of promise, being, moreover, as my master often told my father, a youth of prodigious parts and great *cuteness*. Indeed, on this subject my master's veracity could not be questioned; because when I first commenced Latin, I was often heard repeating the prescribed tasks in my sleep. Many of his relations had already, even upon the strength of my prospective priesthood, begun to claim relationship with our family, and before I was nineteen, I found myself godfather to a dozen godsons and as many god-daughters; every one of whom I had with unusual condescension taken under my patronage; and most of the boys were named after myself. Finding that I was thus responsible for so much, in the opinion of my friends, and having the aforesaid character of piety to sustain, I found it indispensable to make the pilgrimage. Not that I considered myself a sinner, or by any means bound to go from *that* motive, for although the opinion of my friends, as to my talents and sanctity, was exceedingly high, yet, I assure you, it cut but a very indifferent figure, when compared with my own on both these subjects.

I very well remember that the first sly attempt I ever made at a miracle was in reference to Lough Derg; I tried it by way of preparation for my pilgrimage. I heard that there had been a boat lost there, about the year 1796, and that a certain priest who was in her as a passenger, had walked very calmly across the lake to the island, after the boat and the rest of the passengers in her had all gone to the bottom. Now, I had, from my childhood, a particular prejudice against sailing in a boat, although Dick Darcy, a satirical

and heathenish old bachelor, who never went to Mass, used often to tell me, with a grin which I was never able rightly to understand, that I might have no prejudice against sailing, "because," Dick would say, "take my word for it, you'll never die by drowning." At all events, I thought to myself, that should any such untoward accident occur to me, it would be no unpleasant circumstance to imitate the priest; but that it would be infinitely more agreeable to make the first experiment in a marl-pit, on my father's farm, than on the lake. Accordingly, after three days' fasting, and praying for the power of not sinking in the water, I slipped very quietly down to the pit, and after reconnoitering the premises, to be sure there was no looker-on, I approached the brink. At this moment my heart beat high with emotion, my soul was wrapt up to a most enthusiastic pitch of faith, and my whole spirit absorbed in feelings, where hope—doubt—gleams of uncertainty—visions of future eminence—twitches of fear—reflections on my expertness in swimming—on the success of the water-walking priest afore-mentioned—and on the depth of the pond—had all insisted on an equal share of attention. At the edge of the pit grew large water-lilies, with their leaves spread over the surface; it is singular to reflect upon what slight and ridiculous circumstances the mind will seize, when wound up in this manner to a pitch of superstitious absurdity. I am really ashamed, even whilst writing this, of the confidence I put for a moment in a treacherous water-lily, as its leaf lay spread so smoothly and broadly over the surface of the pond, as if to lure my foot to the experiment. However, after having stimulated myself by a fresh pater and ave, I advanced, my eyes turned up enthusiastically to heaven—my hands resolutely clenched—my teeth locked together—my nerves set—and my whole soul strong in confidence—I advanced, I say, and lest I might give myself time to cool from this divine glow, I made a tremendous stride, planting my right foot exactly in the middle of the treacherous water-lily leaf, and the next moment was up to the neck in water. Here was devotion cooled. Happily I was able to bottom the pool, or could swim very well, if necessary; so I had not much difficulty in getting out. As soon as I found myself on the bank, I waited not to make reflections, but with a rueful face set off at full speed for my father's house, which was not far distant; the water all the while whizzing out of my clothes, by the rapidity of the motion, as it does from a water-spaniel after having been in that element. It is singular to think what a strong authority vanity has over the principles and passions in the weakest and strongest moments of both; I never was remarkable, at that open, ingenuous period of my life, for secrecy; yet did I now take especial care not to invest either this attempt at the miraculous, or its concomitant failure, with anything like narration. It was, however, an act of devotion that had a vile effect on my lungs, for it gave me a cough that was intolerable; and I never felt the infirmities of humanity more than in this ludicrous attempt to get beyond them; in which, by the way, I was nearer being successful than I had intended, though in a different sense. This happened a month before I started for Lough Derg.

It was about six o'clock of a delightful morning in the pleasant month of July, when I set out upon my pilgrimage, with a single change of linen in my pocket, and a pair of discarded shoes upon my bare feet; for, in compliance with the general rule, I wore no stockings. The sun looked down upon all nature with great good humor; everything smiled around me; and as I passed for a few miles across an upland country which stretched down from a chain of dark rugged mountains that lay westward, I could not help feeling, although the feeling was indeed checked—that the scene was exhilarating. The rough upland was in several places diversified with green spots of cultivated land, with some wood, consisting of an old venerable plantation of mountain pine, that hung on the convex sweep of a large knoll away to my right,—with a broad sheet of lake that curled to the fresh arrowy breeze of morning, on which a variety of water-fowl were flapping their wings or skimming along, leaving a troubled track on the peaceful waters behind them; there were also deep intersections of precipitous or sloping glens, graced with hazel, holly, and every description of copse-wood. On other occasions I have drunk deeply of pleasure, when in the midst of this scenery, bearing about me the young, free, and bounding spirit, its first edge of enjoyment unblunted by the collision of base minds and stony hearts, against which experience jostles us in maturer life.

The dew hung shining upon the leaves, and fell in pattering showers from the trees, as a bird, alarmed at my approach, would spring from the branch and leave it vibrating in the air behind her; the early challenge of the cock grouse, and the *quick-go-quick* of the quail, were cheerfully uttered on all sides. The rapid martins twittered with peculiar glee, or, in the light caprice of their mirth, placed themselves for a moment upon the edge of a scaur, or earthly precipice, in which their nests were built, and then shot

off again to mingle with the careering and joyful flock that cut the air in every direction. Where is the heart which could not enjoy such a morning scene? Under any other circumstances it would have enchanted me; but here, in fact, that intensity of spirit which is necessary to the due contemplation of beautiful prospects, was transferred to a gloomier object. I was under the influence of a feeling quite new to me. It was not pleasure, nor was it pain, but a chilliness of soul which proceeded from the gloomy and severe task that I had undertaken—a task which, when I considered the danger and the advantages annexed to its performance, was sufficient to abstract me from every other object. It was really the first exercise of that jealous spirit of mistaken devotion which keeps the soul in perpetual sickness, and invests the *innocent* enjoyments of life with a character of sin and severity. It was this gloomy feeling that could alone have strangled in their birth those sensations which the wisdom of God has given as a security in some degree against sin, by opening to the heart of man sources of pleasure, for which the soul is not compelled to barter away her innocence, as in those of a grosser nature. I may be wrong in analyzing the sensation, but for the first time in my life I felt anxious and unhappy; yet, according to my own opinions, I should have been otherwise. I was startled at what I experienced, and began to consider it as a secret intimation that I had chosen a wrong time for my journey. I even felt as if it would not prosper—as if some accident or misfortune would befall me ere my return. The boat might sink, as in 1796: this was quite alarming. The miraculous experiment on the pond here occurred to me with full force, and came before my imagination in a new point of view. The drenching I got had a deep and fearful meaning. It was ominous—it was prophetic—and sent by a merciful Providence to deter me from attending the pilgrimage at this peculiar time—perhaps on this particular day: to-morrow the spell might be broken, the danger past, and the difference of a single day could be nothing. Just at this moment an unlucky hare, starting from an adjoining thicket, scudded across my path, as if to fill up the measure of these ominous predictions. I paused, and my foot was on the very turn to the rightabout, when instantly a thought struck me which produced a reaction in my imagination. Might not all this be the temptation of the devil, suggested to prevent me from performing this blessed work? Might not the hare itself be some——? In short, the counter-current carried me with it. I had commenced my journey, and every one knows that when a man commences a journey it is *unlucky* to turn back. On I went, but still with a subdued and melancholy tone of feeling. If I met a cheerful countryman, his mirth found no kindred spirit in me: on the contrary, my taciturnity seemed to infect him; for, after several ineffectual attempts at conversation, he gradually became silent, or hummed a tune to himself, and, on parting, bade me a short, doubtful kind of good day, looking over his shoulder, as he departed, with a face of scrutiny and surprise.

After getting five or six miles across the country, I came out on one of these by-roads which run independently of all advantages of locality, "up hill and down dale," from one little obscure village to another. These roads are generally paved with round broad stones, laid curiously together in longitudinal rows like the buttons on a schoolboy's jacket. Owing to the infrequency of travellers on them, they are quite overgrown with grass, except in one stripe along the middle, which is kept naked by the hoofs of horses and the tread of foot passengers. There is some tradition connected with these roads, or the manner of their formation, which I do not remember.

At last I came out upon the main road; and you will be pleased to imagine to yourself the figure of a tall, gaunt, gawkish young man, dressed in a good suit of black cloth, with shirt and cravat like snow, striding solemnly along, without shoe or stocking; for about this time I was twelve miles from home, and blisters had already risen upon my feet, in consequence of the dew having gone into my shoes, which at the best were enough to cut up any man; I had therefore to strip and carry my shoes—one in my pocket, and another stuffed in my hat; being thus with great reluctance compelled to travel barefoot: yet I soon turned even this to account, when I reflected that it would enhance the merit of my pilgrimage, and that every fresh blister would bring down a fresh blessing. 'Tis true I was nettled to the soul, on perceiving the face of a laborer on the way-side, or of a traveller who met me, gradually expanding into a broad sarcastic grin, as such an unaccountable figure passed him. But these I soon began to suspect were Protestant grins; for none but heretics would presume by any means to give me a sneer. The Catholics taking me for a priest, were sure to doff their hats to me; or if they wore none, as is not unfrequent when at labor, they would catch their forelocks with their finger and thumb, and bob down their heads in the act of veneration. This attention of my brethren more than compensated for the

mirth of all other sects; in fact, their mistaking me for a priest began to give me a good opinion of myself, and perfectly reconciled me to the fatiguing severity of the journey.

I have had occasion to remark, while upon this pilgrimage, or rather long afterwards,—for I was but little versed *then* in the science of reflection—that it is impossible to calculate upon the capabilities of either body or mind, until they are drawn out by some occasion of peculiar interest, in which those of either or both are thrown upon their own energies and resources. In my opinion, the great secret or the directing principle of all enterprise rests in the motive of action; for, whenever a suitable interest can be given to the principles of human conduct, the person bound by, and feeling that interest will not only perform as much as could possibly be expected from his natural powers, but he will recruit his energies by drawing in all the adventitious aid which the various relations of that interest, as they extend to other objects, are capable of affording him. It was amazing, for instance, to observe the vigor and perseverance with which feeble, sickly old creatures, performed the necessary austerities of this dreadful pilgrimage;—creatures, who if put to the same fatigue, on any other business, would at once sink under it; but the motive supplied energy, and the infirmities of nature borrowed new strength from the deep and ardent devotion of the spirit.

The first that I suspected of being fellow pilgrims were two women whom I overtook upon the way. They were dressed in gray cloaks, striped red and blue petticoats; drugget, or linseywoolsey gowns, that came within about three inches of their ankles. Each had a small white bag slung at her back, which contained the scanty provisions for the journey, and the oaten cakes, crisp and hard-baked, for the pilgrimage to the lake. The hoods of their cloaks fell down their backs, and each dame had a spotted cotton kerchief pinned around her *dowd* cap at the chin, whilst the remainder of it fell down the shoulders, over the cloaks. Each had also a staff in her hand, which she held in a manner peculiar to a travelling woman—that is, with her hand round the upper end of it, her right thumb extended across its head, and her arm, from the elbow down, parallel with the horizon. The form of each, owing to the want of that spinal strength and vigor which characterize the erect gait of man, was bent a little forward, and this, joined to the idea produced by the nature of their journey, gave to them something of an ardent and devoted character, such as the mind and eye would seek for in a pilgrim. I saw them at some distance before me, and knew by the staves and white bags behind them that they were bound for Lough Derg. I accordingly stretched out a little that I might overtake them; for in consequence of the absorbing nature of my own reflections, my journey had only been a solitary one, and I felt that society would relieve me. I was not a little surprised, however, on finding that as soon as I topped one height of the road, I was sure to find my two old ladies a competent distance before me in the hollow (most of the northern roads are of this nature), and that when I got to the bottom, I was as sure to perceive their heads topping the next hill, and then gradually sinking out of my sight. I was surprised at this, and perhaps a little nettled, that a fresh active young fellow should not have sufficient mettle readily to overtake two women. I *did* stretch out, therefore, with some vigor, yet it was not till after a chase of two miles or so that I found myself abreast of them.

As soon as they noticed me they dropped a curtesy each, addressing me at the same time as a clergyman, and I returned their salutation with all due gravity. Upon my inquiring how far they had travelled that day, it appeared that they had actually performed a journey seven miles longer than mine: "We needn't ax your Reverence it you're for the Islan'?" said one of them. "I am," I replied, not caring to undeceive her as to my Reverentiality.

The truth was, in the midst of all my sanctity I felt proud of the old woman's mistake as to my priesthood, and really had not so much ready virtue about me, on the occasion, as was sufficient to undeceive her. I was even thankful to her for the inquiry, and thought, on a closer inspection, I perceived an uncommon portion of good sense and intelligence in her face. "My very excellent, worthy woman," said I, "how is it that you are able to travel at such a rate, when one would suppose you should be fatigued by this time, after so long a journey?" "Musha?" said she, "but your Reverence ought to know that."—I felt puzzled at this: "How should I know it?" said I. "I'm sure," she continued, "you couldn't expect a poor ould crathur o' sixty to travel at this rate, at all at all; except for raisons, your Reverence:"—looking towards me quite confidently and knowingly. This was still more oracular, and I felt very odd under it; my character for devotion was at stake, and I feared that the old lady was drawing me into a kind of vicious circle. "Your Reverence knows, that for the likes o' me, that can hardly move to the market of a Saturday, Lord help me!

an' home agin, for to travel at this rate, would be impossible, any how, except," she added, "for what I'm carryin', sir, blessed be God for it!"—peering at me again with a more knowing and triumphant look. "Why, that's true," said I, thoughtfully; and then, assuming a bit of the sacerdotal privilege, and suddenly raising my voice, although I was as innocent as the child unborn of her meaning,—"that's true; but now as you appear to be a sensible, pious woman, I hope you understand the nature of what you *are* carrying—and in a proper manner, too, for you know that's the chief point." "Why, Father dear, I do my best, avourneen; an' I ought of a sartinty to know it, bekase blessed Friar Hagan spent three days instructin' Mat and myself in it; an' more betoken, that Mat sent him a sack o' phaties, an' a bag of oats for his trouble, not forgettin' the goose he got from myself, the Micklemas afther.—Arrah how long is that ago, Katty a-haygur?" said she, addressing her companion. "Ten years," said Katty. "Oh! it's more, I'm thinkin'; it's ten years since poor Dick, God rest his sowl, died, and this was full two years afore that: but no matther, agra, I'll let your Reverence hear the prayer, at any rate." She here repeated a beautiful Irish prayer to the Blessed Virgin, of which that beginning with "Hail, holy Queen!" in the Roman Catholic prayer-books is a translation, or perhaps the original. While she was repeating the prayer, I observed her hand in her bosom, apparently extricating something, which, on being brought out, proved to be a scapular; she held it up, that I might see it: "Your Reverence," said she, "this is the ninth journey of the kind I made: but you don't wonder *now*, I bleeve, how stoutly I'm able to stump it."

"You really do stump it stoutly, as you say," I replied.

"Ay," said she, "an' not a wan' o' me but's as weak as a cat, at home scarce can put a hand to any thing; but then, your Reverence, my eldest daughter, Elish, jist minds the house, an' lets the ould mother mind the prayers, as I'm not able to do a hand's turn, worth namin'."

"But you appear to be stout and healthy," I observed, "if a person may judge by your looks."

"Glory be to them that giv it to me then! *that* I am at the present time, *padre dhceilish*. But don't you know I'm always so durin' this journey; I've a wicket heart-burn that torments the very life out o' me, all the year round till this; and what 'ud your Reverence think, but it's sure to lave me, clear and clane, and a fortnight or so afore I come here; I never wanst feels a bit iv it, while I rouse and prepare myself for the Island, nor for a month after I come here agen, Glory be to God." She then turned to her companion, and commenced, in a voice half audible—"Musha! Katty a-haygur, did ye iver lay your two livin' eyes on so young a priest? a sweet and holy crathur he is, no doubt, and has goodness in his face, may the Lord bless him!"

"Musha!" said she, "surely your Reverence can't be long afther bein' *ordained*, I'm thinkin'?" "Well, that's very strange," said I, evading her, "so you tell me your heart-burn leaves you, and that you get stout every year about the time of your pilgrimage?" "An' troth an' I do!—hut! what am I sayin'? *Indeed*, sir, may be that's more than I can say, either, your Reverence: but for sartin' it is"—"Do you mean that you do, or that you do not?" I inquired. "Indeed, your Reverence, you jist hot it—the Lord bless you, and spare you to the parents that reared ye; an' proud people may they be at having the likes of 'im, Katty avourneen"—turning abruptly to Katty, that she might disarm my interrogatories on this tender subject with a better grace—"proud people, as I said afore, the Lord may spare him to them!" We here topped a little hill, and saw the spire of a steeple, and the skirts of a country town, which a passenger told us was about three miles distant.

My feet by this time were absolutely in griskins, nor was I by any means prepared for a most unexpected proposal, which the spokeswoman, after some private conversation with the other, undertook to make. I could not imagine what the purport of the dialogue was; but I easily saw, that I myself was the subject of it, for I could perceive them glance at me occasionally, as if they felt a degree of hesitation in laying down the matter for my approval; at length she opened it with great adroitness:—"Musha, an' to be sure he will, Katty dear an' darlin'—and mightu't you know he would—the refusin' to do it isn't in his face, as any body that has eyes to see may know—*you* ashamed!—and what for would ye be ashamed?—asthore, it's 'imself that's not proud, or he wouldn't tramp it, barefooted, along wud two ould crathurs like huz; him that has no sin to answer for—but I'll spake to 'im myself, and ye'll see it's he that won't refuse it. Why thin, your Reverence, Katty an' I war thinkin', that as there's only three of us, an' the town's afore us, where we'll rest a while, plaise God—for by that time the shower that's away over there will be comin' down;—that as there's but three of us, would it be any harm if we sed a bit of a Rosary, and your Reverence to join us?"

This was, indeed, a most unexpected attack; but it was evident that I was set down by this curious woman as a paragon of piety; though indeed her object was rather to smooth the way in my mind, for what she intended should be a very excellent opinion of her own godliness.

I looked about me, and as far as my eye could reach, the road appeared solitary. I did, 'tis true, debate the matter with myself, *pro* and *con.*, for I felt the absurdity of my situation, and of this abrupt proposal, more than I was willing to suppose I did. Still, thought I, it is a serious thing to refuse praying with this poor woman, because she *is* poor—God is no respecter of person—this too is a Rosary to the Blessed Virgin; besides, nothing can be too humbling for a person when once engaged in this holy station—"So, pride, I trample you under my feet!" said I to myself, at a moment when the appearance of a respectable person on the road would have routed all my humility. I complied, however, with a very condescending grace, and to it we went. The old women pulled out their beads, and I got my hat, which had one of my shoes in it, under my arm. They requested that I would open the Rosary, which I did: and thus we kept tossing the ball of prayer from one to another along the way, whilst I was bending and sinking on the hard gravel in perfect agony.

But we had not gone far, when the shower, which we did not suppose would have fallen until we should reach the town, began to descend with greater bounty than we were at all prepared for, or than I was, at least; for I had no outside coat: but indeed the morning was so beautiful, that rain was scarcely to be apprehended. With respect to the old lady, she appeared to be better acquainted with the necessary preparations for such a journey than I had been: for as soon as the shower became heavy (and it fell very heavily), she whipped off her cloak, and before I could say a syllable to the contrary, had it pinned about me. She then drew out of a large four-cornered pocket of red cloth, that hung at her side, a hare's-skin cap, which in a twinkling was on her own cranium. But what was most singular, considering the heat of the weather, was the appearance of an excellent frieze jacket, such as porters and draymen usually wear, with two outside pockets on the sides, into one of which she drove her arm up to the elbow, and in the other hand carried her staff like a man—I thought she wore the cap, too, a little to the one side on her head. Indeed, a more ludicrous appearance could scarcely be conceived than she now exhibited. I, on the other hand, cut an original figure, being six feet high, with a short gray cloak pinned tightly about me, my black cassimere small-clothes peeping below it—my long, yellow, polar legs, unencumbered with calves, quite naked; a good hat over the cloak—but no shoes on my feet, marching thus gravely upon my pilgrimage, with two such figures!

In this singular costume did we advance, the rain all the time falling in torrents. The town, however, was not far distant, and we arrived at a little thatched house, where "dry lodgin'" was offered above the door, both to "man and baste;" and never did an unfortunate group stand more in need of *dry* lodging, for we were wet to the skin. On entering the town, we met a carriage, in which were a gentleman and two ladies: I chanced to be walking a little before the woman, but could perceive, by casting a glance into the carriage, that they were in convulsions with laughter; to which I have strong misgivings of having contributed in no ordinary degree. But I felt more indignant at the wit, forsooth, of the well-fed serving-man behind the coach, who should also have his joke upon us; for as we passed, he turned to my companion, whom he addressed as a male personage—"And why, you old villain, do you drive your cub to the 'island' pinioned in such a manner,—give him the use of his arms, you sinner!"—thus intimating that I was a booby son of her's in leading-strings. The old lady looked at him with a very peculiar expression of countenance; I thought she smiled, but never did a smile appear to me so pregnant with bitterness and cursing scorn. "Ay," said she, "there goes the well-fed heretic, that neither fasts nor prays—*his* God is his belly—they *have* the fat of the land for the present, your Reverence, but wait a bit. In the mane time, we had bether get in here a little, till this shower passes—you see the sun's beginnin' to brighten behind the rain, so it can't last long: and a bit of breakfast will do none of us any harm." We then entered the house aforesaid, which presented a miserable prospect for refreshment; but as I was in some measure identified with my fellow-travelers, I could not with a good grace give them up. I had not at the time the least experience of the world, was incapable of that discrimination which guides some people, as it were by instinct, in choosing their society, and had altogether but a poor notion of the more refined decorum of life. When we got in, the equivocal lady began to exercise some portion of authority. "Come," said she, "here's a clargyman, and you had betther lose no time in gettin' his Reverence his breakfast;" then, said the civil creature to the mistress, in the same kind of half audible tone—

"Avourneen, if you have anything comfortable, get it for him; he is generous, an' will pay you well for it; a blessed crathur he is too, as ever brought good luck under your roof; Lord love you, if ye hard him discoursin' uz along the road, as if he was one of ourselves, so mild and sweet! I'm sure I'll always have a good opinion of myself for puttin' on the jacket this bout, at any rate, as I was able to spare his Reverence the cloak, a-haygur!" the mild crathur!"

While my fellow traveller was thus talking, I had time to observe that the woman of the house was a cleanly-looking creature, with something of a sickly appearance. An old gray-headed man sat in something between a chair and a stool, formed of one solid piece of ash, supported by three legs sloping outwards; the seat of it was quite smooth by long use, and a circular row of rungs, capped by a piece of semicircular wood, shaped to receive the reclining body of whoever might occupy it, rose from the seat in presumptuous imitation of an arm-chair. There were two other chairs besides this, but the remainder of the seats were all stools. The room was square, with a bed in each of the corners adjoining the fire, covered with blue drugget quilts, stoutly quilted; there was another room in which the travellers slept. Opposite me on the wall was the appropriate picture of St. Patrick himself, with his crosier in hand, driving all kinds of venomous reptiles out of the kingdom. The Hermit of Killarney was on his right, and the Yarmouth Tragedy, or *the dolorious* history of Jemmy and Nancy, two unfortunate lovers, on his left. Such is the rigorous economy of a pilgrimage, and such is the circumstances of the greater part of those who undertake it, that it is to houses of this description the generality of them resort. These "dry lodging" houses may not improperly be called Pilgrims' Inns, a great number of them being opened only during the continuance of the three months in which the stations are performed.

Breakfast was now got ready, but it was evident that my two companions had not been taken into account; for there was "an equipage" only for one. I inquired from my speaking partner if she and her fellow-traveller would not breakfast. The only reply I received was a sorrowful shake of the head, and "Och, no, phaise your Reverence, no!" in quite an exhausted cadence. On hearing this, the kind landlady gave them a look of uncommon pity, exclaiming at the same time, as if in communication with her own feelings, "Musha, God pity them, the poor crathurs; an' they surely can't but be both wake an' hungry afther sich a journey, this blessed an' broilin' day—och! och! if I had it or could afford it, an' they shouldn't want, any way—arrah, won't ye thry and ate a bit of something?" addressing herself to them. "Och, then, no, alanna, but I'd just thank ye for a dhrink of cowld wather, if ye phase; an' that may be the strengthenin' of us a bit." I saw at once that their own little stock of provisions, if they really had any, was too scanty to allow the simple creatures the indulgence of a regular meal; still I thought they might, if they felt so very weak, have taken even the slightest refreshment from their bags. However, I was bound in honor, and also in charity, to give them their breakfast, which I ordered accordingly for them both, it being, I considered, only fair that as we had prayed together we should eat together. Whilst we were at breakfast, the landlady, with a piece of foresight for which I afterwards thanked her, warmed a pot of water, in which my feet were bathed; she then took out a large three-cornered pincushion with tassels, which hung at her side, a darning needle, and having threaded it, she drew a white woollen thread several times along a piece of soap, pressing it down with her thumb until it was quite soapy; this she drew very tenderly through the blisters which were risen on my feet, cutting it at both ends and leaving a part of it in the blister. It is decidedly the best remedy that ever was tried, for I can declare that during the remainder of my pilgrimage, not one of these *blisters* gave me the least pain.

When breakfast was over, and these kind attentions performed, we set out once more; and from this place, I remarked, as we advanced, that an odd traveller would fall in upon the way: so that before we had gone many miles farther, the fatigue of the journey was much lessened by the society of the pilgrims. These were now collected into little groups, of from three to a dozen, each, with the exception of myself and one or two others of a decenter cast, having the staff and bag. The chat and anecdotes were, upon the whole, very amusing; but although there was a great variety of feature, character, and costume among so many, as must always be the case where people of different lives, habits, and pursuits, are brought together; still I could perceive that there was a shade of strange ruminating abstraction apparent on all. I could observe the cheerful narrator relapse into a temporary gloom, or a fit of desultory reflection, as some train of thought would suddenly rise in his mind. I could sometimes perceive a shade of pain, perhaps of anguish, darken the countenance of another, as if a bitter recollection was awakened; yet this often changed, by an unexpected transition, to a gleam of joy and

satisfaction, as if a quick sense or hope of relief flashed across his heart.

When we came near Petigo, the field for observation was much enlarged. The road was then literally alive with pilgrims, and reminded me, as far as numbers were concerned, of the multitudes that flocked to market on a fair-day. Petigo is a snug little town, three or four miles from the lake, where the pilgrims all sleep on the night before the commencement of their stations. When we were about five or six miles from it, the road presented a singular variety of grouping. There were men and women of all ages, from the sprouting devotee of twelve, to the hoary, tottering pilgrim of eighty, creeping along, bent over his staff, to perform this soul-saving work, and die.

Such is the reverence in which this celebrated place is held, that as we drew near it, I remarked the conversation to become slack; every face put on an appearance of solemnity and thoughtfulness, and no man was inclined to relish the conversation of his neighbor or to speak himself. The very women were silent. Even the lassitude of the journey was unfelt, and the unfledged pilgrim, as he looked up in his father's or mother's face, would catch the serious and severe expression he saw there, and trot silently on, forgetting that he was fatigued.

For my part, I felt the spirit of the scene strongly, yet, perhaps, not with such an *exclusive* interest as others. I had not only awe, terror, enthusiasm, pride, and devotion to manage, but suffered heavy annoyance from the inroad of a villanous curiosity which should thrust itself among the statelier feelings of the occasion, and set all attempts to restrain it at defiance. It was a sad bar to my devotions, which, but for its intrusion, I might have conducted with more meritorious steadiness. How, for instance, was it possible for me to register the transgressions of my whole life, heading them under the "seven deadly sins," with such a prospect before me as the beautiful waters and shores of Lough Erne?

Despite of all the solemnity about me, my unmanageable eye would turn from the very blackest of the seven deadly offences, and the stoutest of the four cardinal virtues, to the beetling, abrupt, and precipitous rocks which hung over the lake as if ready to tumble into its waters. I broke away, too, from several "acts of contrition"* to conjecture whether the dark, shadowy inequalities which terminated the horizon, and penetrated, methought, into the very skies far beyond the lake, were mountains or clouds: a dark problem, which to this day I have not been able to solve. Nay, I was taken twice, despite of the most virtuous efforts to the contrary, from a *Salve Regina*,* to watch a little skiff, which shone with its snowy sail spread before the radiant evening sun, and glided over the waters, like an angel sent on some happy message. In fact, I found my heart on the point of corruption, by indulging in what I had set down in my vocabulary as the lust of the eye, and had some faint surmise that I was plunging into obduracy. I accordingly made a private mark with the nail of my thumb, on the "act of contrition" in my prayer-book, and another on the *Salve Regina*, that I might remember to confess for these devilish wanderings. But what all my personal piety could not effect, a lucky turn in the road accomplished, by bringing me from the view of the lake; and thus ended my temptations and my defeats on these points.

When we got into Petigo, we found the lodging-houses considerably crowded. I contrived, however, to establish myself as well as another, and in consequence of my black, dress and the garrulous industry of my epicene companion, who stuck close to me all along, was treated with more than common respect. And here I was deeply impressed with the remarkable contour of many visages, which I had now a better opportunity of examining than while on the road. There seemed every description of guilt, and every degree of religious feeling, mingled together in the same mass, and all more or less subdued by the same principle of abrupt and gloomy abstraction.

There was a little man dressed in a turned black coat, and drab cassimere small-clothes, who struck me as a remarkable figure; his back was long, his legs and thighs short and he walked on the edge of his feet. He had a pale, sorrowful face, with bags hung under his eyes, drooping eyelids, no beard, no brows, and no chin; for in the place of the two latter, there was a slight frown where the brows ought to have been, and a curve in the place of the chin, merely perceptible from the bottom of his underlip to his throat. He wore his own hair, which was a light bay, so that you could scarcely distinguish it from a wig. I was given to understand that he was a religious tailor under three blessed orders.

There was another round-shouldered man, with black, twinkling eyes, plump face, rosy cheeks, and nose twisted at the top. In his

* It should be observed here that several of the pilgrims, as they approach the vicinity of the Lough, are in the habit of praying privately along the way.

* A Latin hymn to the Virgin.

character, humor appeared to be the predominant principle. He was evidently an original, and, I am sure, had the knack of turning the ludicrous side of every object towards him. His eye would roll about from one person to another while fingering his beads, with an expression of humor something like delight beaming from his fixed, steady countenance; and when anything that would have been particularly worthy of a joke met his glance, I could perceive a tremulous twinkle of the eye intimating his inward enjoyment. I think still this jocular abstinence was to him the severest part of the pilgrimage. I asked him was he ever at the "Island" before; he peered into my face with a look that infected me with risibility, without knowing why, shrugged up his shoulders, looked into the fire, and said "No," with a dry emphatic cough after it—as much as to say, you may apply my answer to the future as well as to the past. Religion, I thought, was giving him up, or sent him here as a last resource. He spoke to nobody.

A little behind the humorist sat a very tall, thin, important-looking personage, dressed in a shabby black coat; there was a cast of severity and self-sufficiency in his face, which at once indicated him to be a man of office and authority, little accustomed to have his own will disputed. I was not wrong in my conjecture; he was a classical schoolmaster, and was pompously occupied, when I first saw him, in reading through his spectacles, with his head raised aloft, the seven Penitential Psalms in Latin, out of the Key of Paradise, to a circle of women and children, along with two or three men in frieze coats, who listened with profound attention.

A little to the right of Syntax, were a man and woman—the man engaged in teaching the woman a Latin charm against the colic, to which it seems she was subject. Although they all, for the most part, who were in the large room about us, prayed aloud, yet by fastening the attention on any particular person, you could hear what he said. I therefore heard the words of this charm, and as my memory is not bad, I still remember them; they ran thus:

Petrus sedebat super lapidem marmoream juxta ædem Jerusalem et dolebat, Jesus veniebat et rogabat "Petre, quid doles?" "Doleo vento ventre." "Surge, Petre, et sanus esto." Et quicunque hæc verba non scripta sed memoriter tradita recitat nunquam dolebit vento ventre.

These are the words literally, but I need not say, that had the poor woman sat there since, she would not have got them impressed on her memory.

There were also other countenances in which a man might almost read the histories of their owners. Methought I could perceive the lurking, unsubdued spirit of the battered rake, in the leer of his roving eye, while he performed, in the teeth of his flesh, blood, and principles, the delusive vow to which the shrinking spirit, at the approach of death, on the bed of sickness, clung, as to its salvation; for it was evident that superstition had only exacted from libertinism what fear and ignorance had promised her.

I could note the selfish, griping miser, betraying his own soul, and holding a false promise to his heart, as with lank jaw, keen eye, and brow knit with anxiety for the safety of his absent wealth, he joined some group, eager if possible to defraud them even of the benefit of their prayers, and attempting to practise that knavery upon heaven which had been so successful upon earth.

I could see the man of years, I thought, withering away under the disconsolation of an ill-spent life, old without peace, and gray without wisdom, flattering himself that he is religious because he prays, and making a merit of offering to God that which Satan had rejected; thinking, too, that he has withdrawn from sin, because the ability of committing it has left him, and taking credit for subduing his propensities, although they have only died in his nature.

I could mark, too, I fancied, the stiff, set features of the pharisee, affecting to instruct others, that he might show his own superiority, and descanting on the merits of works, that his hearers might know he performed them himself.

I could also observe the sly, demure overdoings of the hypocrite, and mark the deceitful lines of grave meditation running along that part of his countenance where in others the front of honesty lies open and expanded. I could trace him when he got beyond his depth, where the want of sincerity in religion betrayed his ignorance of its forms.

I could note the scowling, sharp-visaged bigot, wrapt up in the nice observance of trifles, correcting others, if the object of their supplications embraced anything within a whole hemisphere of heresy, and not so much happy because he thought himself *in* the way of salvation, as because he thought others *out* of it—a consideration which sent pleasure tingling to his fingers' ends.

But notwithstanding all this, I noticed, through the gloom of the place, many who were actuated by genuine, unaffected piety, from whom charity and kindness beamed

forth through all the disadvantages around them. Such people, for the most part, prayed in silence and alone. Whenever I saw a man or woman anxious to turn away their faces, and separate themselves from the flocks of gregarious babblers, I seldom failed to witness the outpouring of a contrite spirit. I have certainly seen, in several instances, the tear of heartfelt repentance bedew the sinner's cheek. I observed one peculiarly interesting female who struck me very much. In personal beauty she was very lovely—her form perfectly symmetrical, and she evidently belonged to rather a better order of society. Her dress was plain, though her garments were by no means common. She could scarcely be twenty, and yet her face told a tale of sorrow, of deep, wasting, desolating sorrow. As the prayers, hymns, and religious conversations which went on, were peculiar to the place, time, and occasion—it being near the hour of rest—she probably did not feel that reluctance in going to pray in presence of so many which she otherwise would have felt. She kept her eye on a certain female who had a remote dusky corner to pray in, and the moment she retired from it, this young creature went up and there knelt down. But what a contrast to the calm, unconscious, and insipid mummery which went on at the moment through the whole room! Her prayer was short, and she had neither book nor beads; but the heavings of her bosom, and her suppressed sobs, sufficiently proclaimed her sincerity. Her petition, indeed, seemed to go to heaven from a broken heart. When it was finished, she remained a few moments on her knees, and dried her eyes with her handkerchief. As she rose up, I could mark the modest, timid glance, and the slight blush as she presented herself again amongst the company, where all were strangers. I thought she appeared, though in the midst of such a number, to be woefully and pitiably alone.

As for my own companion, she absolutely made the grand tour of all the praying knots on the premises, having taken a very tolerable bout with each. There were two qualities in which she shone pre-eminent—voice and distinctness; for she gave by far the loudest and most monotonous chant. Her visage also was remarkable, for her complexion resembled the dark, dingy red of a winter apple. She had a pair of very piercing black eyes, with which, while kneeling with her body thrown back upon her heels as if they were a cushion, she scrutinized, at her ease, every one in the room, rocking herself gently from side to side. The poor creature paid a marked attention to the interesting young woman I have just mentioned. At last, they dropped off one by one to bed, that they might be up early the next morning for the Lough, with the exception of some half-dozen, more long-winded than the rest, whose voices I could hear at their sixth rosary, in the rapid elevated tone peculiar to Catholic devotion, until I fell asleep.

The next morning, when I awoke, I joined with all haste the aggregate crowd that proceeded in masses towards the lake or Purgatory—which lies amongst the hills that extend to the north-east of Petigo. While ascending the bleak, hideous mountain range, whose ridge commands a full view of this celebrated scene of superstition, the manner and appearance of the pilgrims were deeply interesting. Such groupings as pressed forward around me would have made fine studies either for him who wished to deplore or to ridicule the degradations and absurdities of human nature; indeed there was an intense interest in the scene. I look back at this moment with awe towards the tremulous and high-strained vibrations of my mind, as it responded to the excitement. Reader, have you ever approached the Eternal City? have you ever, from the dreary solitudes of the Campagna, seen the dome of St. Peter's for the first time? and have the monuments of the greatest men and the mightiest deeds that ever the earth witnessed—have the names of the Cæsars, and the Catos, and the Scipios, excited a curiosity amounting to a sensation almost too intense to be borne? I think I can venture to measure the expansion of your mind, as it enlarged itself before the crowding visions of the past, as the dim grandeur of ages rose up and developed itself from amidst the shadows of time; and entranced amidst the magic of your own associations, you desired to stop—you were almost content to go no farther—your *own* Rome, you were in the midst of—Rome free—Rome triumphant—Rome classical. And perhaps it is well you awoke in good time from your shadowy dream, to escape from the unvaried desolation and the wasting *malaria* that brooded all around. Reader, I can fancy that such might have been your sensations when the domes and the spires of the world's capital first met your vision; and I can assure you, that while ascending the ridge that was to give me a view of Patrick's Purgatory, my sensations were as impressively, as powerfully excited. For I desire you to recollect, that the welfare of your immortal soul was not connected with your imaginings, your magnificent visions did not penetrate into the soul's doom. You were not submitted to the agency of a transcendental power. You were, in a word, a poet, but not a fan-

stic. What comparison, then, could there be between the exercise of your free, manly, cultivated understanding, and my feelings on this occasion, with my thick-coming visions of immortality, that almost lifted me from the mountain-path I was ascending, and brought me, as it were, into contact with the invisible world? I repeat it, then, that such were my feelings, when all the faculties which exist in the mind were aroused and concentrated upon one object. In such a case, the pilgrim stands, as it were, between life and death; and as it was superstition that placed him there, she certainly conjures up to his heated fancy those dark, fleeting, and indistinct images which are best adapted to that gloom which she has already cast over his mind. Although there could not be less than two hundred people, young and old, boys and girls, men and women, the hale and the sickly, the blind and the lame, all climbing to gain the top with as little delay as possible, yet was there scarcely a sound, certainly not a word, to be heard among them. For my part, I plainly heard the palpitations of my heart, both loud and quick. Had I been told that the veil of eternity was about to be raised before me at that moment, I could scarcely have felt more intensely. Several females were obliged to rest for some time, in order to gain both physical and moral strength—one fainted; and several old men were obliged to sit down. All were praying, every crucifix was out, every bead in requisition; and nothing broke a silence so solemn but a low, monotonous murmur of deep devotion.

As soon as we ascended the hill, the whole scene was instantly before us: a large lake, surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains, bleak, uncomfortable, and desolate. In the lake itself, about half a mile from the edge next us, was to be seen the "Island," with two or three slated houses on it, naked and unplastered, as desolate-looking almost as the mountains. A little range of exceeding low hovels, which a dwarf could scarcely enter without stooping, appeared to the left; and the eye could rest on nothing more, except a living mass of human beings crawling slowly about. The first thing the pilgrim does when he gets a sight of the lake, is to prostrate himself, kiss the earth, and then on his knees *offer up* three *Paters* and *Aves*, and a *Creed* for the favor of being permitted to see this blessed place. When this is over, he descends to the lake, and after paying tenpence to the ferry-man, is rowed over to the Purgatory.

When the whole view was presented to me, I stood for some time to contemplate it; and I cannot better illustrate the reaction which took place in my mind, than by saying that it resembles that awkward inversion which a man's proper body experiences when, on going to pull something from which he expects a marvellous assistance, it comes with him at a touch, and the natural consequence is, that he finds his head down and his heels up. That which dashed the whole scene from the dark elevation in which the romance of devotion had placed it was the appearance of slated houses, and of the smoke that curled from the hovels and the prior's residence. This at once brought me back to humanity: and the idea of roasting meat, boiling pots, and dressing dinners, dispossessed every fine and fearful image which had floated through my imagination for the last twelve hours. In fact, allowing for the difference of situation, it nearly resembled John's Well, or James's Fair, when beheld at a distance, turning the slated houses into inns, and the hovels into tents. A certain idea, slight, untraceable, and involuntary, went over my brain on that occasion, which, though it did not *then* cost me a single effort of reflection, I think was revived and developed at a future period of my life, and became, perhaps to a certain extent, the means of opening a wider range of thought to my mind, and of giving a new tone to my existence. Still, however, nothing except my idea of its external appearance disappointed me; I accordingly ascended with the rest, and in a short time found myself among the living mass upon the island.

The first thing I did was to hand over my three cakes of oaten bread which I had got made in Petigo, tied up in a handkerchief, as well as my hat and second shirt, to the care of the owner of one of the huts: having first, by the way, undergone a second prostration on touching the island, and greeted it with fifteen holy kisses, and another string of prayers. I then, according to the regulations, should commence the *stations*, lacerated as my feet were after so long a journey; so that I had not a moment to rest. Think, therefore, what I must have suffered, on surrounding a large chapel, in the direction of from east to west, over a pavement of stone spikes, every one of them making its way along my nerves and muscles to my unfortunate brain. I was absolutely stupid and dizzy with the pain, the praying, the jostling, the elbowing, the scrambling and the uncomfortable penitential murmurs of the whole crowd. I knew not what I was about, but went through the forms in the same mechanical spirit which pervaded all present. As for that solemn, humble, and heartfelt sense of God's presence, which Christian prayer demands, its existence in the

mind would not only be a moral but a physical impossibility in Lough Derg. I verily think that if mortification of the body, without conversion of the life or heart—if penance and not repentance *could* save the soul, no wretch who performed a pilgrimage here could with a good grace be damned. Out of hell the place is matchless, and if there *be* a purgatory in the other world, it may very well be said there is a fair rehearsal of it in the county of Donegal in Ireland.

When I commenced my station, I started from what is called the "Beds," and God help St. Patrick if he lay upon them: they are sharp stones placed circularly in the earth, with the spike ends of them up, one circle within another; and the manner in which the pilgrim gets as far as the innermost, resembles precisely that in which school-boys enter the "Walls of Troy" upon their slates. I moved away from these upon the sharp stones with which the whole island is surfaced, keeping the chapel, or "Prison," as it is called, upon my right; then turning, I came round again with a *circumbendibus*, to the spot from which I set out. During this circuit, as well as I can remember, I *repeated* fifty-five *paters* and *aves*, and five creeds, or five decades; and be it known, that the fifty prayers were *offered up* to the Virgin Mary, and the odd five to God! I then commenced getting round the eternal beds, during which I *repeated*, I think, fifteen *paters* and *aves* more; and as the beds decreased in circumference, the prayers decreased in length, until a short circuit and three *paters* and *aves* finished the last and innermost of these blessed couches. I really forgot how many times each day the prison and these beds are to be surrounded, and how many hundred rayers are to be *repeated* during the circuit, though each circuit is in fact making the grand tour of the island; but I never shall forget that I was the best part of a July day at it, when the soles of my feet were flayed, and the stones hot enough to broil a beefsteak! When the first day's station was over, it is necessary to say that a little rest would have been agreeable? But no, this would not suit the policy of the place; here it may be truly said that there is no rest for the wicked. The only luxury allowed me was the privilege of feasting upon one of my cakes (having not tasted food that blessed day until then); upon one of my cakes, I say, and a copious supply of the water of the lake, which, to render the repast more agreeable, was made lukewarm! This was to keep my spirits up after the delicate day's labor I had gone through, and to cheer me against the pleasant prospect of a hard night's praying without sleep, which lay in the back ground! But when I saw every one at this refreshing meal with a good, thick, substantial *bannock*, and then looked at the immateriality of my own, I could not help reverting to the woman who made them for me, with a degree of vivacity not altogether in unison with the charity of a Christian. The knavish creature defrauded me of one-half of the oatmeal, although I had purchased it myself in Petigo for the occasion; being determined that as I was only to get two meals in the three days, they should be such as a person could fast upon. Never was there a man more bitterly disappointed; for they were not thicker than crown-pieces, and I searched for them in my mouth to no purpose—the only thing like substance I could feel there was the warm water. At last, night came; but here to describe the horrors of what I suffered I hold myself utterly inadequate. I was wedged in a shake-down bed with seven others, one of whom was a Scotch Papist—another a man with a shrunk leg, who wore a crutch—all afflicted with that disease which northern men that feed on oatmeal are liable to; and then the swarms that fell upon my poor young skin, and probed, and stung, and fed on me! it was pressure and persecution almost insupportable, and yet such was my fatigue that sleep even here began to weigh down my eyelids.

I was just on the point of enjoying a little rest, when a man ringing a large hand-bell, came round crying out in a low, supernatural growl, which could be heard double the distance of the loudest shout—"Waken up, waken up, and come to the prison!" The words were no sooner out of his mouth, than there was a sudden start, and a general scramble in the dark for our respective garments. When we got dressed, we proceeded to the waters of the lake, in which we washed our face and hands, repeating prayers during the ablution. This to me was the most impressive and agreeable part of the whole station. The night, while we were in bed, or rather in torture, had become quite stormy, and the waves of the lake beat against the shore with the violence of an agitated sea. There was just sufficient moon to make the "darkness visible," and to show the black clouds drifting with rapid confusion, in broken masses, over our heads. This, joined to the tossing of the billows against the shore—the dark silent groups that came, like shadows, stooping for a moment over the surface of the waters, and retreating again in a manner which the severity of the night rendered necessarily quick, raising thereby in the mind the idea of gliding spirits—then the preconceived desolation of the surround-

ing scenery—the indistinct shadowy chain of dreary mountains which, faintly relieved by the lurid sky, hemmed in the lake—the silence of the forms, contrasted with the tumult of the elements about us—the loneliness of the place—its isolation and remoteness from the habitations of men—all this put together, joined to the feeling of deep devotion in which I was wrapped, had really a sublime effect upon me. Upon the generality of those who were there, blind to the natural beauty and effect of the hour and the place, and viewing it only through the medium of superstitious awe, it was indeed calculated to produce the notion of something not belonging to the circumstance and reality of human life.

From this scene we passed to one, which, though not characterized by its dark, awful beauty, was scarcely inferior to it in effect. It was called the "Prison," and it is necessary to observe here, that every pilgrim must pass twenty-four hours in this place, kneeling, without food or sleep, although one meal of bread and warm water, and whatever sleep he could get in Petigo with seven in a bed, were his allowance of food and sleep during the twenty-four hours previous. I must here beg the good reader's attention for a moment, with reference to our penance in the "Prison." Let us consider now the nature of this pilgrimage: it must be performed on foot, no matter what the distance of residence (allowing for voyages)—the condition of life—the age or the sex of the pilgrim may be. Individuals from France, from America, England, and Scotland, visit it—as voluntary devotees, or to perform an act of penance for some great crime, or perhaps to atone for a bad life in general. It is performed, too, in the dead heat of summer, when labor is slack, and the lower orders have sufficient leisure to undertake it; and, I may add, when travelling on foot is most fatiguing; they arrive, therefore, without a single exception, blown and jaded almost to death. The first thing they do, notwithstanding this, is to commence the fresh rigors of the station, which occupies them several hours. This consists in what I have already described, viz., the pleasant promenade upon the stony spikes around the prison and the "beds;" that over, they take their first and only meal for the day; after which, as in my own case just related, they must huddle themselves in clusters, on what is barefacedly called a bed, but which is nothing more nor less than a beggarman's shakedown, where the smell, the heat, the filth, and above all, the vermin, are intolerable to the very farthest stretch of the superlative degree. As soon as their eyes begin to close here, they are roused by the bell-man, and summoned at the hour of twelve—first washing themselves as aforesaid, in the lake, and then adjourning to the prison which I am about to describe. There is not on earth, with the exception of pagan rites,—and it is melancholy to be compelled to compare any institution of the Christian religion with a Juggernaut,—there is not on earth, I say, a regulation of a religious nature, more barbarous and inhuman than this. It has destroyed thousands since its establishment—has left children without parents, and parents childless. It has made wives widows, and torn from the disconsolate husband the mother of his children; and is itself the monster which St. Patrick is said to have destroyed in the place—a monster, which is a complete and significant allegory of this great and destructive superstition. But what is even worse than death, by stretching the powers of human sufferance until the mind cracks under them, it is said sometimes to return these pitiable creatures maniacs—exulting in the laugh of madness, or sunk for ever in the incurable apathy of religious melancholy. I mention this now, to exhibit the purpose for which these calamities are turned to account, and the dishonesty which is exercised over these poor, unsuspecting people, in consequence of their occurrence. The pilgrims, being thus aroused at midnight are sent to prison; and what think you is the impression under which they enter it? one indeed, which, when we consider their bodily weakness and mental excitement, must do its work with success. It is this: that as soon as they enter the prison a *supernatural* tendency to sleep will come over them, which, they say, is peculiar to the place; that this is an emblem of the influence of sin over the soul, and a type of their future fate; that if they resist this they will be saved; but if they yield to it, they will not only be damned in the next world, but will go mad, or incur some immediate and dreadful calamity in this. Is it any wonder that a weak mind and exhausted body, wrought upon by these bugbears, should induce upon by itself, by its own terrors, the malady of derangement? We know that nothing acts so strongly and so fatally upon reason, as an imagination diseased by religious terrors: and I regret to say, that I had upon that night an opportunity of witnessing a fatal instance of it.

After having washed ourselves in the dark waters of the lake, we entered this famous "prison," which is only a naked, unplastered chapel, with an altar against one of the side-walls, and two galleries. On entering this

place, a scene presented itself altogether unparalleled on the earth, and in every point of view capable to sustain the feelings raised in the mind by the midnight scenery of the lake as seen during the ablutions. The prison was full, but not crowded; for had it been crowded, we would have been happy. It was, however, just sufficiently filled to give every individual the pleasure of sustaining himself, without having it in his power to recline for a moment in an attitude of rest, or to change that most insupportable of all bodily suffering, uniformity of position. There we knelt upon a hard ground floor, and commenced praying; and again I must advert to the policy which prevails in this island. During the period of imprisonment, there are no prescribed prayers nor ceremonies whatever to be performed, and this is the more strange, as every other stage of the station has its proper devotions. But these are suspended here, lest the attention of the prisoners might be fixed on any particular object, and the supernatural character of drowsiness imputed to the place be thus doubted—they are, therefore, turned in without anything to excite them to attention or to resist the propensity to sleep occasioned by their fatigue and want of rest. Having thus nothing to do, nothing to sustain, nothing to stimulate them, it is very natural that they should, even if unexhausted by previous lassitude, be inclined to sleep; but everything that can weigh them down is laid upon them in this heavy and oppressive superstition, that the strong delusion may be kept up.

On entering the prison, I was struck with the dim religious twilight of the place. Two candles gleamed faintly from the altar, and there was something I thought of a deadly light about them, as they burned feebly and stilly against the darkness which hung over the other part of the building. Two priests, facing the congregation, stood upon the altar in silence, with pale spectral visages, their eyes catching an unearthly glare from the sepulchral light of the slender tapers. But that which was strangest of all, and, as I said before, without a parallel in this world, was the impression and effect produced by the deep, drowsy, hollow, hoarse, guttural, ceaseless, and monotonous *hum*, which proceeded from about four hundred individuals, half asleep and at prayer; for their cadences were blended and slurred into each other, as they repeated, in an awe-struck and earnest undertone, the prayers in which they were engaged. It was certainly the strangest sound I ever heard, and resembled a thousand subterraneous groans, uttered in a kind of low, deep, unvaried chant. Nothing could produce a sense of gloomy alarm in a weak superstitious mind equal to this; and it derived much of its wild and singular character, as well as of its lethargic influence, from its continuity; for it still—still rung lowly and supernaturally on my ear. Perhaps the deep, wavy prolongation of the bass of a large cathedral bell, or that low, continuous sound, which is distinct from its higher and louder intonations, would give a faint notion of it, yet only a faint one; for the body of hoarse monotony here was immense. Indeed, such a noise had something so powerfully lulling, that human nature, even excited by the terrible suggestions of superstitious fear, was scarcely able to withstand it.

Now the poor pilgrims forget, that this strong disposition to sleep arises from the weariness produced by their long journeys—by the exhausting penance of the station, performed without giving them time to rest—by the other still more natural consequence of not giving them time to sleep—by the drowsy darkness of the chapel—and by the heaviness caught from the low peculiar murmur of the pilgrims, which would of itself overcome the lightest spirit. I was here but a very short time when I began to doze, and just as my chin was sinking placidly on my breast, and the words of an *Ave Maria* dying upon my lips, I felt the charm all at once broken by a well-meant rap upon the occiput, conferred through the instrumentality of a little angry-looking squat urchin of sixty years, and a remarkably good black-thorn cudgel, with which he was engaged in thwacking the heads of such sinners, as, not having the dread of insanity and the regulations of the place before their eyes, were inclined to sleep. I declare the knock I received told to such a purpose on my head, that nothing occurred during the pilgrimage that vexed me so much.

After all, I really slept the better half of the night; yet so indescribably powerful was the apprehension of derangement, that my hypocritical tongue wagged aloud at the prayers, during these furtive naps. Nay, I not only slept but dreamed. I experienced also that singular state of being, in which, while the senses are accessible to the influence of surrounding objects, the process of thought is suspended, the man seems to enjoy an inverted existence, in which the soul sleeps, and the body remains awake and susceptible of external impressions. I once thought I was washing myself in the lake, and that the dashing noise of its waters rang in my ears: I also fancied myself at home in conversation with my friends; yet, in neither case, did I altogether forget where I was. Still in struggling to bring my mind back, so paramount

was the dread of awaking deranged should I fall asleep, that these occasional visions—associating themselves with this terror—and this again broken in upon by the hoarse murmurs about me, throwing their dark shades on every object that passed my imagination, the force of reason being too vague at the moment; these occasional visions I say, and this jumbling together of broken images and disjointed thoughts, had such an effect upon me, that I imagined several times that the awful penalty was exacted, and that my reason was gone for ever. I frequently started, and on seeing two dim lights upon the altar, and on hearing the ceaseless and eternal murmurs going on—going on—around me, without being immediately able to ascribe them to their proper cause, I set myself down as a lost man; for on that terror I was provokingly clear during the whole night. I more than once gave an involuntary groan or shriek, on finding myself in this singular state; so did many others, and these groans and shrieks were wildly and fearfully contrasted with the never-ending hum, which, like the ceaseless noise of a distant waterfall, went on during the night. The perspiration occasioned by this inconceivable distress, by the heat of the place, and by the unchangeableness of my position, flowed profusely from every core. About two o'clock in the morning an unhappy young man, either in a state of lethargic indifference, or under the influence of these sudden paroxysms, threw himself, or fell from one of the galleries, and was so shattered by the fall that he died next day at twelve o'clock,—and, what was not much to the credit of the clergymen on the island—without the benefit of the clergy; for I saw a priest with his stole and box of chrism finishing off his extreme unction when he was quite dead. This is frequently done in the Church of Rome, under a hope that life may not be utterly extinct, and that consequently the final separation of the soul and body may not have taken place.

In this prison, during the night, several persons go about with rods and staves, rapping those on the head whom they see heavy; snuff-boxes also go around very freely, elbows are jogged, chins chucked, and ears twitched, for the purpose of keeping each other awake. The rods and staves are frequently changed from hand to hand, and I thought it would be a lucky job if I could get one for a little, to enable me to change my position. I accordingly asked a man who had been a long time banging in this manner, if he would allow me to take his place for some time, and he was civil enough to do so. I therefore set out on my travels through the prison, rapping about me at a great rate, and with remarkable effect; for, whatever was the cause of it, I perceived that not a soul seemed the least inclined to doze after a visit from me; on the contrary, I observed several to scratch their heads, giving me at the same time significant looks of very sincere thankfulness.

But what I am convinced was the most meritorious act of my whole pilgrimage, as it was certainly the most zealously performed, was a remembrance I gave the squat fellow, who visited me in the early part of the night. He was engaged, tooth and nail, with another man, at a *De profundis*, and although not asleep at the time, yet on the principle that prevention is better than cure, I thought it more prudent to let him have his rap before the occasion for it might come on: he accordingly got full payment, at compound interest, for the villanous knock he had *lent* me before.

This employment stirred my blood a little, and I got much lighter. I could now pay some attention to the scene about me, and the first object that engaged it was a fellow with a hare-lip, who had completely taken the lead at prayer. The organs of speech seemed to have been transferred from his mouth to his nose, and, although Irish was his vernacular language, either some fool or knave had taught him to *say his prayers* in English: and you may take this as an observation founded on fact, that the language which a Roman Catholic of the lower class does *not* understand, is the one in which he is disposed to pray. As for him he had lots of English prayers, though he was totally ignorant of that language. The twang from the nose, the loud and rapid tone in which he spoke, and the *malaproprian* happiness with which he travestied every prayer he uttered, would have compelled any man to smile. The priests laughed outright before the whole congregation, particularly one of them, whom I well knew; the other turned his face towards the altar, and leaning over a silver pix, in which, according to their own tenets, the Redeemer of the world must have been at that moment, as it contained the consecrated wafers, gave full vent to his risibility. Now it is remarkable that no one present attached the slightest impropriety to this—I for one did not; although it certainly occurred to me with full force at a subsequent period.

When morning came, the blessed light of the sun broke the leaden charm of the prison, and infused into us a wonderful portion of fresh vigor. This day being the second from our arrival, we had our second station to perform, and consequently all the

sharp spikes to re-traverse. We were not permitted at all to taste food during these twenty-four hours, so that our weakness was really very great. I beg leave, however, to return my special acknowledgments for the truly hospitable allowance of *wine* with which I, in common with every other pilgrim, was treated. This wine is made by filling a large pot with the lake water, and making it lukewarm. It is then handed round in jugs and wooden noggins—to their credit be it recorded—in the greatest possible abundance. On this alone I breakfasted, dined, and supped, during the second or prison day of my pilgrimage.

At twelve o'clock that night we left prison, and made room for another squadron, who gave us their kennels. Such a luxury was sleep to me, however, that I felt not the slightest inconvenience from the vermin, though I certainly made a point to avoid the Scotchman and the cripple. On the following day I confessed; and never was an unfortunate soul so grievously afflicted with a bad memory as I was on that occasion—the whole thing altogether, but particularly the prison scene, had knocked me up, I could not therefore remember a tithe of my sins; and the priest, poor man, had really so much to do, and was in such a hurry, that he had me clean absolved before I had got half through the preface, or knew what I was about. I then went with a fresh batch to receive the sacrament, which I did from the hands of the good-natured gentleman who enjoyed so richly the praying talents of the hare-lipped devotee in the prison.

I cannot avoid mentioning here a practice peculiar to Roman Catholics, which consists in an exchange of one or more prayers, by a stipulation between two persons: *I offer up* a *pater* and *ave* for you, and you again for me. It is called *swapping* or exchanging *prayers*. After I had received the sacrament, I observed a thin, sallow little man, with a pair of beads, as long as himself, moving from knot to knot, but never remaining long in the same place. At last he glided up to me, and in a whisper asked me if I knew him. I answered in the negative. "Oh, then, a lanna, ye war never here before?" "Never." "Oh, I see that, acushla, you would a known me if you had: well then, did ye never hear of Sol Donnel, the pilgrim?"

"I never did," I replied, "but are we not all pilgrims while here?"

"To be sure, aroon, but I'm a pilgrim every place else, you see, as well as here, my darlin' sweet young man."

"Then you're a pilgrim by profession?"

"That's it, asthore machree; everybody that comes here the second time, sure, knows Sol Donnel, the blessed pilgrim."

"In that case it was impossible for me to know you, as I was never here before." "A cushla, I know that, but a good beginnin' are ye makin' of it—an' at your time of life too; but, avick, it must prosper wid ye, comin' here I mane."

"I hope it may." "Well yer parents isn't both livin' it's likely?" "No." "Aye! but ye'll jist not forget that same, ye see; I b'lieve I sed so—your father dead, I suppose?" "No, my mother." "Your mother; well, avick, I didn't say that for a sartinty; but still, you see, avourneen, maybe somebody could a tould ye it was the mother, forhaps, afther all." "Did you know them?" I asked. "You see, a lanna, I can't say that, without first hearin' their names." "My name is B——." "An' a dacent bearable name it is, darlin'. Is yer father of them dacent people, the B——s of Newtownlimavady, ahagur!" "Not that I know of." "Oh, well, well, it makes no maxim between you an' me, at all, at all; but the Lord mark you to grace, any how; it's a dacent name sure enough, only if yer mother was livin', it's herself 'ud be the proud woman, an' well she might, to see such a clane, promisin' son steppin' home to her from Lough Derg." "Indeed I'm obliged to you," said I; "I protest I'm obliged to you, for your good opinion of me." "It's nothin' but what ye desarve, avick! an' more nor that—yer the makin's of a clargy I'm guessin'?" "I am," said I, "surely designed for that." "Oh, I knew it, I knew it, it's in your face; you've the *sogarth* in yer very face; an' well will ye become the *robes* when ye get them on ye: sure, an' to tell you the truth (in a whisper, stretching up his mouth to my ear), I feel my heart warm towardst you, somehow." "I declare I feel much the same towards you," I returned, for the fellow in spite of me was gaining upon my good opinion; "you are a decent, civil soul." "An' for that raison, and for your dacent mother's sake (*sobies-coat in passy, amin*),* I'll jist here *offer up* the *gray profungus*† for the release of her sowl out o' the burning flames of purgathur." I really could not help shuddering at this. He then repeated a psalm for that purpose, the 130th in our Bible, but the 129th in theirs. When it was finished, with all due gesticulation, that is to say, having thumped his breast with great violence, kissed the ground, and crossed himself repeatedly, he says to me, like a man confident that he had paved his way to my good graces, "Now, avick, as we *did* do so much,

* Requiescat in pace. † De profundis.

you're the very darlin' young man that I won't lave, widout the best, maybe, that's to come yet, ye see; bekase I'll *swap a prayer* wid you, this blessed minute." "I'm very glad you mentioned it," said I. "But you don't know, maybe, darlin', that I'm undher five ordhers." "Dear me! is it possible you're under so many?" "Undher five ordhers, acushla!"—"Well," I replied, "I am ready."—"Undher five ordhers—but I'll lave it to yourself; only when it's over, maybe, ye'll hear somethin' from me that'll make you thankful you ever gave me silver any way."

By this time I saw his drift: but he really had managed his point so dexterously—not forgetting the *De profundis*—that I gave him tenpence in silver: he pocketed it with great alacrity, and was at the prayer in a twinkling, which he did offer up in prime style—five *paters*, five *aves*, and a creed, whilst I set the same number to his credit. When we had finished, he made me kneel down to receive his blessing, which he gave in great form:—"Now," said he, in a low, important tone, "I'm goin' to show you a thing that'll make you bless the born day you ever seen my face; and it's this—did ye ever hear of the blessed *Thirty Days' Prayer?*"* "I can't say I did." "Well, avick, in good time still; but there's a blessed book, if you can get it, that has a prayer in it, named the *Thirty Days' Prayer*, an' if ye jist repate that same, every day for thirty days fastin', there's no request ye'll ax from heaven, good, bad, or indifferent, but ye'll get. And now do you begrudge givin' me what I got?" "Not a bit," said I, "and I'll certainly look for the book." "No, no, the darlin' fine young man," soliloquizing aloud—"Well and well did I know you wouldn't, nor another along wid it—sensible and learned as we are, to know the blessed worth of what you got for it; not makin', at the same time, any comparishment at all at all atween it and the dirty thrash of riches of this earth, that every wan has their heart fixed upon—exceptin' them that the Lord gives the larnin' an' the edication to, to know betther."

Oh, flattery! flattery! and a touch of hypocrisy on my part! Between ye, did ye make another lodgment on my purse, which was instantly lightened by an additional bank token, value tenpence, handed over to this sugar-tongued old knave. When he pocketed this, he shook me cordially by the hand, bidding me "not to forgit the Thirty Days' Prayer, at any rate." He then glided off, with his small, sallow face, stuck between his little shrugged shoulders, fingering his beads, and praying audibly with great apparent fervor, whilst his little keen eye was reconnoitering for another pigeon. In the course of a few minutes, I saw him lead a large, soft, warm-looking, countryman, over to a remote corner, and enter into an earnest conversation with him, which, I could perceive, ended by their both kneeling down, I suppose, *to swap a prayer;* and I have no doubt but he lightened the honest countryman's purse, as well as mine.

On the third day I was determined, if possible, to leave it early; so I performed my third and last station round the chapel and the beds, reduced to such a state of weakness and hunger, that the coats of my stomach must have been rubbing against each other; my feet were quite shapeless. I therefore made the shortest circuit and the longest strides possible, until I finished it.

I witnessed this day, immediately before my departure from this gloomy and truly purgatorial settlement, a scene of some interest. A priest was standing before the door of the dwelling-house, giving tickets to such as were about to confess, this being a necessary point. When he had despatched them all, I saw an old man and his son approach him, the man seemingly sixty, the boy about fourteen. They had a look of peculiar decency, but were thin and emaciated, even beyond what the rigor of their penance here could produce. The youth tottered with weakness, and the old man supported him with much difficulty. It is right to mention here, that this pilgrimage was performed in a season* when sickness and famine prevailed fearfully in this kingdom. They advanced up to the priest to pay their money on receiving their tickets; he extended his palm from habit, but did not speak. The old man had some silver in his hand; and as he was about to give it to the priest, I saw the child look up beseechingly in his father's face, whilst an additional paleness came over his own, and his eyes filled with tears. The father saw and felt the appeal of the child, and hesitated; the priest's arm was still extended, his hand open:—"Would you, sir," said the old man, addressing the priest, "be good enough to hear a word from me?" "For what?" replied the priest, in a sharp tone. "Why, sir," answered the old man, "I am very much distressed." "Ay—it is the common story! Come, pay the money; don't you see I've no time to lose?" "I won't detain you a minute, sir," said the man; "this child"——"You want to keep the money,

* There is such a prayer, and I have often seen it in Catholic Prayer-books.

* 1817.

then? that's your object; down with it on the instant, and begone."

The old man dropped it into the priest's hand, in a kind of start, produced by the stern tone of voice in which he was addressed. When the priest got the money he seemed in a better humor, not wishing, I could see, to send the man away with a bad impression of him. "Well, now what's that you were going to say to me?" "Why, sir," resumed the old man, "that I have not a penny in my possession behind what I have just now put into your hand—not the price of a morsel for this child or myself, although we have forty miles to travel!" "Well, and how am *I* to remedy that? What brought you here, if you had not what would bear your expenses?" "I had, sir, on setting out; but my little boy was five days sick in Petigo, and *that* took away with it what we had to carry us home." "And you expect me, in short, to furnish you with money to do that? Do you think, my good man, there are not *paupers* in my own parish, that have a better right to assistance than you have!" "I do not doubt it, sir," said he, "I do not doubt it; and as for myself I could crawl home upon anything; but what is this child to do? he is already sinking with hunger and—" The poor man's utterance here failed him, as he cast his eyes on the poor, pale boy. When he had recovered himself a little, he proceeded:—"He is all that it has pleased God to leave to his afflicted mother and me, out of seven of them. His other brother and sister and him were all we had living for some years; they are seven weeks dead yesterday, of the fever; and when *he* was given over, sir, his mother and I vowed, that if God would spare him to us, either she or I would bring him to the 'Island,' as soon as he would be able for the journey. He was but weakly settin' out, and we had no notion that the station was so tryin' as it is: it has nearly overcome my child, and how he will be able to walk forty miles in this weak, sickly state, God only knows." "Oh! sir," said the boy, "my poor father is worse off and weaker than I am, and he is sick too, sir; I am only weak, but not sick; but my poor father's both weak and sick," said he, his tears streaming from him, as he pressed his father's arm to his breast—"my poor father is both weak and sick, av, and hungry too," said he. "Take this," said the priest, "it is as much as *I* can afford to give you," putting a silver fivepenny-piece into his hand; "there's a great deal of poor in my own parish." *Alas! thought I, you are not a father.* "Indeed, sir," said the poor man, "I thought you would have allowed me to keep the silver I gave you, as how can we travel two-and-forty miles on this?" "I tell you, my good man," said the priest, resuming a sterner tone, "I have done as much for you as I can afford: and if every one gives you as much, you won't be ill off."

The tears stood in the old man's eyes, as he fixed them hopelessly upon his boy, whilst the child looked ravenously at the money, trifling as it was, and seemed to think of nothing except getting the worth of it of food. As they left the priest, "Oh, come, come father," said the little fellow, "come let us get something to eat." "Easy, dear, till I draw my breath a little, for, John, *I am* weak; but the Lord is strong, and will bring us home, if we put our trust in him; for if he's not more merciful to his poor creatures, than some that acts in his name here, John, we would have a bad chance." They here sat down on the ledge of a rock, a few yards from the chapel, and I still remained bound to the spot by the interest I felt in what I had just witnessed. "What do *you* want, sir," said the priest to me; "did *you* get your ticket?" "I did, sir," I replied; "but I hope you will permit me to become an advocate for that poor man and his son, as I think their case is one in which life and death are probably concerned!" "Really, my good young man, you may spare your advocacy I'm not to be duped with such tales as you've heard." "By the tale, sir, if tale you call it," I returned "which the father told, I think, any man might be guided in his charity; but really I think the most pitiful story was to be read in their faces." "Do you think so? Well, if that's your opinion, I'm sure you have a fair opportunity of being charitable; as for me, I have no more time to lose with either you or them," said he, going into a comfortable house, whilst I could have fairly seen him up to the neck in the blessed element about us. I here stepped over, and instantly desired the old man to hand me the fivepence, telling him at the same time that there was something better in prospect as a proof of which I gave him half-a-crown. I then returned to the priest, and laid his fivepence down on the table before him; for I had the generosity, the fire, and the candor of youth about me, unrepressed by the hardening experience of life. "What's this, sir?" said he. "Your money, sir," I replied—"it is such a *very* trifle, that it would be of no service to them, and they will be enabled to go home without it; the old man returns it." "That is as much as to say," he replied, sarcastically, "that you will patronize them yourself; I wish you joy of it. Was it to witness the distresses of others

that you came to the island, let me ask?" "Perhaps I came from a worse motive," I returned. "I haven't the least doubt of it," said he; "but move off—one word of insolence more," said he, stretching to a cutting whip, for the use of which he was deservedly famous—"I will cut you up, sirrah, while I'm able to stand over you." "Upon my word," said I, extending my feet one after another, "you have cut me up pretty well already, I think; but," I added, with coolness, "is that, sir, the weapon of a Christian?" "Is it the weapon of a Christian, sir? whatever weapon it is, you will soon feel the weight of it," said he, brandishing it over my head. "My good father," said I, "do you remember, since nothing else will restrain you, that the laws of the country will not recognize such *horsewhip* Christianity?" "The laws of the country. Oh, God help it for a country! Yes! yes! excellent. Here Michael—I say, come here—drive out this fellow. I'll be calm; I'll not put myself in a passion—out with him! this fellow." On turning round to contemplate the person spoken to, we recognized each other as slight acquaintances. "Bless me," said he, "what's the matter? Why," he added, addressing me, "what's this?" "How? do you know him, Michael?" "Tut, I do—isn't he *for the mission?*" "Oh—ho!—is that it? well, I'm glad I know so much; good-bye to you, for the present; never fear but I'll keep my eye upon you." So saying, we separated. Michael followed me out—"This is an awkward business," said he, "you had better *make submission*, and ask his pardon; for you know he can injure your prospects, and will do so, if you don't submit; he is not of the most forgiving cast—but that's between ourselves." "What o'clock is it?" said I. "Near three." "Well, good-bye, and God bless you; if he had a spark of humanity in him, I would beg his pardon at once, if I thought I had offended him; but as to *making submission* to *such* a man, as you call it—why—this is a very sultry day, my friend." I returned directly to the old man and his son; and, let purity or motive go as it may, truth to tell, they were no losers by the priest's conduct; as I certainly slipped them a few additional shillings, out of sheer contempt for him. On tasting a little refreshment in one of the cabins, the son fainted—but on the whole they were enabled to accomplish their journey home; and the father's blessing was surely a sufficient antidote against the priest's resentment.

I was now ready to depart; and on my way to the boat, found my two old female companions watching, lest I should pass, and they might miss my company on the way. It was now past three o'clock, and we determined to travel as far as we could that night, as the accommodations were vile in Petigo; and the spokeswoman mentioned a house of entertainment, about twelve miles forward, where, she said, we would find better treatment. When we got on *terra firma*, the first man I saw was the monosyllabic humorist, sitting on a hillock resting himself—his eyes fixed on the earth, and he evidently in a brown study on what he had gone through. He was drawing in his breath gradually, his cheeks expanding all the while, until they reached the utmost point of distention, when he would all at once let it go with a kind of easy puff, ending in a groan, as he surveyed his naked feet, which were now quite square, and, like my own, out of all shape. I asked him how he liked the station; he gave me one of the old looks, shrugged his shoulders, but said nothing—it was, however, a shrug condemnatory. I then asked him would he ever make another pilgrimage? He answered me by another shrug, a grave look, dryly raising his eye-brows, and a second appeal to his feet, all of which I easily translated into strong negatives. We refreshed ourselves in Petigo.

When we were on the way home, I observed that, although the singular and fatal accident which befell the young man in the prison excited very little interest at the time of its occurrence, yet no sooner had they who witnessed it got clear of the island, than it was given with every possible ornament; so that it would be as easy to recognize the plain fact, when decked out by their elucidations, as it would be to understand the sense of an original author, after it has come through the hands of half a hundred commentators. But human nature is a darker enigma than any you could find in the "Lady's Magazine." Who would suppose, for instance, that it was the same motive which set their tongues wagging now, that had chained their spirits by the strong force of the marvellous and the terrible, while they were in prison! Yet this was the fact; but their influence hung while there, like the tyrant's sword, over each individual head; and until the danger of falling asleep in the "Prison" was past, they could feel no interest for anything beyond themselves. In both cases, however, they were governed by the force of the marvellous and the terrible.

When we had finished our journey for the day, I was glad to find a tolerable bed; and never did man enjoy such a luxury of sweet sleep as I did that night. My old companion too, evinced an attention to me seldom ex-

perienced in an accidental traveller. She made them get down water and bathe my feet, and asked me at what hour I would set out in the morning, telling me that she would see my clothes brushed, and everything done herself—so minute was the honest creature in her little attentions. I told her I would certainly take a nap in the morning, as I had slept so little for the last three nights, and was besides so fatigued. "Musha to be sure, and why not, agra! after the hard bout you had in that blessed Island! betoken that you're tinder and too soft rared to bear it like them that the work hardens; sleep!—to be sure you'll sleep your fill—you want it, in coorse; and now go to bed, and you'll appear quite another man in the mornin', plaise God!"

I did not awake the next morning till ten o'clock, when I found the sun shining full into the room. I accordingly dressed myself partially, and I say *partially*—for I was rather surprised to find an unexpected chasm in my wardrobe; neither my hat, coat, nor waistcoat being forthcoming. But I immediately made myself easy, by supposing that my kind companion had brought them to be brushed. Yet I relapsed into something more than surprise when I saw my fellow-traveler's redoubtable jacket lying on the seat of a chair, and her hare's-skin cap on the top of it. My misgivings now were anything but weak; nor was I at all improved, either in my religion or philosophy, when, on calling up the landlady I heard that my two companions had set out that morning at four o'clock. I then inquired about my clothes, but all to no purpose; the poor landlady knew nothing about them: which, in fact, was the case; but she told me that the old one brushed them before she went away, saying that they were ready for me to put on whenever I wanted them. "Well," said I, "she *has* made another man of me." The landlady desired me to try if I had my purse; and I found that the kind creature had certainly spared my purse, but showed no mercy at all to what it contained, which was one pound in paper, and a few shillings in silver, the latter, however, she left me. I had now no alternative but to don the jacket and the hare's-skin cap, which when I had done, with as bad a grace and as mortified a visage as ever man dressed himself with, I found I had not the slightest encouragement to throw my eye over the uniform gravity of my appearance, as I used to do in the black; for, alas! that which I was proudest of, viz., the clerical cut which it bestowed upon me, was fairly gone—I had now more the appearance of a poacher than a priest.

In this trim did I return to my friends—a goose stripped of my feathers; a dupe beknaved and beplundered—having been almost starved to death in the "island," and nearly cudgelled by one of the priests. As soon as I crossed the threshold at home, the whole family were on their knees to receive my blessing, there being a peculiar virtue in the Lough Derg blessing. The next thing I did, after giving them an account of the manner in which I was plundered and stripped, was to make a due distribution of the pebbles * of the lake, to contain which my sisters had, previous to my journey, wrought me a little silk bag. This I brought home, stuffed as full as my purse was empty; for the epicene old villain left it to me in all its plenitude—disdaining to touch it. When I went to mass the following Sunday, I was surrounded by crowds, among whom I distributed my blessing, with an air of seriousness not at all lessened by the loss of my clothes and the emptying of my purse. On telling that part of my story to the priest, he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks. He was a small, pleasant little man, who was seldom known to laugh at anybody's joke but his own. Now, the said merriment of the Reverend Father I felt as contributing to make me look exceedingly ridiculous and sheepish. "So," says he, "you have fallen foul of Nell M'Collum, the most notorious shuler in the province! a gipsy, a fortune-teller, and a tinker's widow; but rest contented, you are not the first she has gulled—but beware the next time."—"There is no danger of *that*," said I, with peculiar emphasis.

* An uncommon virtue in curing all kinds of complaints is ascribed to these pebbles, small bags of which are brought home by the pilgrims, and distributed to their respective relations and friends

"IN THIS TRIM DID I RETURN TO MY FRIENDS—A GOOSE STRIPPED OF MY FEATHERS."
—*The Lough Derg Pilgrim*, p. 818, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

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THE HEDGE SCHOOL.

There never was a more unfounded calumny, than that which would impute to the Irish peasantry an indifference to education. I may, on the contrary, fearlessly assert that the lower orders of no country ever manifested such a positive inclination for literary acquirements, and that, too, under circumstances strongly calculated to produce carelessness and apathy on this particular subject. Nay, I do maintain, that he who is intimately acquainted with the character of our countrymen, must acknowledge that their zeal for book learning, not only is strong and ardent, when opportunities of scholastic education occur, but that it increases in proportion as these opportunities are rare and unattainable. The very name and nature of Hedge Schools are proof of this; for what stronger point could be made out, in illustration of my position, than the fact, that, despite of obstacles, the very idea of which would crush ordinary enterprise—when not even a shed could be obtained in which to assemble the children of an Irish village, the worthy pedagogue selected the first green spot on the sunny side of a quickset-thorn hedge, which he conceived adapted for his purpose, and there, under the scorching rays of a summer sun, and in defiance of spies and statutes, carried on the work of instruction. From this circumstance the name of Hedge School orginated; and, however it may be associated with the ludicrous, I maintain, that it is highly creditable to the character of the people, and an encouragement to those who wish to see them receive pure and correct educational knowledge. A Hedge School, however, in its original sense, was but a temporary establishment, being only adopted until such a school-house could be erected, as it was in those days deemed sufficient to hold such a number of children, as were expected, at all hazards, to attend it.

The opinion, I know, which has been long entertained of Hedge Schoolmasters, was, and still is, unfavorable; but the character of these worthy and eccentric persons has been misunderstood, for the stigma attached to their want of knowledge should have rather been applied to their want of morals, because, on this latter point, were they principally indefensible. The fact is, that Hedge Schoolmasters were a class of men from whom morality was not expected by the peasantry; for, strange to say, one of their strongest recommendations to the good opinion of the people, as far as their literary talents and qualifications were concerned, was an inordinate love of whiskey, and if to this could be added a slight touch of derangement, the character was complete.

On once asking an Irish peasant, why he sent his children to a schoolmaster who was notoriously addicted to spirituous liquors, rather than to a man of sober habits who taught in the same neighborhood,

"Why do I send them to Mat Meegan, is it?" he replied—"and do you think, sir," said he, "that I'd send them to that dry-headed dunce, Mr. Frazher, with his black coat upon him, and his Caroline hat, and him wouldn't take a glass of poteen wanst in seven years? Mat, sir, likes it, and teaches the boys ten times betther whin he's dhrunk nor when he's sober; and you'll never find a good teacher, sir, but's fond of it. As for Mat, when he's *half gone*, I'd turn him agin the country for deepness in learning; for it's then he rhymes it out of him, that it would do one good to hear him."

"So," said I, "you think that a love of drinking poteen is a sign of talent in a schoolmaster?"

"Ay, or in any man else, sir," he replied. "Look at tradesmen, and 'tis always the cleverest that you'll find fond of the drink! If you had hard Mat and Frazher, the other evening, at it—what a hare Mat made of him! but he was just in proper tune for it, being, at the time, purty well I thank you, and did not have him a leg to stand upon. He took him in Euclid's Ailments and Logicals, and proved in Frazher's teeth that the candlestick before them was the church-steeple, and Frazher himself the parson; and so sign was on it, the other couldn't disprove it, but had to give in."

"Mat, then," I observed, "is the most learned man on this walk."

"Why, thin, I doubt that same, sir," replied he, "for all he's so great in the books; for, you see, while they were ding dust at it, who comes in but mad Delaney, and he attacked Mat, and, in less than no time, rubbed the consate out of *him*, as clane as *he* did out of Frazher."

"Who is Delaney?" I inquired.

"He was the makings of a priest, sir, and was in Maynooth a couple of years, but he took in the knowledge so fast, that, bedad, he got *cracked wid larnin'*—for a *dunce* you see, never cracks wid it, in regard of the thickness of the skull: no doubt but he's too many for Mat, and can go far beyaut him in the books;

but then, like Mat, he's still brightest whin he has a sup in his head."

These are the prejudices which the Irish peasantry have long entertained concerning the character of hedge schoolmasters; but, granting them to be unfounded, as they generally are, yet it is an indisputable fact, that hedge schoolmasters were as superior in literary knowledge and acquirements to the class of men who are now engaged in the general education of the people, as they were beneath them in moral and religious character. The former part of this assertion will, I am aware, appear rather startling to many. But it is true; and one great cause why the character of Society Teachers is undervalued, in many instances, by the people, proceeds from a conviction on their parts, that they are, and must be, incapable, from the slender portion of learning they have received, of giving their children a sound and practical education.

But that we may put this subject in a clearer light, we will give a sketch of the course of instruction which was deemed necessary for a hedge schoolmaster, and let it be contrasted with that which falls to the lot of those engaged in the conducting of schools patronized by the Education Societies of the present day.

When a poor man, about twenty or thirty years ago, understood from the schoolmaster who educated his sons, that any of them was particularly "cute at his larnin'," the ambition of the parent usually directed itself to one of three objects—he would either make him a priest, a clerk, or a schoolmaster. The determination once fixed, the boy was set apart from every kind of labor, that he might be at liberty to bestow his undivided time and talents to the object set before him. His parents strained every nerve to furnish him with the necessary books, and always took care that his appearance and dress should be more decent than those of any other member of the family. If the church were in prospect, he was distinguished, after he had been two or three years at his Latin, by the appellation of "the young priest," an epithet to him of the greatest pride and honor; but if destined only to wield the ferula, his importance in the family, and the narrow circle of his friends, was by no means so great. If, however, the goal of his future ambition as a schoolmaster was humbler, that of his literary career was considerably extended. He usually remained at the next school in the vicinity until he supposed that he had completely drained the master of all his knowledge. This circumstance was generally discovered in the following manner:—As soon as he judged himself a match for his teacher, and possessed sufficient confidence in his own powers, he penned him a formal challenge to meet him in literary contest, either in his own school, before competent witnesses, or at the chapel-green, on the Sabbath day, before the arrival of the priest, or probably after it—for the priest himself was sometimes the moderator and judge upon these occasions. This challenge was generally couched in rhyme, and either sent by the hands of a common friend or posted upon the chapel-door.

These contests, as the reader perceives, were always public, and were witnessed by the peasantry with intense interest. If the master sustained a defeat, it was not so much attributed to his want of learning, as to the overwhelming talent of his opponent; nor was the success of the pupil generally followed by the expulsion of the master—for this was but the first of a series of challenges which the former proposed to undertake, ere he eventually settled himself in the exercise of his profession.

I remember being present at one of them, and a ludicrous exhibition it was. The parish priest, a red-faced, jocular little man, was president; and his curate, a scholar of six feet two inches in height, and a schoolmaster from the next parish, were judges. I will only touch upon two circumstances in their conduct, which evinced a close, instinctive knowledge of human nature in the combatants. The master would not condescend to argue off his throne—a piece of policy to which, in my opinion, he owed his victory (for he won); whereas the pupil insisted that he should meet him on equal ground, face to face, in the lower end of the room. It was evident that the latter could not divest himself of his boyish terror so long as the other sat, as it were, in the plentitude of his former authority, contracting his brows with habitual sternness, thundering out his arguments, with a most menacing and stentorian voice, while he thumped his desk with his shut fist, or struck it with his great ruler at the end of each argument, in a manner that made the youngster put his hands behind him several times, to be certain that that portion of his dress which is *unmentionable* was tight upon him.

If in these encounters the young candidate for the honors of the literary sceptre was not victorious, he again resumed his studies, under his old preceptor, with renewed vigor and becoming humility; but if he put the schoolmaster down, his next object was to seek out some other teacher, whose celebrity was unclouded within his own range. With him he had a fresh encounter, and its result was similar to what I have already related

If victorious, he sought out another and more learned opponent; and if defeated, he became the pupil of his conqueror—going night about, during his sojourn at the school, with the neighboring farmers' sons, whom he assisted in their studies, as a compensation for his support. He was called during these peregrinations, the *Poor Scholar*, a character which secured him the esteem and hospitable attention of the peasantry, who never fail in respect to any one characterized by a zeal for learning and knowledge.

In this manner he proceeded, a literary knight errant, filled with a chivalrous love of letters, which would have done honor to the most learned peripatetic of them all; enlarging his own powers, and making fresh acquisitions of knowledge as he went along. His contests, his defeats, and his triumphs, of course, were frequent; and his habits of thinking and reasoning must have been considerably improved, his acquaintance with classical and mathematical authors rendered more intimate, and his powers of illustration and comparison more clear and happy. After three or four years spent in this manner, he usually returned to his native place, sent another challenget o the schoolmaster, in the capacity of a candidate for his situation, and if successful, drove him out of the district, and established himself in his situation. The vanquished master sought a new district, sent a new challenge, in his turn, to some other teacher, and usually put him to flight in the same manner. The terms of defeat or victory, according to their application, were called *sacking* and *bogging*.

"There was a great argument entirely, sir," said a peasant once, when speaking of these contests, "'twas at the chapel on Sunday week, betune young Tom Brady, that was a poor scholar in Munsther, and Mr. Hartigan the schoolmaster."

"And who was victorious?" I inquired.

"Why, sir, and maybe 'twas young Brady that didn't *sack* him clane before the priest and all, and went nigh to *bog* the priest himself in Greek. His Reverence was only two words beyant him; but he sacked the master any how, and showed him in the Grammatical and Dixonary where he was wrong."

"And what is Brady's object in life?" I asked. "What does he intend to do."

"Intend to do, is it? I am tould nothing less nor going into Trinity College in Dublin, and expects to bate them all there, out and out: he's first to make something they call a seizure;* and, after making that good, he's to be a counsellor. So, sir, you see what it is to resave good schoolin', and to have the larnin'; but, indeed, it's Brady that's the great head-piece entirely."

Unquestionably, many who received instruction in this manner have distinguished themselves in the Dublin University; and I have no hesitation in saying, that young men educated in Irish hedge schools, as they were called, have proved themselves to be better classical scholars and mathematicians, generally speaking, than any proportionate number of those educated in our first-rate academies. The Munster masters have long been, and still are, particularly celebrated for making excellent classical and mathematical scholars.

That a great deal of ludicrous pedantry generally accompanied this knowledge is not at all surprising, when we consider the rank these worthy teachers held in life, and the stretch of inflation at which their pride was kept by the profound reverence excited by their learning among the people. It is equally true, that each of them had a stock of *crambos* ready for accidental encounter, which would have puzzled Euclid or Sir Isaac Newton himself; but even these trained their minds to habits of acuteness and investigation. When a schoolmaster of this class had established himself as a good mathematician, the predominant enjoyment of his heart and life was to write the epithet *Philomath* after his name; and this, whatever document he subscribed, was never omitted. If he witnessed a will, it was Timothy Fagan, Philomath; if he put his name to a promissory note, it was Tim. Fagan, Philomath; if he addressed a love-letter to his sweetheart, it was still Timothy Fagan—or whatever the name might be—Philomath; and this was always written in legible and distinct copy-hand, sufficiently large to attract the observation of the reader.

It was also usual for a man who had been a pre-eminent and extraordinary scholar, to have the epithet GREAT prefixed to his name. I remember one of this description, who was called the *Great O'Brien par excellence*. In the latter years of his life he gave up teaching, and led a circulating life, going round from school to school, and remaining a week or a month alternately among his brethren. His visits were considered an honor, and raised considerably the literary character of those with whom he resided; for he spoke of dunces with the most dignified contempt, and the general impression was, that he would scorn even to avail himself of their hospitality. Like most of his brethren, he could not live without the *poteen*; and his custom was, to drink a pint of it in its native

* Sizar.

purity before he entered into any literary contest, or made any display of his learning at wakes or other Irish festivities; and most certainly, however blamable the practice, and injurious to health and morals, it threw out his talents and his powers in a most surprising manner.

It was highly amusing to observe the peculiarity which the consciousness of superior knowledge impressed upon the conversation and personal appearance of this decaying race. Whatever might have been the original conformation of their physical structure, it was sure, by the force of acquired habit, to transform itself into a stiff, erect, consequential, and unbending manner, ludicrously characteristic of an inflated sense of their extraordinary knowledge, and a proud and commiserating contempt of the dark ignorance by which, in despite of their own light, they were surrounded. Their conversation, like their own *crambos*, was dark and difficult to be understood; their words, truly sesquipedalian; their voice, loud and commanding in its tones; their deportment, grave and dictatorial, but completely indescribable, and certainly original to the last degree, in those instances where the ready, genuine humor of their country maintained an unyielding rivalry in their disposition, against the natural solemnity which was considered necessary to keep up the due dignity of their character.

In many of these persons, where the original gayety of the disposition was known, all efforts at the grave and dignified were complete failures, and these were enjoyed by the peasantry and their own pupils, nearly with the sensations which the enactment of Hamlet by Liston would necessarily produce. At all events, their education, allowing for the usual exceptions, was by no means superficial; and the reader has already received a sketch of the trials which they had to undergo, before they considered themselves qualified to enter upon the duties of their calling. Their life was, in fact, a state of literary warfare; and they felt that a mere elementary knowledge of their business would have been insufficient to carry them, with suitable credit, through the attacks to which they were exposed from travelling teachers, whose mode of establishing themselves in schools, was, as I said, by driving away the less qualified, and usurping their places. This, according to the law of opinion and the custom which prevailed, was very easily effected, for the peasantry uniformly encouraged those whom they supposed to be the most competent; as to moral or religious instruction, neither was expected from them, so that the indifference of the moral character was no bar to their success.

The village of Findramore was situated at the foot of a long green hill, the outline of which formed a low arch, as it rose to the eye against the horizon. This hill was studded with clumps of beeches, and sometimes enclosed as a meadow. In the month of July, when the grass on it was long, many an hour have I spent in solitary enjoyment, watching the wavy motion produced upon its pliant surface by the sunny winds, or the flight of the cloud-shadows, like gigantic phantoms, as they swept rapidly over it, whilst the murmur of the rocking-trees, and the glancing of their bright leaves in the sun, produced a heartfelt pleasure, the very memory of which rises in my imagination like some fading recollection of a brighter world.

At the foot of this hill ran a clear, deep-banked river, bounded on one side by a slip of rich, level meadow, and on the other by a kind of common for the village geese, whose white feathers, during the summer season, lay scattered over its green surface. It was also the play-ground for the boys of the village school; for there ran that part of the river which, with very correct judgment, the urchins had selected as their bathing-place. A little slope, or watering-ground in the bank, brought them to the edge of the stream, where the bottom fell away into the fearful depths of the whirlpool, under the hanging oak on the other bank. Well do I remember the first time I ventured to swim across it, and even yet do I see, in imagination, the two bunches of water flaggons on which the inexperienced swimmers trusted themselves in the water.

About two hundred yards from this, the *boreen*,* which led from the village to the main road, crossed the river, by one of those old narrow bridges whose arches rise like round ditches across the road—an almost impassable barrier to horse and car. On passing the bridge in a northern direction, you found a range of low thatched houses on each side of the road: and if one o'clock, the hour of dinner, drew near, you might observe columns of blue smoke curling up from a row of chimneys, some made of wicker creels plastered over with a rich coat of mud; some, of old, narrow, bottomless tubs; and others, with a greater appearance of taste, ornamented with thick, circular ropes of straw, sewed together like bees' skeps, with a peel of a briar; and many having nothing but the open vent above. But the smoke by no means escaped by its legitimate aperture, for you might observe little clouds of it bursting out of the doors and windows; the panes of the latter being mostly stopped at

* A little road.

other times with old hats and rags, were now left entirely open for the purpose of giving it a free escape.

Before the doors, on right and left, was a series of dunghills, each with its concomitant sink of green, rotten water; and if it happened that a stout-looking woman, with watery eyes, and a yellow cap hung loosely upon her matted locks, came, with a chubby urchin on one arm, and a pot of dirty water in her hand, its unceremonious ejection in the aforesaid sink would be apt to send you up the village with your finger and thumb (for what purpose you would yourself perfectly understand) closely, but not knowingly, applied to your nostrils. But, independently of this, you would be apt to have other reasons for giving your horse, whose heels are by this time surrounded by a dozen of barking curs, and the same number of shouting urchins, a pretty sharp touch of the spurs, as well as for complaining bitterly of the odor of the atmosphere. It is no landscape without figures; and you might notice, if you are, as I suppose you to be, a man of observation, in every sink as you pass along, a "slip of a pig," stretched in the middle of the mud, the very *beau ideal* of luxury, giving occasionally a long, luxuriant grunt, highly expressive of his enjoyment; or, perhaps, an old farrower, lying in indolent repose, with half a dozen young ones jostling each other for their draught, and punching her belly with their little snouts, reckless of the fumes they are creating; whilst the loud crow of the cock, as he confidently flaps his wings on his own dunghill, gives the warning note for the hour of dinner.

As you advance, you will also perceive several faces thrust out of the doors, and rather than miss a sight of you, a grotesque visage peeping by a short cut through the paneless windows—or a tattered female flying to snatch up her urchin that has been tumbling itself, heels up, in the dust of the road, lest "the gintleman's horse might ride over it;" and if you happen to look behind, you may observe a shaggy-headed youth in tattered frieze, with one hand thrust indolently in his breast, standing at the door in conversation with the inmates, a broad grin of sarcastic ridicule on his face, in the act of breaking a joke or two upon yourself, or your horse; or perhaps, your jaw may be saluted with a lump of clay, just hard enough not to fall asunder as it flies, cast by some ragged gorsoon from behind a hedge, who squats himself in a ridge of corn to avoid detection.

Seated upon a hob at the door, you may observe a toil-worn man, without coat or waistcoat; his red, muscular, sunburnt shoulder peering through the remnant of a skirt, mending his shoes with a piece of twisted flax, called a *lingel*, or, perhaps, sewing two footless stockings (*or martyeens*) to his coat, as a substitute for sleeves.

In the gardens, which are usually fringed with nettles, you will see a solitary laborer, working with that carelessness and apathy that characterizes an Irishman when he labors *for himself*—leaning upon his spade to look after you, glad of any excuse to be idle.

The houses, however, are not all such as I have described—far from it. You see here and there, between the more humble cabins, a stout, comfortable-looking farm-house, with ornamental thatching and well-glazed windows; adjoining to which is a hay-yard, with five or six large stacks of corn, well-trimmed and roped, and a fine, yellow, weather-beaten old hay-rick, half cut—not taking into account twelve or thirteen circular strata of stones, that mark out the foundations on which others had been raised. Neither is the rich smell of oaten or wheaten bread, which the good wife is baking on the griddle, unpleasant to your nostrils; nor would the bubbling of a large pot, in which you might see, should you chance to enter, a prodigious square of fat, yellow, and almost transparent bacon tumbling about, to be an unpleasant object; truly, as it hangs over a large fire, with well-swept hearthstone, it is in good keeping with the white settle and chairs, and the dresser with noggins, wooden trenchers, and pewter dishes, perfectly clean, and as well polished as a French courtier.

As you leave the village, you have, to the left, a view of the hill which I have already described, and to the right a level expanse of fertile country, bounded by a good view of respectable mountains, peering decently into the sky; and in a line that forms an acute angle from the point of the road where you ride, is a delightful valley, in the bottom of which shines a pretty lake; and a little beyond, on the slope of a green hill, rises a splendid house, surrounded by a park, well wooded and stocked with deer. You have now topped the little hill above the village, and a straight line of level road, a mile long, goes forward to a country town, which lies immediately behind that white church, with its spire cutting into the sky, before you. You descend on the other side, and, having advanced a few perches, look to the left, where you see a long, thatched chapel only distinguished from a dwelling-house by its want of chimneys and a small stone cross that stands on the top of the eastern gable; behind it is a graveyard; and beside it a snug, public-house, well whitewashed; then, to the right, you observe a door apparently in the side of a clay bank, which rises considerably

above the pavement of the road. What! you ask yourself, can this be a human habitation?—but ere you have time to answer the question, a confused buzz of voices from within reaches your ear, and the appearance of a little "gorsoon," with a red, close-cropped head and Milesian face, having in his hand a short, white stick, or the thigh-bone of a horse, which you at once recognize as "the pass" of a village school, gives you the full information. He has an ink horn, covered with leather, dangling at the button-hole (for he has long since played away the buttons) of his frieze jacket—his mouth is circumscribed with a streak of ink—his pen is stuck knowingly behind his ear—his shins are dotted over with fire-blisters, black, red, and blue—on each heel a kibe—his "leather crackers," *videlicet*—breeches shrunk up upon him, and only reaching as far down as the caps of his knees. Having spied you, he places his hand over his brows, to throw back the dazzling light of the sun, and peers at you from under it, till he breaks out into a laugh, exclaiming, half to himself, half to you:—

"You a gintleman!—no, nor one of your breed never was, you procthorin' thief, you!"

You are now immediately opposite the door of the seminary, when half a dozen of those seated next it notice you.

"Oh, sir, here's a gintleman on a horse!—masther, sir, here's a gintleman on a horse, wid boots and spurs on him, that's looking in at us."

"Silence!" exclaims the master; "back from the door; boys, rehearse; every one of you rehearse, I say, you Bœotians, till the gintleman goes past!"

"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"No, you don't, Phelim."

"I do, indeed, sir."

"What!—is it after conthradictin' me you'd be? Don't you see the 'porter's' out, and you can't go."

"Well, 'tis Mat Meehan has it, sir: and he's out this half-hour, sir; I can't stay in, sir—iphfff—iphfff!"

"You want to be idling your time looking at the gintleman, Phelim."

"No, indeed, sir—iphfff!"

"Phelim, I know you of ould—go to your sate. I tell you, Phelim, you were born for the encouragement of the hemp manufacture, and you'll die promoting it."

In the meantime, the master puts his head out of the door, his body stooped to a "half bend"—a phrase, and the exact curve which it forms, I leave for the present to your own sagacity—and surveys you until you pass. That is an Irish hedge school, and the personage who follows you with his eye, a hedge schoolmaster. His name is Matthew Kavanagh; and, as you seem to consider his literary establishment rather a curiosity in its kind, I will, if you be disposed to hear it, give you the history of him and his establishment, beginning, in the first place, with

THE ABDUCTION OF MAT KAVANAGH,

THE HEDGE SCHOOLMASTER.

For about three years before the period of which I write, the village of Findramore, and the parish in which it lay, were without a teacher. Mat's predecessor was a James Garraghty, a lame young man, the son of a widow, whose husband lost his life in attempting to extinguish a fire that broke out in the dwelling-house of Squire Johnston, a neighboring magistrate. The son was a boy at the time of this disaster, and the Squire, as some compensation for the loss of his father's life in his service, had him educated at his own expense; that is to say, he gave the master who taught in the village orders to educate him gratuitously, on the condition of being horsewhipped out of the parish, if he refused. As soon as he considered himself qualified to teach, he opened a school in the village on his own account, where he taught until his death, which happened in less than a year after the commencement of his little seminary. The children usually assembled in his mother's cabin; but as she did not long survive the son, this, which was at best a very miserable residence, soon tottered to the ground. The roof and thatch were burnt for firing, the mud gables fell in, and were overgrown with grass, nettles, and docks; and nothing remained but a foot or two of the little clay side-walls, which presented, when associated with the calamitous fate of their inoffensive inmates, rather a touching image of ruin upon a small scale.

Garraghty had been attentive to his little pupils, and his instructions were sufficient to give them a relish for education—a circumstance which did not escape the observation of their parents, who duly appreciated it. His death, however, deprived them of this advantage; and as schoolmasters, under the old system, were always at a premium, it so happened, that for three years afterwards, not one of that class presented himself to their acceptance. Many a trial had been made, and many a sly offer held out, as a lure to the neighboring teachers, but they did not take; for although the country was densely inhabited, yet it was remarked that no schoolmaster ever "*throve*" in the neighborhood of Findramore. The

place, in fact, had got a bad name. Garraghty died, it was thought, of poverty, a disease to which the Findramore schoolmasters had been always known to be subject. His predecessor, too, was hanged, along with two others, for burning the house of an "Aagint."

Then the Findramore boys were not easily dealt with, having an ugly habit of involving their unlucky teachers in those quarrels which they kept up with the Ballyscanlan boys, a fighting clan that lived at the foot of the mountains above them. These two factions, when they met, whether at fair or market, wake or wedding, could never part without carrying home on each side a dozen or two of bloody coxcombs. For these reasons, the parish of Aughindrum had for a few years been afflicted with an extraordinary dearth of knowledge; the only literary establishment which flourished in it being a parochial institution, which, however excellent in design, yet, like too many establishments of the same nature, it degenerated into a source of knowledge, morals, and education, exceedingly dry and unproductive to every person except the master, who was enabled by his honest industry to make a provision for his family absolutely surprising, when we consider the moderate nature of his ostensible income. It was, in fact, like a well dried up, to which scarcely any one ever thinks of going for water.

Such a state of things, however, could not last long. The youth of Findramore were parched for want of the dew of knowledge; and their parents and grown brethren met one Saturday evening in Barny Brady's shebeen-house, to take into consideration the best means for procuring a resident schoolmaster for the village and neighborhood. It was a difficult point, and required great dexterity of management to enable them to devise any effectual remedy for the evil which they felt. There were present at this council, Tim Dolan, the senior of the village, and his three sons, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, Owen Roe O'Neil, Jack Traynor, and Andy Connell, with five or six others, whom it is not necessary to enumerate.

"Bring us in a quart, Barny," said Dolan to Brady, whom on this occasion we must designate as the host; "and let it be rale hathen."

"What do you mane, Tim?" replied the host.

"I mane," continued Dolan, "stuff that was never christened, man alive."

"Thin I'll bring you the same that Father Maguire got last night on his way home, after anointin' ould Katty Duffy," replied Brady. "I'm sure, whatever I might be after giving to strangers, Tim, I'd be long sorry to give *yous* anything but the right sort."

"That's a gay man, Barny," said Traynor, "but off wid you like a shot, and let us get it under our tooth first, an' then we'll tell you more about it—A big rogue is the same Barny," he added, after Brady had gone to bring in the poteen, "an' never sells a dhrop that's not one whiskey and five wathers."

"But he couldn't expose it on *you*, Jack," observed Connell; "you're too ould a hand about the *pot* for that. Warn't you in the mountains last week?"

"Ay: but the curse of Cromwell upon the thief of a gauger, Simpson—himself and a pack o' redcoats surrounded us when we war beginnin' to *double*, and the purtiest *runnin'* that ever you seen was lost; for you see, before you could cross yourself, we had the bottoms knocked clane out of the vessels; so that the villains didn't get a hole in our coats, as they thought they would."

"I tell you," observed O'Neil, "there's a *bad pill* * somewhere about us."

"Ay, is there, Owen," replied Traynor; "and what is more, I don't think he's a hundhre miles from the place where we're sittin' in."

"Faith, maybe so, Jack," returned the other.

"I'd never give into that," said Murphy. "'Tis Barny Brady that would never turn informer—the same thing isn't in him, nor in any of his breed; there's not a man in the parish I'd thrust sooner."

"I'd jist thrust him," replied Traynor, "as far as I could throw a cow by the tail. Arrah, what's the rason that the gauger never looks next or near *his* place, an' it's well known that he sells poteen widout a license, though he goes past his door wanst a week?"

"What the h—— is keepin' him at all?" inquired one of Dolan's sons.

"Look at him," said Traynor, "comin' in out of the garden; how much afeard he is! keepin' the whiskey in a phatie ridge—an' I'd kiss the book that he brought that bottle out in his pocket, instead of diggin' it up out o' the garden."

Whatever Brady's usual habits of *christening* his poteen might have been, that which he now placed before them was good. He laid the bottle on a little deal table with cross legs, and along with it a small drinking glass fixed in a bit of flat circular wood, as a substitute for the original bottom, which had

* This means a treacherous person who cannot be depended upon.

been broken. They now entered upon the point, in question, without further delay.

"Come, Tim," said Coogan, "you're the ouldest man, and must spake first."

"Troth, man," replied Dolan, "beggin' your pardon, I'll dhrink first—healths apiece, your sowl; success boys—glory to ourselves, and confusion to the Scanlon boys, any way."

"And maybe," observed Connell, "'tis we that didn't lick them well in the last fair—they're not able to meet the Findramore birds even on their own walk."

"Well, boys," said Delany, "about the masther? Our childre will grow up like *bullockeens** widout knowing a ha'porth; and larning, you see, is a burdyen that's asy carried."

"Ay," observed O'Neil, "as Solvester Maguire, the poet, used to say—

> 'Labor for larnin, before you grow ould,
> For larnin' is better nor riches or gould;
> Riches an' gould they may vanquish away,
> But larnin' alone it will never decay.'"

"Success, Owen! Why, you might put down the pot and warm an air to it," said Murphy.

"Well, boys, are we all safe?" asked Traynor.

"Safe?" said old Dolan. "Arrah, what are you talkin' about? Sure 'tisn't of that same spalpeen of a gauger that we'd be afraid!"

During this observation, young Dolan pressed Traynor's foot under the table, and they both went out for about five minutes.

"Father," said the son, when he and Traynor re-entered the room, "you're a wanting home."

"Who wants me, Larry, avick?" says the father.

The son immediately whispered to him for a moment, when the old man instantly rose, got his hat, and after drinking another bumper of the poteen, departed.

"Twas hardly worth while," said Delany; "the ould fellow is mettle to the back-bone, an' would never show the *garran-bane* at any rate, even if he knew all about it."

"Bad end to the syllable I'd let the same ould cock hear," said the son; "the divil thrust any man that didn't *switch the primer*† for it, though he *is* my father; but now, boys, that the coast's clear, and all safe—where will we get a schoolmaster? Mat Kavanagh won't budge from the Scanlon boys, even if we war to put our hands undher his feet; and small blame to him—sure, you would not expect him to go against his own friends?"

"Faith, the gorsoons is in a bad state," Murphy; "but, boys where will we get a man that's *up?* Why I know 'tis betther to have anybody nor be without one; but we might kill two birds wid one stone—if we could get a masther that would carry 'Articles,'* an' swear in the boys, from time to time—an' between ourselves, if there's any danger of the hemp, we may as well lay it upon strange shoulders."

"Ay, but since Corrigan swung for the Aagint," replied Delaney, "they're a little modest in havin' act or part wid us; but the best plan is to get an advartisement wrote out, an' have it posted on the chapel door."

This hint was debated with much earnestness; but as they were really anxious to have a master—in the first place, for the simple purpose of educating their children; and in the next, for filling the situation of director and regulator of their illegal Ribbon meetings—they determined on penning an advertisement, according to the suggestion of Delaney. After drinking another bottle, and amusing themselves with some further chat, one of the Dolans undertook to draw up the advertisement, which ran as follows:—

"ADVARTAAISEMENT."

"*Notes to Schoolmasthers, and to all others whom it may consarn.*

"WANTED,

"For the nabourhood and the vircinity of the Townland of Findramore, in the Parish of Aughindrum, in the Barony of Lisnamoghry, County of Sligo, Province of Connaught, Ireland.

"To SCHOOLMASTERS.

"Take Notes—That any Schoolmaster who understands Spellin' gramatically—Readin' and Writin', in the raal way, accordin' to the Dixonary—Arithmatick, that is to say, the five common rules, namely, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—and addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, of Dives's denominations. Also reduction up and down—cross multiplication of coin—the Rule of Three Direck—the Rule of Three in verse—the double Rule of Three—Frackshins taught according to the vulgar and decimatin' method; and must be well practised to tache the Findramore boys how to manage the *Scuffle*.†

* Bullockeens—little bullocks.
† Take an oath.

* A copy of the Whiteboy oath and regulations.
† The Scuffle was an exercise in fractions, illustrated by a quarrel between the first four letters of the alphabet, who went to loggerheads about a sugar-plum. A, for instance, seized upon three-fourths of it; but B snapped two-thirds of what he

"N.B. He must be will grounded in *that*. Practis, Discount, and *Rebatin'*. N.B. Must be well grounded in *that* also.

"Tret and Tare—Fellowship—Allegation—Barther—Rates per Scent—Intherest—Exchange—Prophet in Loss—the Square Root—the Kibe Root—Hippothenuse—Arithmatical and Jommetrical Purgation—Compound Intherest—Loggerheadism—Questions for exercise, and the Conendix to Algibbra. He must also know Jommithry accordin' to Grunther's scale—the Castigation of the Klipsticks—Surveying, and the use of the Jacob-staff.

"N.B. Would get a good dale of Surveyin' to do in the vircinity of Findramore, particularly in *Con-acre time*. If he know the use of the globe, it would be an accusation. He must also understand the Three Sets of Book-keeping, by single and double entry, particularly Loftus & Company of Paris, their Account of Cash and Company. And above all things, he must know how to tache the *Sarvin' of Mass in Latin*, and be able to read Doctor Gallaher's Irish Sarmints, and explain Kolumkill's and Pasterini's Prophecies.

"N.B. If he understands *Cudgel-fencin'*, it would be an accusation also—but mustn't tache us wid a staff that bends in the middle, bekase it breaks one's head across the guard. Any schoolmaster capacious and collified to instruct in the above-mintioned branches, would get a good school in the townland Findramore and its vircinity, be well fed, an' get the hoith o' good livin' among the farmers, an' would be ped—

"For Book-keepin', the three sets, *a ginny and half*.

"For Gommethry, &c., *half a ginny a quarther*.

"Arithmatic, *aight and three-hapuns*.

"Readin', Writin', &c., *six Hogs*.

"*Given under our hands, this 37th day of June*, 18004.

"LARRY DOLAN.
"DICK DOLAN, his ⋊ mark.
"JEM COOGAN, his ⋊ mark.
"BRINE MURPHEY.
"PADDY DELANY, his ⋊ mark.
"JACK TRAYNOR.
"ANDY CONNELL.
"OWEN ROE O'NEIL, his ⋊ mark."

"N.B. *By making airly application to any of the undher-mintioned, he will hear of further particklers;* and if they find that he will shoot them, he may expect the best o' thratement, an' be well fed among the farmers.*

"N.B. Would get also a good *Night-school* among the vircinity."

Having penned the above advertisement, it was carefully posted early the next morning on the chapel-doors, with an expectation on the part of the patrons that it would not be wholly fruitless. The next week, however, passed without an application—the second also—and the third produced the same result; nor was there the slightest prospect of a school-master being blown by any wind to the lovers of learning at Findramore. In the meantime, the Ballyscanlan boys took care to keep up the ill-natured prejudice which had been circulated concerning the fatality that uniformly attended such schoolmasters as settled there; and when this came to the ears of the Findramore folk, it was once more resolved that the advertisement should be again put up, with a clause containing an explanation on that point. The clause ran as follows:

"N.B.—The two last masthers that was hanged out of Findramore, that is, Mickey Corrigan, who was hanged for killing the Aagent, and Jem Garraghty, that died of a declension—Jem died in consequence of ill-health, and Mickey was hanged contrary to his own wishes; so that it wasn't either of their faults—as witness our hands this 207th of July.

"DICK DOLAN, his ⋊ mark."

This explanation, however, was as fruitless as the original advertisement; and week

had got, and put it into his hat; C then knocked off his hat, and as worthy Mr. Gough says, "to work they went." After kicking and cuffing each other in prime style, each now losing and again gaining alternately, the question is wound up by requiring the pupil to ascertain what quantity of the sugar-plum each had at the close.

* Nothing can more decidedly prove the singular and extraordinary thirst for education and general knowledge which characterizes the Irish people, than the shifts to which they have often gone in order to gain even a limited portion of instruction. Of this the Irish Night School is a complete illustration. The Night School was always opened either for those of early age, who from their poverty were forced to earn *something* for their own support during the day; or to assist their parents; or for grown young men who had never had an opportunity of acquiring education in their youth, but who now devoted a couple of hours during a winter's night, when they could do nothing else, to the acquisition of reading and writing, and sometimes of accounts. I know not how it was, but the Night School boys, although often thrown into the way of temptation, always conducted themselves with singular propriety. Indeed, the fact is, after all, pretty easily accounted for—inasmuch as none but the steadiest, most sensible, and best conducted young men ever attended it.

after week passed over without an offer from a single candidate. The "vicinity" of Findramore and its "naborhood" seemed devoted to ignorance; and nothing remained, except another effort at procuring a master by some more ingenious contrivance.

Debate after debate was consequently held in Barney Brady's; and, until a fresh suggestion was made by Delany, the prospect seemed as bad as ever. Delany, at length fell upon a new plan; and it must be confessed, that it was marked in a peculiar manner by a spirit of great originality and enterprise, it being nothing less than a proposal to carry off, by force or stratagem, Mat Kavanagh, who was at that time fixed in the throne of literature among the Ballyscanlan boys, quite unconscious of the honorable translation to the neighborhood of Findramore which was intended for him. The project, when broached, was certainly a startling one, and drove most of them to a pause, before they were sufficiently collected to give an opinion on its merits.

"Nothin', boys, is asier," said Delaney. 'There's to be a patthern in Ballymagowan, on next Sathurday—an' that's jist half way betune ourselves and the Scanlan boys. Let us musther, an' go there, any how. We can keep an eye on Mat widout much trouble, an' when opportunity sarves, nick him at wanst, an' off wid him clane."

"But," said Traynor, "what would we do wid him when he'd be here? Wouldn't he *rut an' run* the first opportunity.

"How can he, ye omadhawn, if we put *a manwill** in our pocket, an' sware him? But we'll butther him up when he's among us; or, be me sowks, if it goes that, force him either to settle wid ourselves, or to make himself scarce in the country entirely."

"Divil a much force it'll take to keep him, I'm thinkin'," observed Murphy. "He'll have three times a bether school here; and if he wanst settled, I'll engage he would take to it kindly."

"See here, boys," says Dick Dolan, in a whisper, "if that bloody villain, Brady, isn't afther standin' this quarter of an hour, strivin' to hear what we're about; but it's well we didn't bring up anything consarnin' the other business; didn't I tell yees the desate was in 'im? Look at his shadow on the wall forninst us."

"Hould yer tongues, boys," said Traynor; "jist keep never mindin', and, be me sowks, I'll make him sup sorrow for that thrick."

"You had bettber neither make nor meddle wid him," observed Delany, "jist put him out o' that—but don't rise yer hand to him, or he'll sarve you as he did Jem Flannagan: put ye three or four months in the *Stone Jug*."*

Traynor, however, had gone out while he was speaking, and in a few minutes dragged in Brady, whom he caught in the very act of eaves-dropping.

"Jist come in, Brady," said Traynor, as he dragged him along; "walk in, man alive; sure, and sich an honest man as you are needn't be afeard of lookin' his friends in the face! Ho!—an' be me sowl, is it a spy we've got; and, I suppose, would be an informer too, if he had heard anything to tell!"

"What's the maain' of this, boys?" exclaimed the others, feigning ignorance. "Let the honest man go, Traynor. What do ye hawl him that way for, ye gallis pet?"

"Honest!" replied Traynor; "how very honest he is, the desavin' villain, to be standin' at the windy there, wantin' to overhear the little harmless talk we had."

"Come, Traynor," said Brady, seizing him in his turn by the neck, "take your hands off of me, or, bad fate to me, but I'll lave ye a mark."

Traynor, in his turn, had his hand twisted in Brady's cravat, which he drew tightly about his neck, until the other got nearly black in the face.

"Let me go you villain!" exclaimed Brady, "or, by this blessed night that's in it, it'll be worse for you."

"Villain, is it?" replied Traynor, making a blow at him, whilst Brady snatched at a penknife, which one of the others had placed on the table, after picking the tobacco out of his pipe—intending either to stab Traynor, or to cut the knot of the cravat by which he was held. The others, however, interfered, and prevented further mischief.

"Brady," said Traynor, "you'll rue this night, if ever a man did, you tracherous informin' villian. What an honest spy we have among us!—and a short coorse to you!"

"O, hould yer tongue, Traynor!" replied Brady: "I believe it's best known who is both the spy and the informer. The divil a pint of poteen ever you'll run in this parish, until you clear yourself of bringing the gauger on the Tracys, bekase they tuck Mick M'Kew, in preference to yourself, to run it for them."

Traynor made another attempt to strike him, but was prevented. The rest now interfered; and, in the course of an hour or so, an adjustment took place.

Brady took up the tongs, and swore "by that blessed iron," that he neither heard, nor intended to hear, anything they said; and

* Manual, a Roman Catholic prayer-book, generally pronounced as above.

* A short periphrasis for Gaol.

this exculpation was followed by a fresh bottle at his own expense.

"You omadhawn," said he to Traynor, "I was only puttin' up a dozen o' bottles into the tatch of the house, when you thought I was listenin'; " and, as a proof of the truth of this, he brought them out, and showed them some bottles of poteen, neatly covered up under the thatch.

Before their separation they finally planned the abduction of Kavanagh from the Patron, on the Saturday following, and after drinking another round went home to their respective dwellings.

In this speculation, however, they experienced a fresh disappointment; for, ere Saturday arrived, whether in consequence of secret intimation of their intention from Brady, or some friend, or in compliance with the offer of a better situation, the fact was, that Mat Kavanagh had removed to another school, distant about eighteen miles from Findramore. But they were not to be outdone; a new plan was laid, and in the course of the next week a dozen of the most enterprising and intrepid of the "boys," mounted each upon a good horse, went to Mat's new residence for the express purpose of securing him.

Perhaps our readers may scarcely believe that a love of learning was so strong among the inhabitants of Findramore as to occasion their taking such remarkable steps for establishing a schoolmaster among them; but the country was densely inhabited, the rising population exceedingly numerous, and the outcry for a schoolmaster amongst the parents of the children loud and importunate.

The fact, therefore, was, that a very strong motive stimulated the inhabitants of Findramore in their efforts to procure a master. The old and middle-aged heads of families were actuated by a simple wish, inseparable from Irishmen, to have their children educated; and the young men, by a determination to have a properly qualified person to conduct their Night Schools, and improve them in their reading, writing, and arithmetic. The circumstance I am now relating is one which actually took place: and any man acquainted with the remote parts of Ireland, may have often seen bloody and obstinate quarrels among the peasantry, in vindicating a priority of claim to the local residence of a schoolmaster among them. I could, within my own experience, relate two or three instances of this nature.

It was one Saturday night, in the latter end of the month of May, that a dozen Findramore "boys," as they were called, set out upon this most singular of all literary speculations, resolved, at whatever risk, to secure the person and effect the permanent bodily presence among them of the Redoubtable Mat Kavanagh. Each man was mounted on a horse, and one of them brought a spare steed for the accommodation of the schoolmaster. The caparison of this horse was somewhat remarkable: it consisted of a wooden straddle, such as is used by the peasantry for carrying wicker paniers or creels, which are hung upon two wooden pins, that stand up out of its sides. Underneath was a straw mat, to prevent the horse's back from being stripped by it. On one side of this hung a large creel, and on the other a strong sack, tied round a stone merely of sufficient weight to balance the empty creel. The night was warm and clear, the moon and stars all threw their mellow light from a serene, unclouded sky, and the repose of nature in the short nights of this delightful season, resembles that of a young virgin of sixteen—still, light, and glowing. Their way, for the most part of their journey, lay through a solitary mountain-road; and, as they did not undertake the enterprise without a good stock of poteen, their light-hearted songs and choruses awoke the echoes that slept in the mountain glens as they went along. The adventure, it is true, had as much of frolic as of seriousness in it; and merely as the means of a day's fun for the boys, it was the more eagerly entered into.

It was about midnight when they left home, and as they did not wish to arrive at the village to which they were bound, until the morning should be rather advanced, the journey was as slowly performed as possible. Every remarkable object on the way was noticed, and its history, if any particular association was connected with it, minutely detailed, whenever it happened to be known. When the sun rose, many beautiful green spots and hawthorn valleys excited, even from these unpolished and illiterate peasants, warm bursts of admiration at their fragrance and beauty. In some places, the dark flowery heath clothed the mountains to the tops, from which the gray mists, lit by a flood of light, and breaking into masses before the morning breeze, began to descend into the valleys beneath them; whilst the voice of the grouse, the bleating of sheep and lambs, the pee-weet of the wheeling lap-wing, and the song of the lark threw life and animation over the previous stillness of the country. Sometimes a shallow river would cross the road, winding off into a valley that was overhung, on one side, by rugged precipices clothed with luxuriant heath and wild ash; whilst, on the other, it was skirted by a long sweep of greensward, skimmed by the twit-

tering swallow, over which lay scattered numbers of sheep, cows, brood mares, and colts—many of them rising and stretching themselves ere they resumed their pasture, leaving the spots on which they lay of a deeper green. Occasionally, too, a sly-looking fox might be seen lurking about a solitary lamb, or brushing over the hills with a fat goose upon his back, retreating to his den among the inaccessible rocks, after having plundered some unsuspecting farmer.

As they advanced into the skirts of the cultivated country, they met many other beautiful spots of scenery among the upland, considerable portions of which, particularly in long sloping valleys, that faced the morning sun, were covered with hazel and brushwood, where the unceasing and simple notes of the cuckoo were incessantly plied, mingled with the more mellow and varied notes of the thrush and blackbird. Sometimes the bright summer waterfall seemed, in the rays of the sun, like a column of light, and the springs that issued from the sides of the more distant and lofty mountains shone with a steady, dazzling brightness, on which the eye could scarcely rest. The morning, indeed, was beautiful. the fields in bloom, and every thing cheerful. As the sun rose in the heavens, nature began gradually to awaken into life and happiness; nor was the natural grandeur of a Sabbath summer morning among these piles of magnificent mountains—nor its heartfelt, but more artificial beauty in the cultivated country, lost, even upon the unphilosophical "boys" of Findramore; so true is it, that such exquisite appearances of nature will force enjoyment upon the most uncultivated heart.

When they had arrived within two miles of the little town in which Mat Kavanagh was fixed, they turned off into a deep glen, a little to the left; and, after having seated themselves under a white-thorn which grew on the banks of a rivulet, they began to devise the best immediate measures to be taken.

"Boys," said Tim Dolan, "how will we manage now with this thief of a schoolmaster, at all? Come, Jack Traynor, you that's up to still-house work—escapin' and carryin' away stills from gaugers, the bloody villains! out wid yer *spake*, till we hear your opinion."

"Do ye think, boys," said Andy Connell, "that we could flatter him to come by fair mains?"

"Flatther him!" said Traynor; "and, by my sowl, if we flatther him at all, it must be by the hair of the head. No, no; let us bring him first, whether he will or not, an' ax his consent afterwards!"

"I'll tell you what it is, boys," continued Connell, "I'll hould a wager, if you have him to me, I'll bring him wid his own consint."

"No, nor sorra that you'll do, nor could do," replied Traynor: "for, along wid every thing else, he thinks he's not jist doated on by the Findramore people, being one of the Ballyscanlan tribe. No, no; let two of us go to his place, and purtind that we have other business in the fair of Clansallagh on Monday next, and ax him in to dhrink, for he'll not refuse that, any how; then, when he's half tipsy, ax him to convoy us this far; we'll then meet you here, an' tell him some palaver or other—sit down where we are now, and, after making him dead dhrunk, hoist a big stone in the creel, and Mat in the sack, on the other side, wid his head out, and off wid him; and he will know neither act nor part about it till we're at Findramore."

Having approved of this project, they pulled out each a substantial complement of stout oaten bread, which served, along with the whiskey, for breakfast. The two persons pitched on for decoying Mat were Dolan and Traynor, who accordingly set out, full of glee at the singularity and drollness of their undertaking. It is unnecessary to detail the ingenuity with which they went about it, because, in consequence of Kavanagh's love of drink, very little ingenuity was necessary. One circumstance, however, came to light, which gave them much encouragement, and that was a discovery that Mat by no means relished his situation.

In the meantime, those who stayed behind in the glen felt their patience begin to flag a little, because of the delay made by the others, who had promised, if possible, to have the schoolmaster in the glen before two o'clock. But the fact was, that Mat, who was far less deficient in hospitality than in learning, brought them into his house, and not only treated them to plenty of whiskey, but made the wife prepare a dinner, for which he detained them, swearing, that except they stopped to partake of it, he would not convoy them to the place appointed. Evening was, therefore, tolerably far advanced, when they made their appearance at the glen, in a very equivocal state of sobriety—Mat being by far the steadiest of the three, but still considerably the worse for what he had taken. He was now welcomed by a general huzza; and on his expressing surprise at their appearance, they pointed to their horses, telling him that they were bound for the fair of Clansallagh, for the purpose of selling them. This was the more probable, as, when a fair occurs in Ireland, it is usual for cattle-dealers, particularly horse-jockeys, to effect sales, and "show" their horses on the evening before.

Mat now sat down, and was vigorously plied with strong poteen—songs were sung, stories told, and every device resorted to that was calculated to draw out and heighten his sense of enjoyment; nor were their efforts without success; for, in the course of a short time, Mat was free from all earthly care, being incapable of either speaking or standing.

"Now, boys," said Dolan, "let us do the thing clane an' dacent. Let you, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, and Andy Connell, go back, and tell the wife and two childher a cock-and-a-bull story about Mat—say that he is coming to Findramore for good and all, and that'll be thruth, you know; and that he ordhered yez to bring her and them afther him; and we can come back for the furniture to-morrow."

A word was enough—they immediately set off; and the others, not wishing that Mat's wife should witness the mode of his conveyance, proceeded home, for it was now dusk. The plan succeeded admirably; and in a short time the wife and children, mounted behind the "boys" on the horses, were on the way after them to Findramore.

The reader is already aware of the plan they had adopted for translating Mat; but, as it was extremely original, I will explain it somewhat more fully. The moment the schoolmaster was intoxicated to the necessary point—that is to say, totally helpless and insensible—they opened the sack and put him in, heels foremost, tying it in such a way about his neck as might prevent his head from getting into it: thus avoiding the danger of suffocation. The sack, with Mat at full length in it, was then fixed to the pin of the straddle, so that he was in an erect posture during the whole journey. A creel was then hung at the other side, in which was placed a large stone, of sufficient weight to preserve an equilibrium; and, to prevent any accident, a droll fellow sat astride behind the straddle, amusing himself and the rest by breaking jokes upon the novelty of Mat's situation.

"Well, Mat, *ma bouchal*, how duv ye like your sitivation? I believe, for all your larnin', the Findramore boys have *sacked* you at last!"

"Ay," exclaimed another, "he *is* sacked at last, in spite of his Matthew-maticks."

"An', be my sowks," observed Traynor, "he'd be a long time goin' up a Maypowl in the state he's in—his own snail would bate him.*

"Yes," said another; "but he desarves credit for travelin' from Clansallagh to Findramore, widout layin' a foot to the ground—

"'Wan day wid Captain Whiskey I wrastled a fall,
But faith I was no match for the captain at all—
But faith I was no match for the captain at all,
Though the landlady's measures they were
damnable small.
Tooral, looral, looral looral lido.'

Whoo—hurroo! my darlings—success to the Findramore boys! Hurroo—hurroo—the Findramore boys for ever!"

"Boys, did ever ye hear the song Mat made on Ned Mullen's fight wid Jemmy Connor's gander? Well here is part of it, to the tune of 'Brian O'Lynn'—

"'As Ned and the gander wor basting each other,
I hard a loud cry from the gray goose, his mother;
I ran to assist him, wid very great speed,
But betore I arrived the poor gander did bleed.

"'Alas!' says the gander, 'I'm very ill-trated,
For traicherous Mullen has me fairly defated;
Bud had you been here for to show me fair play,
I could leather his *puckan* around the lee bray.'

"Bravo! Matt," addressing the insensible schoolmaster—"success, poet. Hurroo for the Findramore boys! the Bridge boys for ever!"

They then commenced, in a tone of mock gravity, to lecture him upon his future duties—detailing the advantages of his situation, and the comforts he would enjoy among them—although they might as well have addressed themselves to the stone on the other side. In this manner they got along, amusing themselves at Mat's expense, and highly elated at the success of their undertaking. About three o'clock in the morning they reached the top of the little hill above the village, when, on looking back along the level stretch of road which I have already described, they noticed their companions, with Mat's wife and children, moving briskly after them. A general huzza now took place, which, in a few minutes, was answered by two or three dozen of the young folks, who were assembled in Barny Brady's waiting for their arrival. The scene now became quite animated—cheer after cheer succeeded—jokes, laughter, and rustic wit, pointed by the spirit of Brady's poteen, flew briskly about. When Mat was unsacked, several of them came up, and shaking him cordially by the hand, welcomed him among them. To the kindness of this reception, however, Mat was wholly insensible, having been for the greater part of the journey in a profound sleep. The boys now slipped the loop of the sack off the straddle-pin; and,

* This alludes to a question in Gough's Arithmetic, which is considered difficult by hedge schoolmasters.

carrying Mat into a farmer's house, they deposited him in a settle-bed, where he slept unconscious of the journey he had performed, until breakfast-time on the next morning. In the mean time, the wife and children were taken care of by Mrs. Connell, who provided them with a bed, and every other comfort which they could require.

The next morning, when Mat awoke, his first call was for a drink. I should have here observed, that Mrs. Kavanagh had been sent for by the good woman in whose house Mat had slept, that they might all breakfast and have a drop together, for they had already succeeded in reconciling *her* to the change.

"Wather!" said Mat—"a drink of wather, if it's to be had for love or money, or I'll split wid druth—I'm all in a state of conflagration; and my head—by the sowl of Newton, the inventor of fluxions, but my head is a complete illucidation of the centrifugal motion, so it is. Tundher-an'-turf! is there no wather to be had? Nancy, I say, for God's sake, quicken yourself with the hydraulics, or the best mathematician in Ireland's gone to the abode of Euclid and Pythagoras, that first invented the multiplication table."

On cooling his burning blood with the "hydraulics," he again lay down with the intention of composing himself for another sleep; but his eye having noticed the novelty of his situation, he once more called Nancy.

"Nancy avourneen," he inquired, "will you be afther resolving me one single proposition.—Where am I at the present speaking? Is it in the *Siminary* at home, Nancy?"

Nancy, in the mean time, had been desired to answer in the affirmative, hoping that if his mind was made easy on that point, he might refresh himself by another hour or two's sleep, as he appeared to be not at all free from the effects of his previous intoxication.

"Why, Mat, jewel, where else could you be, alannah, but at home? Sure isn't here Jack, an' Biddy, an' myself, Mat, agra, along wid me. Your head isn't well, but all you want is a good rousin' sleep."

"Very well, Nancy; very well, that's enough—quite satisfactory—*quod erat demonstrandum.* May all kinds of bad luck rest upon the Findramore boys, any way! The unlucky vagabonds—I'm the *third* they've done up. Nancy, off wid ye, like quicksilver for the priest."

"The priest! Why, Mat, jewel, what puts that into your head? Sure, there's nothing wrong wid ye, only the sup o' drink you tuck yesterday."

"Go, woman," said Mat; "did you ever know me to make a wrong *cuculation?* I tell you I'm *non compos mentis* from head to heel. Head! by my sowl, Nancy, it'll soon be a *caput mortuum* wid me—I'm far gone in a disease they call an opthical delusion—the devil a thing less it is—me bein' in my own place, an' to think I'm lyin' in a settle bed; that there is a large dresser, covered wid pewter dishes and plates; and to crown all, the door on the wrong side of the house. Off wid ye, and tell his Reverence that I want to be anointed, and to die in pace and charity wid all men. May the most especial kind of bad luck light down upon you, Findramore, and all that's in you, both man and baste—you have given *me* my gruel along wid the rest; but, thank God, you won't hang me, any how! Off, Nancy, for the priest, till I die like a Christhan, in pace and forgiveness wid the world;—all kinds of hard fortune to them! Make haste, woman, if you expect me to die like a Christhan. If they bad let me alone till I'd publish to the world my Treatise upon Conic Sections—but to be cut off on my march to fame! another draught of the hydraulics, Nancy, an' then for the priest—But see, bring Father Connell, the curate, for he understands something about Matthew-maticks; an' never heed Father Roger, for divil a thing he knows about them, not even the difference between a right line and a curve—in the page of histhory, to his everlasting disgrace, be the same recorded!"

"Mat," replied Nancy, scarcely preserving her gravity, "keep yourself from talkin', an' fall asleep, then you'll be well enough."

"Is there e'er a sup at all in the house?" said Mat; "if there is, let me get it; for there's an ould proverb, though it's a most unmathematical axiom as ever was invinted—'try a hair of the same dog that bit you;' give me a glass, Nancy, an' you can go for Father Connell after. Oh, by the sowl of Isaac, that invented fluxions, what's this for?"

A general burst of laughter followed this demand and ejaculation; and Mat sat up once more in the settle, and examined the place with keener scrutiny. Nancy herself laughed heartily; and, as she handed him the full glass, entered into an explanation of the circumstances attending his translation.

Mat, at all times rather of pliant disposition, felt rejoiced on finding that he was still *compos mentis;* and on hearing what took place, he could not help entering into the humor of the enterprise, at which he laughed as heartily as any of them.

"Mat," said the farmer, and half a dozen of the neighbors, "you're a happy man; there's a hundred of the boys have a school-

"I BELIEVE, FOR ALL YOUR LARNING, THE FINDEAMORE BOYS HAVE SACKED YOU AT LAST."
—*Hedge School*, p. 831, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

house half built for you this same blessed sunshiny mornin', while your lying at aise in your bed."

"By the sowl of Newton, that invented fluxions!" replied Mat, "but I'll take revenge for the disgrace you put upon my profession, by stringing up a schoolmaster among you, and I'll hang you all! It's death to steal a four-footed animal; but what do you desarve for stealin' a Christian baste, a two-legged schoolmaster without feathers, eighteen miles, and he not to know it?"

In the course of a short time Mat was dressed, and having found benefit from the "hair of the dog that bit him," he tried another glass, which strung his nerves, or, as he himself expressed it—"they've got the rale mathematical tinsion again." What the farmer said, however, about the school-house had been true. Early that morning all the growing and grown young men of Findramore and its "vircinity" had assembled, selected a suitable spot, and, with merry hearts, were then busily engaged in erecting a school-house for their general accomodation.

The manner of building hedge school-houses being rather curious, I will describe it. The usual spot selected for their erection is a ditch in the road-side, in some situation where there will be as little damp as possible. From such a spot an excavation is made equal to the size of the building, so that, when this is scooped out, the back side-wall, and the two gables are already formed, the banks being dug perpendicularly. The front side-wall, with a window in each side of the door, is then built of clay or green sods laid along in rows; the gables are also topped with sods, and, perhaps, a row or two laid upon the back side-wall, if it should be considered too low. Having got the erection of Mat's house thus far, they procured a scraw-spade, and repaired with a couple of dozen of cars to the next bog, from which they cut the light heathy surface in strips the length of the roof. A scraw-spade is an instrument resembling the letter T, with an iron plate at the lower end, considerably bent, and well adapted to the purpose for which it is intended. Whilst one party cut the scraws, another bound the *couples* and *bauks* * and a third cut as many green branches as were sufficient to wattle it. The couples, being bound, were raised—the ribs laid on—then the wattles, and afterwards the scraws.

Whilst these successive processes went forward, many others had been engaged all the morning cutting rushes; and the scraws were no sooner laid on, than half a dozen thatchers mounted the roof, and long before the evening was closed, a school house, capable of holding near two hundred children, was finished. But among the peasantry no new house is ever put up without a hearth-warming and a dance. Accordingly the clay floor was paired—a fiddler procured—Barny Brady and his stock of poteen sent for; the young women of the village and surrounding neighborhood attended in their best finery; dancing commenced—and it was four o'clock the next morning when the merry-makers departed, leaving Mat a new home and a hard floor, ready for the reception of his scholars.

Business now commenced. At nine o'clock the next day Mat's furniture was settled in a small cabin, given to him at a cheap rate by one of the neighboring farmers; for, whilst the school-house was being built, two men, with horses and cars, had gone to Clansallagh, accompanied by Nancy, and removed the furniture, such as it was, to their new residence. Nor was Mat, upon the whole, displeased at what had happened; for he was now fixed in a flourishing country—fertile and well cultivated; nay, the bright landscape which his school-house commanded was sufficient in itself to reconcile him to his situation. The inhabitants were in comparatively good circumstances; many of them wealthy, respectable farmers, and capable of remunerating him very decently for his literary labors; and what was equally flattering, there was a certainty of his having a numerous and well-attended school in a neighborhood with whose inhabitants he was acquainted.

Honest, kind-hearted Paddy!—pity that you should ever feel distress or hunger!—pity that you should be compelled to seek, in another land, the hard-earned pittance by which you keep the humble cabin over your chaste wife and naked children! Alas! what noble materials for composing a national character, of which humanity might be justly proud, do the lower orders of the Irish possess, if raised and cultivated by an enlightened education! Pardon me, gentle reader, for this momentary ebullition; I grant I am a little dark now. I assure you, however, the tear of enthusiastic admiration is warm on my eye-lids, when I remember the flitches of bacon, the sacks of potatoes, the bags of meal, the *miscowns* of butter, and the dishes of eggs—not omitting crate after crate of turf which came in such rapid succession to Mat Kavanagh, during the first

* The couples are shaped like the letter A, and sustain the roof; the bauks, or rafters, cross them from one side to another like the line inside the letter.

week on which he opened his school. Ay, and many a bottle of stout poteen, when

"The eye of the gauger saw it not,"

was, with a sly, good-humored wink, handed over to Mat, or Nancy, no matter which, from under the comfortable drab jock, with velvet-covered collar, erect about the honest, ruddy face of a warm, smiling farmer, or even the tattered frieze of a poor laborer—anxious to secure the attention of the "masther" to his little "*Shoneen*," whom, in the extravagance of his ambition, he destined to "wear the robes as a clargy." Let no man say, I repeat, that the Irish are not fond of education.

In the course of a month Mat's school was full to the door posts, for, in fact, he had the parish to himself—many attending from a distance of three, four, and five miles. His merits, however, were believed to be great, and his character for learning stood high, though unjustly so: for a more superficial, and at the same time, a more presuming dunce never existed; but his character alone could secure him a good attendance; he, therefore, belied the unfavorable prejudices against the Findramore folk, which had gone abroad, and was a proof, in his own person, that the reason of the former schoolmasters' miscarriage lay in the belief of their incapacity which existed among the people. But Mat was one of those showy, shallow fellows, who did not lack for assurance.

The first step a hedge schoolmaster took, on establishing himself in a school, was to write out, in his best copperplate hand, a flaming advertisement, detailing, at full length, the several branches he professed himself capable of teaching. I have seen many of these—as who that is acquainted with Ireland has not?—and, beyond all doubt, if the persons that issued them were acquainted with the various heads recapitulated, they must have been buried in the most profound obscurity, as no man but a walking Encyclopædia—an admirable Crichton—could claim an intimacy with them, embracing, as they often did, the whole circle of human knowledge. 'Tis true, the vanity of the pedagogue had full scope in these advertisements, as there was none to bring him to an account, except some rival, who could only attack him on those practical subjects which were known to both. Independently of this, there was a good-natured collusion between them on those points which were beyond their knowledge, inasmuch as they were not practical but speculative, and by no means involved their character or personal interests. On the next Sunday, therefore, after Mat's establishment at Findramore, you might see a circle of the peasantry assembled at the chapel door, perusing, with suitable reverence and admiration on their faces, the following advertisement; or, perhaps, Mat himself, with a learned, consequential air, in the act of "expounding" it to them.

"EDUCATION.

"*Mr. Matthew Kavanagh, Philomath and Professor of the Learned Languages, begs leave to inform the Inhabitants of Findramore and its vicinity, that he lectures on the following branches of Education, in his Seminary at the above-recited place:—*

"Spelling, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, upon altogether *new* principles, hitherto undiscovered by any excepting himself, and for which he expects a *Patent* from Trinity College, Dublin; or, at any rate, from Squire Johnston, Esq., who paternizes many of the pupils; Book-keeping, by single and double entry—Geometry, Trigonometry, Stereometry, Mensuration, Navigation, Guaging, Surveying, Dialling, Astronomy, Astrology, Austerity, Fluxions, Geography, ancient and modern—Maps, the Projection of the Sphere—Algebra, the Use of the Globes, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Pneumatics, Optics, Dioptics, Catroptics, Hydraulics, Ærostatics, Geology, Glorification, Divinity, Mythology, Medicinality, Physic, by theory only, Metaphysics practically, Chemistry, Electricity, Galvanism, Mechanics, Antiquities, Agriculture, Ventilation, Explosion, etc.

"In Classics—Grammar, Cordery, Æsop's Fables, Erasmus' Colloquies, Cornelius Nepos, Phædrus, Valerius Maximus, Justin, Ovid, Sallust, Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, Terence, Tully's Offices, Cicero, Manouverius Turgidus, Esculapius, Rogerius, Satanus Nigrus, Quinctilian, Livy, Thomas Aquinas, Cornelius Agrippa, and Cholera Morbus.

"Greek Grammar, Greek Testament, Lucian, Homer, Sophocles, Æschylus, Thucydides, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and the Works of Alexander the Great; the manners, habits, customs, usages, and the meditations of the Grecians; the Greek Digamma resolved, Prosody, Composition, both in prose and verse, and Oratory, in English, Latin and Greek; together with various other branches of learning and scholastic profundity—*quos enumerare longum est*—along with Irish Radically, and a small taste of Hebrew upon the Masoretic text.

"MATTHEW KAVANAGH, *Philomath*." *

* See note at the end of this sketch, p. 849.

Having posted this document upon the chapel-door, and in all the public places and cross roads of the parish, Mat considered himself as having done his duty. He now began to teach, and his school continued to increase to his heart's content, every day bringing him fresh scholars. In this manner he flourished till the beginning of winter, when those boys, who, by the poverty of their parents, had been compelled to go to service to the neighboring farmers, flocked to him in numbers, quite voracious for knowledge. An addition was consequently built to the school-house, which was considerably too small; so that, as Christmas approached, it would be difficult to find a more numerous or merry establishment under the roof of a hedge school. But it is time to give an account of its interior.

The reader will then be pleased to picture to himself such a house as I have already described—in a line with the hedge; the eave of the back roof within a foot of the ground behind it; a large hole exactly in the middle of the "*riggin*," as a chimney; immediately under which is an excavation in the floor, burned away by a large fire of turf, loosely heaped together. This is surrounded by a circle of urchins, sitting on the bare earth, stones, and hassocks, and exhibiting a series of speckled shins, all radiating towards the fire, like sausages on a *Poloni* dish. There they are—wedged as close as they can sit; one with half a thigh off his breeches—another with half an arm off his tattered coat—a third without breeches at all, wearing, as a substitute, a piece of his mother's old petticoat, pinned about his loins—a fourth, no coat—a fifth, with a cap on him, because he has got a scald, from having sat under the juice of fresh hung bacon—a sixth with a black eye—a seventh two rags about his heels to keep his kibes clean—an eighth crying to get home, because he has got a headache, though it may be as well to hint, that there is a drag-hunt to start from beside his father's in the course of the day. In this ring, with his legs stretched in a most lordly manner, sits, upon a deal chair, Mat himself, with his hat on, basking in the enjoyment of unlimited authority. His dress consists of a black coat, considerably in want of repair, transferred to his shoulders through the means of a clothes-broker in the county-town; a white cravat, round a large stuffing, having that part which comes in contact with the chin somewhat streaked with brown—a black waistcoat, with one or two "tooth-an'-egg" metal buttons sewed on where the original had fallen off—black corduroy inexpressibles, twice dyed, and sheep's-gray stockings. In his hand is a large, broad ruler, the emblem of his power, the woful instrument of executive justice, and the signal of terror to all within his jurisdiction. In a corner below is a pile of turf, where on entering, every boy throws his two sods, with a *hitch* from under his left arm. He then comes up to the master, catches his forelock with finger and thumb, and bobs down his head, by way of making him a bow, and goes to his seat. Along the walls on the ground is a series of round stones, some of them capped with a straw collar or hassock, on which the boys sit; others have bosses, and many of them hobs—a light but compact kind of boggy substance found in the mountains. On these several of them sit; the greater number of them, however, have no seats whatever, but squat themselves down, without compunction, on the hard floor. Hung about, on wooden pegs driven into the walls, are the shapeless yellow "caubeens" of such as can boast the luxury of a hat, or caps made of goat or hare's skin, the latter having the ears of the animal rising ludicrously over the temples, or cocked out at the sides, and the scut either before or behind, according to the taste or the humor of the wearer. The floor, which is only swept every Saturday, is strewed over with tops of quills, pens, pieces of broken slate, and tattered leaves of "Reading made Easy," or fragments of old copies. In one corner is a knot engaged at "Fox and Geese," or the "Walls of Troy" on their slates; in another, a pair of them are "fighting bottles," which consists in striking the bottoms together, and he whose bottle breaks first, of course, loses. Behind the master is a third set, playing "heads and points"—a game of pins. Some are more industriously employed in writing their copies, which they perform seated on the ground, with their paper on a copy-board—a piece of planed deal, the size of the copy, an appendage now nearly exploded—their cheek-bones laid within half an inch of the left side of the copy, and the eye set to guide the motion of the hand across, and to regulate the straightness of the lines and the forms of the letters. Others, again, of the more grown boys, are working their sums with becoming industry. In a dark corner are a pair of urchins thumping each other, their eyes steadily fixed on the master, lest he might happen to glance in that direction. Near the master himself are the larger boys, from twenty-two to fifteen—shaggy-headed slips, with loose-breasted shirts lying open about their bare chests; ragged colts, with white, dry, bristling beards upon them, that never knew a razor; strong stockings on their legs; heavy brogues, with broad, nail-paved soles; and breeches open

at the knees. Nor is the establishment without a competent number of females. These were, for the most part, the daughters of wealthy farmers, who considered it necessary to their respectability, that they should not be altogether illiterate; such a circumstance being a considerable drawback, in the opinion of an admirer, from the character of a young woman for whom he was about to propose—a drawback, too, which was always weighty in proportion to her wealth or respectability.

Having given our readers an imperfect sketch of the interior of Mat's establishment, we will now proceed, however feebly, to represent him at work—with all the machinery of the system in full operation.

"Come, boys, rehearse—(buz, buz, buz)—I'll soon be after calling up the first spelling lesson—(buz, buz, buz)—then the mathematicians—book-keepers—Latinists and Grecians, successfully. (Buz, buz, buz)—Silence there below!—your pens! Tim Casey, isn't this a purty hour o' the day for you to come into school at; arrah, and what kept you, Tim? Walk up wid yourself here, till we have a confabulation together; you see I love to be talking to you.

"Sir, Larry Branagen, here; he's throwing spits at me out of his pen."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"By my sowl, Larry, there's a rod in steep for you."

"Fly away, Jack—fly away, Jill; come again, Jack—"

"I had to go to Paddy Nowlan's for tobaccy, sir, for my father." (Weeping with his hand knowingly across his face—one eye laughing at his comrades.)—

"You lie, it wasn't."

"If you call me a liar agin, I'll give you a dig in the mug."

"It's not in your jacket."

"Isn't it?"

"Behave yourself; ha! there's the masther looking at you—ye'll get it now."—

"None at all, Tim? And she's not after sinding an excuse wid you? What's that undher your arm?"

"My Gough, sir."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Silence, boys. And, you blackguard Lilliputian, you, what kept you away till this?"

"One bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin'—"

"Sir, they're stickin' pins in me, here."

"Who is, Briney?"

"I don't know, sir, they're all at it."

"Boys, I'll go down to yez."

"I can't carry him, sir, he'd be too heavy for me: let Larry Toole do it, he's stronger nor me; any way, there, he's putting a corker pin in his mouth."*—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo—I'll never stay away agin, sir; indeed I won't, sir. Oh, sir, dear, pardon me this wan time; and if ever you catch me doing the like agin, I'll give you lave to welt the sowl out of me."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Behave yourself, Barny Byrne."

"I'm not touching you."

"Yes, you are; didn't you make me blot my copy?"

"Ho, by the livin', I'll pay you goin' home for this."

"Hand me the taws."

"Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo—what'll I do, at all at all! Oh, sir dear, sir dear, sir dear—hoo-hoo-hoo."

"Did she send no message, good or bad, before I lay on?"

"Oh, not a word, sir, only that my father killed a pig yesterday, and he wants you to go up to-day at dinner-time."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"It's time to get lave—it isn't, it is—it isn't, it is," etc.

"You lie, I say, your faction never was able to fight ours; didn't we lick all your dirty breed in Builagh-battha fair?"

"Silence there."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Will you meet us on Sathurday, and we'll fight it out clane!"

"Ha-ha-ha! Tim, but you got a big fright, any how: whist, ma bouchal, sure I was only jokin' you; and sorry I'd be to bate your father's son, Tim. Come over, and sit beside myself at the fire here. Get up, Micky Donoghue, you big, burnt-shinn'd spalpeen you, and let the dacent boy sit at the fire."

"Hulabaloo hoo-hoo-hoo—to go to give me such a welt, only for sitting at the fire, and me brought turf wid me."

"To-day, Tim?"

"Yes, sir."

"At dinner time, is id?"

"Yes, sir."

"Faith, the dacent strain was always in the same family."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

* In the hedge schools it was usual for the unfortunate culprit about to be punished to avail himself of all possible stratagems that were calculated to diminish his punishment. Accordingly, when put upon another boy's back to be horsed, as it was termed, he slipped a large pin, called a corker, in his mouth, and on receiving the first blow stuck it into the neck of the boy who carried him. This caused the latter to jump and bounce about in such a manner that many of the blows directed at his burthen missed their aim. It was an understood thing, however, that the boy carrying the felon should aid him in every way in his power, by yielding, moving, and shifting about, so that it was only when he seemed to abet the master that the pin was applied to him.

"Horns, horns, cock horns: oh, you up'd wid them, you lifted your fingers—that's a mark, now—hould your face, till I blacken you."—

"Do you call thim two sods, Jack Lanigan? why, 'tis only one long one broke in the middle; but you must make it up to-morrow. Jack, how is your mother's tooth?—did she get it pulled out yet?"

"No, sir."

"Well, tell her to come to me, and I'll write a charm for it, that'll cure her.—What kept you till now, Paddy Magouran?"

"Couldn't come any sooner, sir."

"You couldn't, sir—and why, sir, couldn't you come any sooner, sir?"

"See, sir, what Andy Nowlan done to my copy."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"Silence, I'll massacree yez if yez don't make less noise."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"I was down with Mrs. Kavanagh, sir."

"You were, Paddy—an' Paddy, *ma bouchal*, what war you doing there, Paddy?"

"Masther, sir, spake to Jem Kenny here; he made my nose bleed."—

"Eh, Paddy?"

"I was bringin' her a layin' hen, sir, that my mother promised her at mass on Sunday last."

"Ah, Paddy, you're a game bird, yourself, wid your layin' hens; you're as full o' mischief as an egg's full o' mate—(*omnes*—ha, ha, ha, ha!)—Silence, boys—what are you laughin' at?—ha, ha, ha!—Paddy, can you spell Nebachodnazure for me?"

"No, sir."

"No, nor a better scholar, Paddy, could not do that, *ma bouchal*; but *I'll* spell it for you. Silence, boys—whist, all of yez, till I spell Nebachodnazure for Paddy Magouran. Listen; and you yourself, Paddy, are one of the letthers:

"'A turf and a *clod* spells Nebachod—
A knife and a razure, spells Nebachodnazure—
Three pair of boots and five pair of shoes—
Spells Nebachodnazure, the king of the Jews.'

Now, Paddy, that's spelling Nebachodnazure by the science of Ventilation; but you'll never go that deep, Paddy."—

"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"Is that the way you ax me, you vagabone?"

"I want to go out, sir,"—(pulling down the fore lock.)

"Yes, that's something dacenter; by the sowl of Newton, that invinted fluxions, if ever you forget to make a bow again, I'll flog the enthrils out of you—wait till the pass comes in."

Then comes the spelling lesson.

"Come, boys, stand up to the spelling lesson."

"Mickey," says one urchin, "show me your book, till I look at *my* word. I'm fifteenth."

"Wait till I see my own."

"Why do you crush for?"

"That's my place."

"No, it's not."

"Sir, spake to———I'll tell the masther."

"What's the matther there?"

"Sir, he won't let me into my place."

"I'm before you."

"No you're not."

"I say, I am."

"You lie, pug-face: ha! I called you pug-face, tell now if you dare."

"Well boys, down with your pins in the book: who's king?"

"I am, sir."

"Who's queen?"

"Me, sir."

"Who's prince?"

"I am prince, sir."

"Tag rag and bob-tail, fall into your places."

"I've no pin, sir."

"Well down with you to the tail———now, boys."*

Having gone through the spelling-task, it was Mat's custom to give out six *hard words* selected according to his judgment—as a final test; but he did not always confine himself to that. Sometimes he would put a number of syllables arbitrarily together, forming a most heterogeneous combination of articulate sounds.

"Now, boys, here's a deep word, that'll thry yez: come Larry spell *me-mo-man-dran-san-ti-fi-can-du-ban-dan-li-al-i-ty*, or *mis-an-thro-po-mor-phi-ta-ni-a-nus-mi-ca-li-a-tion*;—that's too hard for you, is it? Well, then, spell phthisic. Oh, that's physic you're spellin'. Now, Larry, do you know the difference between physic and phthisic?"

"No, sir."

"Well, I'll expound it: phthisic, you see, manes—whisht, boys; will yez hould yer tongues there—phthisic, Larry, signifies—that is, phthisic—mind, it's not physic I'm expounding, but phthisic—boys, will yez stop yer noise there—signifies——but, Larry, it's so deep a word in larnin' that I should draw it out on a slate for you: and now I reminmber, man alive, you're not far enough on yet to undherstand it: but what's physic, Larry?"

"Isn't that, sir, what my father tuck the day he got sick, sir?"

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* At the spelling lesson the children were obliged to put down each a pin, and he who held the first place got them all with the exception of the queen—that is the boy who held the second place, who got two; and the prince, *i. e.*, the third, who got one. The last boy in the class was called *Bobtail*.

"That's the very thing, Larry: it has what larned men call a medical property, and resembles little ricketty Dan Reilly there—it retrogrades. Och! Och! I'm the boy that knows things———you see now how I expounded them two hard words for yez, boys—don't yez?"

"Yes, sir," etc., etc.

"So, Larry, you haven't the larnin' for that either: but here's an 'asier one—spell me Ephabridotas (Epaphroditas)—you can't! but! man—you're a big dunce, entirely, that little shoneen Sharkey there below would *sack*. God be wid the day when I was the likes of you—it's I that was the bright gorsoon entirely—and so sign was on it, when a great larned traveler—silence boys, till I tell yez this [a dead silence]—from Thrinity College, all the way in Dublin, happened to meet me one day—seeing the slate and Gough, you see, undher my arm, he axes me—'Arrah, Mat,' says he, 'what are you *in?*' says he. 'Faix, I'm in my breeches, for one thing,' says I, off hand—silence childhre, and don't laugh so loud—(ha, ha, ha!) So he looks closer at me: 'I see that,' says he; 'but what are you reading?' 'Nothing at all at all,' says I; 'bad manners to the taste, as you may see, if you've your eyesight.' 'I think,' says he, 'you'll be apt to *die* in your breeches;' and set spurs to a fine saddle mare he rid—faith, he did so—thought me so *cute*—(*omnes*—ha, ha, ha!) Whisht, boys, whisht; isn't it a terrible thing that I can't tell yez a joke, but you split your sides laughing at it—(ha, ha, ha!)—don't laugh so loud, Barney Casey."—(ha, ha, ha!)

Barney.—"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"Go, avick, you'll be a good scholar yet, Barney. Faith, Barney knows whin to laugh, any how."

"Well, Larry, you can't spell Ephabridotas?—thin, here's a short weeshy one, and whoever spells it will get the pins;—spell a red rogue wid three letters. You, Micky! Dan? Jack? Natty? Alick? Andy? Pether? Jim? Tim? Pat? Rody? you? you? you? Now, boys, I'll hould you that my little Andy here, that's only beginning the *Rational Spelling Book*, bates you all; come here, Andy, alanna: now, boys, if he bates you, you must all bring him a little *miscaun* of butter between two kale blades, in the mornin', for himself; here, Andy avourneen, spell red rogue with three letthers."

Andy.—"M, a, t—Mat."

"No, no, avick, that's myself, Andy; it's red rogue, Andy—hem!—*F*——."

"F, o, x—fox."

"That's a man, Andy. Now boys, mind what you owe Andy in the mornin', plase God, won't yez?"

"Yes, sir." "Yes, sir." "Yes, sir." "I will, sir." "And I will, sir." "And so will I, sir," etc., etc, etc.

I know not whether the Commissioners of Education found the monitorial system of instruction in such of the old hedge schools as maintained an obstinate resistance to the innovations of modern plans. That Bell and Lancaster deserve much credit for applying and extending the principle (speaking without any reference to its merits) I do not hesitate to grant; but it is unquestionably true, that the principle was reduced to practice in Irish hedge schools long before either of these worthy gentlemen were in existence. I do not, indeed, at present remember whether or not they claim it as a discovery, or simply as an adaptation of a practice which experience, in accidental cases, had found useful, and which they considered capable of more extensive benefit. I remember many instances, however, in which it was applied—and applied, in my opinion, though not as a permanent system, yet more judiciously than it is at present. I think it a mistake to suppose that silence, among a number of children in school, is conducive to the improvement either of health or intellect, that the chest and the lungs are benefited by giving full play to the voice, I think will not be disputed; and that a child is capable of more intense study and abstraction in the din of a school-room, than in partial silence (if I may be permitted the word), is a fact, which I think any rational observation would establish. There is something cheering and cheerful in the noise of friendly voices about us—it is a restraint taken off the mind, and it will run the lighter for it—it produces more excitement, and puts the intellect in a better frame for study. The obligation to silence, though it may give the master more ease, imposes a new moral duty upon the child, the sense of which must necessarily weaken his application. Let the boy speak aloud, if he pleases—that is, to a certain pitch; let his blood circulate; let the natural secretions take place, and the physical effluvia be thrown off by a free exercise of voice and limbs: but do not keep him dumb and motionless as a statue—his blood and his intellect both in a state of stagnation, and his spirit below zero. Do not send him in quest of knowledge alone, but let him have cheerful companionship on his way; for, depend upon it, that the man who expects too much either in discipline or morals from a boy, is not in my opinion, acquainted with human nature. If an urchin titter at his own joke, or cut of

another—if he give him a jagg of a pin under the desk, imagine not that it will do him an injury, whatever phrenologists may say concerning the organ of destructiveness. It is an exercise to the mind, and he will return to his business with greater vigor and effect. Children are not men, nor influenced by the same motives—they do not reflect, because their capacity for reflection is imperfect; so is their reason: whereas on the contrary, their faculties for education (excepting judgment, which strengthens my argument) are in greater vigor in youth than in manhood. The general neglect of this distinction is, I am convinced, a stumbling-block in the way of youthful instruction, though it characterizes all our modern systems. We should never forget that they are children; nor should we bind them by a system, whose standard is taken from the maturity of human intellect. We may bend our reason to theirs, but we cannot elevate their capacity to our own. We may produce an external appearance, sufficiently satisfactory to ourselves; but, in the meantime, it is probable that the child may be growing in hypocrisy, and settling down into the habitual practice of a fictitious character.

But another and more serious objection may be urged against the present strictness of scholastic discipline—which is, that it deprives the boy of a sense of free and independent agency. I speak this with limitations, for a master should be a monarch in his school, but by no means a tyrant; and decidedly the very worst species of tyranny is that which stretches the young mind upon the bed of too rigorous a discipline—like the despot who exacted from his subjects so many barrels of perspiration, whenever there came a long and severe frost. Do not familiarize the mind when young to the toleration of slavery, lest it prove afterwards incapable of recognizing and relishing the principle of an honest and manly independence. I have known many children, on whom a rigor of discipline, affecting the mind only (for severe corporal punishment is now almost exploded), impressed a degree of timidity almost bordering on pusillanimity. Away, then, with the specious and long-winded arguments of a false and mistaken philosophy. A child will be a child, and a boy a boy, to the conclusion of the chapter. Bell or Lancaster would not relish the pap or caudle-cup three times a day; neither would an infant on the breast feel comfortable after a gorge of ox beef. Let them, therefore, put a little of the mother's milk of human kindness and consideration into their straight-laced systems.

A hedge schoolmaster was the general scribe of the parish, to whom all who wanted letters or petitions written, uniformly applied—and these were glorious opportunities for the pompous display of pedantry; the remuneration usually consisted of a bottle of whiskey.

A poor woman, for instance, informs Mat that she wishes to have a letter written to her son, who is a soldier abroad.

"An' how long is he gone, ma'am?"

"Och, thin, masther, he's from me goin' an fifteen year; an' a comrade of his wan spakin' to Jim Dwyer, an' says his ridgiment's lyin' in the Island of Budanages, somewhere in the back parts of Africa."

"An' is it a letther of petition you'd be afther havin' me to indite for you, ma'am?"

"Och, a letthur, sir—a letthur, master; an' may the Lord grant you all kinds of luck, good, bad, an' indifferent, both to you and yours: an' well it's known, by the same token, that it's yourself has the nice hand at the pen entirely, an' can indite a letter or petition, that the priest of the parish mightn't be ashamed to own to it."

"Why, thin, 'tis I that 'ud scorn to deteriorate upon the superiminence of my own execution at inditin' wid a pen in my hand; but would you feel a delectability in my superscriptionizin' the epistolary correspondency, ma'am, that I'm about to adopt?"

"Eagh? och, what am I sayin'!—*sir*—masther—*sir?*—the noise of the crathur's, you see, is got into my ears; and, besides, I'm a bit bothered on both sides of my head, ever since I heard that we ury *weid*."

"Silence, boys; bad manners to yez, will ye be asy, you Lilliputian Bœotians—by my s—— hem—upon my credit, if I go down to that corner, I'll castigate yez in dozens: I can't spake to this decent woman, with your insuperable turbulentiality."

"Ah, avourneen, masther, but the larnin's a fine thing, any how; an' maybe 'tis yourself that hasn't the tongue in your head, an' can spake the tall, high-flown English; a wurrah, but your tongue hangs well, any how—the Lord increase it!"

"Lanty Cassidy, are you gettin' on wid your Stereometry? *festina, mi discipuli; vocabo Homerum, mox atque mox.* You see, ma'am, I must tache thim to spake an' effectuate a translation of the larned languages sometimes."

"Arrah, masther dear, how did you get it all into your head, at all at all?"

"Silence, boys—*tace*—'*conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant.*' Silence, I say agin."

"You could slip over, maybe, to Doran's, masther, do you see? You'd do it betther there, I'll engage: sure and you'd want a dhrop to steady your hand, any how."

"Now, boys, I am goin' to indite a small taste of literal correspondency over at the public-house here; you *literati* will hear the lessons for me, boys, till afther I'm back agin; but mind, boys, *absente domino strepuunt servi*—meditate on the philosophy of that; and, Mick Mahon, take your slate and put down all the names; and, upon my sou —hem—credit, I'll castigate any boy guilty of *misty manners* on my retrogadation thither;—*ergo momentote, cave ne titubes mandataque frangas.*"

"Blood alive, masther, but that's great spakin'—begar, a judge couldn't come up to you; but in throth, sir, I'd be long sarry to throuble you; only he's away fifteen year, and I wouldn't thrust it to another; and the corplar that commands the ridgment would regard your handwrite and your inditin'."

"Don't, ma'am, plade the smallest taste of apology."

"Eagh?"

"I'm happy that I can sarve you, ma'am."

"Musha, long life to you, masther, for that same, any how—but it's yourself that's deep in the larnin' and the langridges; the Lord increase yer knowledge—sure, an' we all want his blessin', you know."

THE RETURN.

"Well, boys, you've been at it—here's swelled faces and bloody noses. What blackened your eye, Callaghan? You're a party prime ministher, ye boxing blackguard, you: I left you to keep pace among these factions, and you've kicked up a purty dust. What blackened your eye—eh?"

"I'll tell you, sir, whin I come in, if you plase."

"Ho, you vagabones, this is the ould work of the faction between the Bradys and the Callaghans—bastin' one another; but, by my sowl, I'll baste you all through other. You don't want to go out, Callaghan. You had fine work here since; there's a dead silence now; but I'll pay you presently. Here, Duggan, go out wid Callaghan, and see that you bring him back in less than no time. It's not enough for your fathers and brothers to be at it, who have *a right* to fight, but you must battle betune you—have your field days itself!"

(*Duggan returns*)—"Hoo—hoo—sir, my nose. Oh, *murdher sheery*, my nose is broked!"

"Blow your nose, you spalpeen you—where's Callaghan?"

"Oh, sir, bad luck to him every day he rises out of his bed; he got a stone in his fist, too, that he *hot* me a pelt on the nose wid, and then made off home."

"Home, is id? Start, boys, off—chase him, lie into him—asy, curse yez, take time gettin' out: that's it—keep to him—don't wait for me; take care, you little spalpeens, or you'll brake your bones, so you will: blow the dust of this road, I can't see my way in it!"

"Oh! murdher, Jem, agra, my knee's out o' joint."

"My elbow's smashed, Paddy. Bad luck to him—the devil fly away wid him—oh! ha! ha!—oh! ha! ha! murdher—hard fortune to me, but little Mickey Geery fell, an' thripped the masther, an' himself's disabled now—his black breeches split too—look at him feelin' them—oh! oh! ha! ha!—by tare-an'-onty, Callaghan will be murdhered, if they cotch him."

This was a specimen of scholastic civilization which Ireland only could furnish; nothing, indeed, could be more perfectly ludicrous than such a chase; and such scenes were by no means uncommon in hedge schools, for, wherever severe punishment was dreaded—and, in truth, most of the hedge masters were unfeeling tyrants—the boy, if sufficiently grown to make a good race, usually broke away, and fled home at the top of his speed. The pack then were usually led on by the master, who mostly headed them himself, all in full cry, exhibiting such a scene as should be witnessed in order to be enjoyed. The neighbors, men, women, and children, ran out to be spectators; the laborers suspended their work to enjoy it, assembling on such eminences as commanded a full view of the pursuit.

"Bravo, boys—success, masther; lie into him—where's your huntin' horn, Mr. Kavanagh?—he'll bate yez if ye don't take the wind of him. Well done, Callaghan, keep up yer heart, yer sowl, and you'll do it asy—you're gaining on them, *ma bouchal*—the masther's down, you gallows clip, an' there's none but the scholars afther ye—he's safe."

"Not he; I'll hould a naggin, the poor scholar has him; don't you see, he's close at his heels?"

"*Done*, by my song—they'll never come up wid him; listen to their leather crackers and cord-a-roys, as their knees bang agin one another. Hark forrit, boys; hark forrit! huzzaw, you thieves, huzzaw!"

"Your beagles is well winded, Mr. Kavanagh, and gives good tongue."

"Well, masther, you had your chase for nothin', I see."

"Mr. Kavanagh," another would observe, "I didn't think you war so stiff in the hams, as to let the gorsoon bate you that way—your wind's failin', sir."

"The schoolmaster was abroad" then, and

never was the "march of intellect" at once so rapid and unsuccessful.

During the summer season, it was the usual practice for the scholars to transfer their paper, slates, and books to the green which lay immediately behind the school-house, where they stretched themselves on the grass, and resumed their business. Mat would bring out his chair, and, placing it on the shady side of the hedge, sit with his pipe in his mouth, the contented lord of his little realm, whilst nearly a hundred and fifty scholars, of all sorts and sizes, lay scattered over the grass, basking under the scorching sun in all the luxury of novelty, nakedness, and freedom. The sight was original and characteristic, and such as Lord Brougham would have been delighted with. "The schoolmaster was abroad again."

As soon as one o'clock drew near, Mat would pull out his *Ring-dial*,* holding it against the sun, and declare the hour.

"Now, boys, to yer dinners, and the rest to play."

"Hurroo, darlins, to play—the masther says it's dinner-time!—whip-spur-an'-away-grey—hurroo—whack—hurroo!"

"Masther, sir, my father bid me ax you home to yer dinner."

"No, he'll come to huz—come wid me if you plase, sir."

"Sir, never heed *them;* my mother, sir, has some of what you know—of the flitch I brought to Shoneen on last Aisther, sir."

This was a subject on which the boys gave themselves great liberty; an invitation, even when not accepted, being an indemnity for the day; it was usually followed by a battle between the claimants, and bloody noses sometimes were the issue. The master himself, after deciding to go where he was certain of getting the best dinner, generally put an end to the quarrels by a reprimand, and then gave notice to the disappointed claimants of the successive days on which he would attend at their respective houses.

"Boys, you all know my maxim; to go, for fear of any jealousies, boys, wherever I get the *worst* dinner; so tell me now, boys, what yer decent mothers have all got at home for me?"

"My mother killed a fat hen yesterday, sir, and you'll have a lump of bacon and flat dutch along wid it."

"We'll have hung beef and greens, sir."

"We tried the praties this mornin', sir, and we'll have new praties, and bread and butther, sir."

"Well, it's all good, boys; but rather than show favor or affection, do you see, I'll go wid Andy, here, and take share of the hen an' bacon: but, boys, for all that, I'm fonder of the other things, you persave; and as I can't go wid you, Mat, tell your respectable mother that I'll be with her to-morrow; and with you, Larry, ma bouchal, the day afther."

If a master were a single man he usually "went round" with the scholars each night; but there were generally a few comfortable farmers, leading men in the parish, at whose house he chiefly resided; and the children of these men were treated with the grossest and most barefaced partiality. They were altogether privileged persons, and had liberty to beat and abuse the other children of the school, who were certain of being most unmercifully flogged, if they even dared to prefer a complaint against the favorites. Indeed the instances of atrocious cruelty in hedge schools were almost incredible, and such as, in the present enlightened time, would not be permitted. As to the state of the "poor scholar," it exceeded belief; for he was friendless and unprotected. But though legal prosecutions in those days were never resorted to, yet, according to the characteristic notions of Irish retributive justice, certain cases occurred, in which a signal, and at times, a fatal vengeance was executed on the person of the brutal master. Sometimes the brothers and other relatives of the mutilated child would come in a body to the school, and flog the pedagogue with his own taws, until his back was lapped in blood. Sometimes they would beat him until few symptoms of life remained.

Occasionally he would get a nocturnal notice to quit the parish in a given time, under a penalty which seldom proved a dead letter in case of non-compliance. Not unfrequently did those whom he had, when boys, treated with such barbarity, go back to him, when young men, not so much for education's sake, as for the especial purpose of retaliating upon him for his former cruelty. When cases of this nature occurred, he found himself a mere cipher in his school, never daring to practise excessive severity in their presence. Instances have come to our own knowledge, of masters, who, for their mere amusement, would go out to the next hedge,

* The Ring-dial was the hedge-schoolmaster's next best substitute for a watch. As it is possible that a great number of our readers may never have heard of, much less seen one, we shall in a word or two describe it—nothing could indeed be more simple. It was a bright brass ring, about three quarters of an inch broad, and two and a half in diameter. There was a small hole in it, which when held opposite the sun admitted the light against the inside of the ring behind. On this was marked the hours and the quarters, and the time was known by observing the number or the quarter on which the slender ray that came in from the hole in front fell.

cut a large branch of furze or thorn, and having first carefully arranged the children on a row round the walls of the school, their naked legs stretched out before them, would sweep round the branch, bristling with spikes and prickles, with all his force against their limbs, until, in a few minutes, a circle of blood was visible on the ground where they sat, their legs appearing as if they had been scarified. This the master did, whenever he happened to be drunk, or in a remarkably good humor. The poor children, however, were obliged to laugh loud, and enjoy it, though the tears were falling down their cheeks, in consequence of the pain he inflicted. To knock down a child with the fist, was considered nothing harsh; nor, if a boy were cut, or prostrated by a blow of a cudgel on the head, did he ever think of representing the master's cruelty to his parents. Kicking on the shins with a point of a brogue or shoe, bound round the edge of the sole with iron nails, until the bone was laid open, was a common punishment; and as for the usual slapping, horsing, and flogging, they were inflicted with a brutality that in every case richly deserved for the tyrant, not only a peculiar whipping by the hand of the common executioner, but a separation from civilized society by transportation for life. It is a fact, however, that in consequence of the general severity practised in hedge schools, excesses of punishment did not often produce retaliation against the master; these were only exceptions, isolated cases that did not affect the general character of the discipline in such schools.

Now when we consider the total absence of all moral and religious principles in these establishments, and the positive presence of all that was wicked, cruel, and immoral, need we be surprised that occasional crimes of a dark and cruel character should be perpetrated? The truth is, that it is difficult to determine, whether unlettered ignorance itself were not preferable to the kind of education which the people then received.

I am sorry to perceive the writings of many respectable persons on Irish topics imbued with a tinge of spurious liberality, that frequently occasions them to depart from truth. To draw the Irish character as it *is*, as the model of all that is generous, hospitable, and magnanimous, is in some degree fashionable; but although I am as warm an admirer of all that is really excellent and amiable in my countrymen as any man, yet I cannot, nor will I, extenuate their weak and indefensible points. That they possess the *elements* of a noble and exalted national character, I grant; nay, that they actually do possess such a character, under limitations, I am ready to maintain. Irishmen, setting aside their religious and political prejudices, are grateful, affectionate, honorable, faithful, generous, and even magnanimous; but, under the stimulus of religious and political feeling, they are treacherous, cruel, and inhuman—will murder, burn, and exterminate, not only, without compunction, but with a satanic delight worthy of a savage. Their education, indeed, was truly barbarous; they were trained and habituated to cruelty, revenge, and personal hatred, in their schools. Their knowledge was directed to evil purposes—disloyal principles were industriously insinuated into their minds by their teachers, most of whom were leaders of illegal associations. The matter placed in their hands was of a most inflammatory and pernicious nature, as regarded politics; and as far as religion and morality were concerned, nothing could be more gross or superstitious than the books which circulated among them. Eulogiums on murder, robbery, and theft were read with delight in the histories of Freney the Robber, and the Irish Rogues and Rapparees; ridicule of the Word of God, and hatred to the Protestant religion, in a book called Ward's Cantos, written in Hudibrastic verse; the downfall of the Protestant Establishment, and the exaltation of the Romish Church, in Columbkill's Prophecy, and latterly in that of Pastorini. Gross superstitions, political and religious ballads of the vilest doggerel, miraculous legends of holy friars persecuted by Protestants, and of signal vengeance inflicted by their divine power on those who persecuted them, were in the mouths of the young and old, and of course firmly fixed in their credulity.

Their weapons of controversy were drawn from the Fifty Reasons, the Doleful Fall of Andrew Sall, the Catholic Christian, the grounds of Catholic Doctrine, a Net for the Fishers of Men, and several other publications of the same class. The books of amusement read in these schools, including the first-mentioned in this list, were, the Seven Champions of Christendom, the Seven Wise Masters and Mistresses of Rome, Don Bellanis of Greece, the Royal Fairy Tales, the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, Valentine and Orson, Gesta Romanorum, Dorastus and Faunia, the History of Reynard the Fox, the Chevalier Faublax; to these I may add, the Battle of Aughrim, Siege of Londonderry, History of the Young Ascanius, a name by which the Pretender was designated, and the Renowned History of the Siege of Troy; the Forty Thieves, Robin Hood's Garland, the Garden of Love and Royal Flower of Fidelity, Parismus and Parismenos; along with others, the names of which shall not

appear on these pages. With this specimen of education before our eyes, is it not extraordinary that the people of Ireland should be, in general, so moral and civilized a people as they are?

"Thady Bradly, will you come up wid your slate, till I examine you in your figures? Go out, sir, and blow your nose first, and don't be after making a looking-glass out of the sleeve of your jacket. Now that Thady's out, I'll hould you, boys, that none of yez knows how to expound his name—eh? do ye? But I needn't ax—well, 'tis Thaddeus; and, maybe, that's as much as the priest that christened him knew. Boys, you see what it is to have the larnin'—to lade the life of a gintleman, and to be able to talk deeply wid the clargy! Now I could run down any man in arguin', except a priest; and if the Bishop was after consecratin' me, I'd have as much larnin' as some of them; but you see I'm not consecrated—and—well, 'tis no matther—I only say that the more's the pity."

"Well, Thady, when did you go into subtraction?"

"The day beyond yesterday, sir; yarra musha, sure 'twas yourself, sir, that shet me the first sum."

"Masther, sir, Thady Bradly stole my 'cutter—that's *my* cutter, Thady Bradly."

"No it's not" (in a low voice).

"Sir, that's my cutter—an' there's three nicks in id."

"Thady, is that his cutter?"

"There's your cutter for you. Sir, I found it on the flure and didn't know who own'd it."

"You know'd very well who own'd it; didn't Dick Martin see you liftin' it off o' my slate, when I was out?"

"Well, if Dick Martin saw him, it's enough: an' 'tis Dick that's the tindher-hearted boy, an' would knock you down wid a lump of a stone, if he saw you murdherin' but a fly!"

"Well, Thady—throth Thady, I fear you'll undherstand subtraction better nor your teacher: I doubt you'll apply it to 'Practice' all your life, ma bouchal, and that you'll be apt to find it 'the Rule of False'* at last. Well, Thady, from one thousand pounds, no shillings, and no pince, how will you subtract one pound? Put it down on your slate—this way,

1000 00 00
1 00 00"

"I don't know how to shet about it, masther."

"You don't, an' how dare you tell me so, you *shingawn* you—you Cornelius Agrippa you—go to your sate and study it, or I'll—ha! be off, you."—

"Pierce Butler, come up wid your multiplication. Pierce, multiply four hundred by two—put it down—that's it,

400
By 2"

"Twice nought is one." (Whack, whack.)

"Take that as an illustration—is that one?"

"Faith, masther, that's two, any how: but, sir, is not wanst nought nothin'; now masther, sure there can't be less than nothin'."

"Very good, sir."

"If wanst nought be nothin', then twice nought must be somethin', for it's double what wanst nought is—see how *I'm* sthruck for *nothin'*, an' me knows it—hoo! hoo! hoo!

"Get out, you Esculapian; but I'll give you *somethin'*, by-and-by, just to make you remimber that you know *nothin'*—off wid you to your sate, you spalpeen you—to tell me that there can't be less than nothin' when it's well known that sporting Squaire O'Canter is worth a thousand pounds less than nothin'."

"Paddy Doran, come up to your 'Intherest.' Well Paddy, what's the intherest of a hundred pound, at five per cent? Boys, have manners you thieves you."

"Do you mane, masther, *per cent. per annum?*"

"To be sure I do—how do you state it?"

"I'll say, as a hundher pound is to one year, so is five per cent. per annum."

"Hum—why what's the number of the sum Paddy?"

"Tis No. 84, sir. (The master steals a glance at the Key to Gough.)

"I only want to look at it in the Gough, you see, Paddy,—an' how dare you give me such an answer, you big-headed dunce, you—go off an' study it, you rascally Lilliputian—off wid you, and don't let me see your ugly mug till you know it."

"Now, *gintlemen*, for the Classics; and first for the Latinaarians—Larry Cassidy, come up wid your Aisop. Larry you're a year at Latin, an' I don't think you know Latin for *frize*, what your own coat is made of, Larry. But, in the first place, Larry, do you know what a man that taiches Classics is called?"

"A schoolmasther, sir." (Whack, whack, whack.)

"Take that for your ignorance—and that to the back of it—ha; that'll taiche you—to call a man that taiches Classics a schoolmaster, indeed! 'Tis a Profissor of Humanity itself, he is—(whack, whack, whack,)—ha! you ringleader, you; you're as bad as Dick M'Growler, that no masther in the county could get any good of, in regard that he put the whole school together by the ears, wherever he'd be, though the spalpeen wouldn't

* The name of a "Rule" in Gough's Arithmetic.

stand fight himself. Hard fortune to you! to go to put such an affront upon me, an' me a Profissor of Humanity. What's Latin for pantaloons?"

"Fem—fem—femi—"

"No, it's not, sir."

"Femora—"

"Can you do it?"

"Don't strike me, sir, don't strike me, sir, an' I will."

"I say, can you do it?"

"Femorali,"—(whack, whack, whack,)—"*Ah*, sir! *ah*, sir! 'tis fermorali—*ah*, sir! 'tis fermorali—*ah*, sir!"

"This thratement to a Profissor of Humanity:—(drives him head over heels to his seat).—Now, sir, maybe you'll have Latin for throwers agin, or by my sowl, if you don't, you must peel, and I'll tache you what a Profissor of Humanity is!

"Dan Roe, you little starved-looking spalpeen, will you come up to your Illocution?—and a purty figure you cut at it, wid a voice like a penny thrumpet, Dan! Well, what speech have you got now, Dan, ma bouchal. Is it, 'Romans, counthrymin, and lovers?'"

"No, shir; yarrah, didn't I *spake* that speech before?"

"No, you didn't, you fairy. Ah, Dan, little as you are, you take credit for more than ever you spoke, Dan, agrah; but, faith, the same thrick will come agin you some time or other, avick! Go and get that speech betther; I see by your face, you haven't it; off wid you, and get a patch upon your breeches, your little knees are through them, though 'tisn't by prayin' you've wore them, any how, you little hop-o'-my-thumb you, wid a voice like a rat in a thrap; off wid you, man alive!"

Sometimes the neighboring gentry used to call into Mat's establishment, moved probably by a curiosity excited by his character, and the general conduct of the school. On one occasion Squire Johnston and an English gentleman paid him rather an unexpected visit. Mat had that morning got a new scholar, the son of a dancing tailor in the neighborhood; and as it was reported that the son was nearly equal to the father in that accomplishment, Mat insisted on having a specimen of his skill. He was the more anxious on this point as it would contribute to the amusement of a travelling schoolmaster, who had paid him rather a hostile visit, which Mat, who dreaded a literary challenge, feared might occasion him some trouble.

"Come up here, you little *sartor*, till we get a dacent view of you. You're a son of Ned Malone's—aren't you?"

"Yes, and of Mary Malone, my mother, too, sir."

"Why, thin, that's not so bad, any how—what's your name?"

"Dick, sir."

"Now, Dick, ma bouchal, isn't it true that you can dance a horn-pipe?"

"Yes, sir."

"Here, Larry Brady, take the door off the hinges, an' lay it down on the flure, till Dick Malone dances the Humors of Glynn: silence, boys, not a word; but just keep lookin' an."

"Who'll sing, sir? for I can't be afther dancin' a step widout the music."

"Boys, which of yez'll sing for Dick? I say, boys, will none of yez give Dick the Harmony? Well, come, Dick, I'll sing for you myself:

"Tooral lol, lorral lol, lorral lol, lorral. lol—
Toldherol, lorral lol, lorral lol, lol," etc., etc.

"I say, Misther Kavanagh," said the strange master, "what angle does Dick's heel form in the second step of the treble, from the kibe on the left foot to the corner of the door forninst him?"

To this mathematical poser Mat made no reply, only sang the tune with redoubled loudness and strength, whilst little Dicky pounded the old crazy door with all his skill and alacrity. The "boys" were delighted.

"Bravo, Dick, that's a man,—welt the flure—cut the buckle—murder the clocks—rise upon sugguan, and sink upon gad—down the flure flat, foot about—keep one foot on the ground and t'other never off it," saluted him from all parts of the house.

Sometimes he would receive a sly hint, in a feigned voice, to call for "Devil stick the Fiddler," alluding to the master. Now a squeaking voice would chime in; by and by another, and so on until the master's bass had a hundred and forty trebles, all in chorus to the same tune.

Just at this moment the two gentlemen entered; and, reader, you may conceive, but I cannot describe, the face which Mat (who sat with his back to the door, and did not see them until they were some time in the house), exhibited on the occasion. There he sung *ore rotundo*, throwing forth an astonishing tide of voice; whilst little Dick, a thin, pale-faced urchin, with his head, from which the hair stood erect, sunk between his hollow shoulders, was performing prodigious feats of agility.

"What's the matter? what's the matter?" said the gentlemen. "Good morning, Mr. Kavanagh!"

"——Tooral lol, lol——

Oh, good——Oh, good morning——gintlemen, with extrame kindness," replied Mat,

rising suddenly up, but not removing his hat, although the gentlemen instantly uncovered.

Why, thin, gintlemen," he continued, "you have caught us in our little relaxations to-day; but—hem!—I mane to give the boys a holiday for the sake of this honest and respectable gintleman in the frize jock, who is not entirely ignorant, you persave, of litherature; and we had a small taste, gintlemen among ourselves, of Sathurnalian licentiousness, *ut ita dicam*, in regard of—hem!—in regard of this lad here, who was dancing a nompipe upon the door, and we, in absence of betther music, had to supply him with the harmony; but, as your honors know, gintlemen, the greatest men have bent themselves on espacial occasions."

"Make no apology, Mr. Kavanagh; it's very commendable in you to *bend* yourself by condescending to amuse your pupils."

"I beg your pardon, Squire, I can take freedoms with you; but perhaps the concomitant gentleman, your friend here, would be pleased to take my stool. Indeed, I always use a chair, but the back of it, if I may be permitted the use of a small portion of jocularity, was as frail as the fair sect: it went home yisterday to be mended. Do, sir, condescend to be *sated*. Upon my reputation, Squire, I'm sorry that I have not accommodation for you, too, sir; except one of these hassocks, which, in joint considheration with the length of your honor's legs, would be, I anticipate, rather low; but *you*, sir, will honor me by taking the stool."

By considerable importunity he forced the gentleman to comply with his courtesy; but no sooner had he fixed himself upon the seat than it overturned, and stretched him, black coat and all, across a wide concavity in the floor nearly filled up with white ashes produced from mountain turf. In a moment he was completely white on one side, and exhibited a most laughable appearance; his hat, too, was scorched and nearly burned on the turf coals. Squire Johnston laughed heartily, as did the other schoolmaster, whilst the Englishman completely lost his temper—swearing that such another uncivilized establishment was not between the poles.

"I solemnly supplicate upwards of fifty pardons," said Mat; "bad manners to it for a stool! but, your honor, it was my own defect of speculation, bekase, you see, it's *minus* a leg—a circumstance of which you waren't in a proper capacity to take cognation, as not being personally acquainted with it. I humbly supplicate upwards of fifty pardons."

The Englishman was now nettled, and determined to wreak his ill-temper on Mat, by turning him and his establishment into ridicule.

"Isn't this, Mister——I forget your name, sir."

"Mat Kavanagh, at your service."

"Very well, my learned friend, Mr. Mat Kevanagh, isn't this precisely what is called a *hedge-school?*"

"A hedge-school!" replied Mat, highly offended; "my seminary a hedge-school! No, sir; I scorn the *cognomen in toto*. This, sir, is a Classical and Mathematical Seminary, under the personal superintendence of your humble servant."

"Sir," replied the other master, who till then was silent, wishing, perhaps, to *sack* Mat in presence of the gentlemen, "it *is* a hedge-school; and he is no scholar, but an ignoramus, whom I'd sack in three minutes, that would be ashamed of a hedge-school."

"Ay," says Mat, changing his tone, and taking the cue from his friend, whose learning he dreaded, "it's just for argument's sake, a hedge-school; and, what is more, I scorn to be ashamed of it."

"And do you not teach occasionally under the hedge behind the house here?"

"Granted," replied Mat; "and now where's your *vis consequentiæ?*"

"Yes," subjoined the other, "produce your *vis consequentiæ;* but any one may know by a glance that the divil a much of it's about you."

The Englishman himself was rather at a loss for the *vis consequentiæ*, and replied, "Why don't you live, and learn, and teach like civilized beings, and not assemble like wild asses—pardon me, my friend, for the simile—at least like wild colts, in such clusters behind the ditches?"

"A clusther of wild coults!" said Mat; "that shows what you are; no man of classical larnin' would use such a word. If you had stuck at the asses, we know it's a subject you're at home in—ha! ha! ha!—but you brought the joke on yourself, your honor—that is, if it is a joke—ha! ha! ha!"

"Permit me, sir," replied the strange master, "to ax your honor one question—did you receive a *classical* education? Are you college-bred?"

"Yes," replied the Englishman; "I can reply to both in the affirmative. I'm a Cantabrigian."

"You are a *what?*" asked Mat.

"I am a Cantabrigian."

"Come, sir, you must explain yourself, if you plase. I'll take my oath that's neither a classical nor a mathematical tarm."

The gentleman smiled. "I was educated in the English College of Cambridge."

"Well," says Mat, "and may be you would

be as well off if you had picked up your larnin' in our own Thrinity; there's good picking in Thrinity, for gentlemen like you, that are sober, and harmless about the brains, in regard of not being overly bright."

"You talk with contempt of a hedge-school," replied the other master. "Did you never hear, for all so long as you war in Cambridge, of a nate little spot in Greece called the groves of Academus?

"'Inter lucos Academi quærere verum.'

What was Plato himself but a hedge school-master? and, with humble submission, it casts no slur on an Irish tacher to be compared to *him*, I think. You forget also, sir, that the Dhruids taught under their oaks: eh?"

"Ay," added Mat, "and the Tree of Knowledge, too. Faith, an' if that same tree was now in being, if there wouldn't be hedge schoolmasters, there would be plenty of hedge scholars, any how—particularly if the fruit was well tasted."

"I believe, Millbank, you must give in," said Squire Johnston. "I think you have got the worst of it."

"Why," said Mat, "if the gintleman's not afther bein' sacked clane, I'm not here."

"Are you a mathematician?" inquired Mat's friend, determined to follow up his victory; "do you know Mensuration?"

"Come, I do know Mensuration," said the Englishman, with confidence.

"And how would you find the solid contents of *a load of thorns?*"

"Ay, or how will you consther and parse me this sintince?" said Mat——

"'Ragibus et clotibus solemus stopere windous,
Non uumerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,
Stercora flat stiro raro terra-tantaro bungo.'"

"Aisy, Mister Kavanagh," replied the other; "let the Cantabrigian resolve the one I propounded him first."

"And let the Cantabrigian then take up mine," said Mat: "and if he can expound it, I'll give him a dozen more to bring home in his pocket, for the Cambridge folk to crack after their dinner, along wid their nuts."

"Can you do the 'Snail?'" inquired the stranger.

"Or 'A and B on opposite sides of a wood,' without the Key?" said Mat.

"Maybe," said the stranger, who threw off the frize jock, and exhibited a muscular frame of great power, cased in an old black coat—"maybe the gintleman would like to get a small taste of the '*Scuffle*.'"

"Not at all," replied the Englishman; "I have not the least curiosity for it—I assure you I have not. What the deuce do they mean, Johnston? I hope you have influence over them."

"Hand me down that cudgel, Jack Brady, till I show the gintleman the 'Snail' and the 'Maypole,'" said Mat.

"Never mind, my lad; never mind, Mr. ——a——Kevanagh. I give up the contest; I resign you the palm, gentlemen. The hedge school has beaten Cambridge hollow."

"One poser more, before you go, sir," said Mat—"Can you give me Latin for a *game-egg* in *two words?*"

"Eh, a game egg? No, by my honor, I cannot—gentlemen, I yield."

"Ay, I thought so," replied Mat; "and, faith, I believe the divil a much of the game bird about you—you bring it home to Cambridge, anyhow, and let them chew their cuds upon it, you persave; and, by the sowl of Newton, it will puzzle the whole establishment, or my name's not Kavanagh."

"It will, I am convinced," replied the gentleman, eyeing the herculean frame of the strange teacher and the substantial cudgel in Mat's hand; "it will, undoubtedly. But who is this most miserable naked lad here, Mr. Kevanagh?"

"Why, sir," replied Mat, with his broad Milesian face, expanded by a forthcoming joke, "he is, sir, in a sartin and especial particularity, a namesake of your own."

"How is that, Mr. Kevanagh?"

"My name's not Kevanagh," replied Mat, "but Kavanagh; the Irish A for ever!"

"Well, but how is the lad a namesake of mine?" said the Englishman.

"Bekase, you see, he's a *poor scholar*, sir," replied Mat: "an' I hope your honor will pardon me for the facetiousness——

"'Quid vetat ridentem dicere verum!'

as Horace says to Mæcenas, in the first of the Sathirs."

"There, Mr. Kavanagh, is the price of a suit of clothes for him."

"Michael, will you rise up, sir, and make the gintleman a bow? he has given you the price of a shoot of clothes, ma bouchal."

Michael came up with a very tattered coat hanging about him; and, catching his forelock, bobbed down his head after the usual manner, saying—"Musha yarrah, long life to your honor every day you rise, an' the Lord grant your sowl a short stay in purgatory, wishin' ye, at the same time, a happy death afterwards!"

The gentleman could not stand this, but laughed so heartily that the argument was fairly knocked up.

It appeared, however, that Squire Johnston did not visit Mat's school from mere curiosity.

"Mr. Kavanagh," said he, "I would be glad to have a little private conversation with you, and will thank you to walk down the road a little with this gentleman and me."

When the gentlemen and Mat had gone ten or fifteen yards from the school door, the Englishman heard himself congratulated in the following phrases by the scholars:—

"How do you feel afther bein' *sacked*, gintleman? The masther sacked you! You're a purty scholar! It's not you, Mr. Johnston, it's the other. You'll come to argue agin, will you? Where's your head, now? Bah! Come back till we put the *suggaun* * about your neck. Bah! You must go to school to Cam-bridge agin, before you can argue an Irisher! Look at the figure he cuts! Why duv ye put the one foot past the other, when ye walk, for? Bah! Dunce!!"

"Well, boys, never heed yez for that," shouted Mat; "never fear but I'll castigate yez, ye spulpeen villains, as soon as I go back. Sir," said Mat, "I supplicate upwards of fifty pardons. I assure you, sir, I'll give them a most inordinate castigation, for their want of respectability."

"What's the Greek for tobaccy?" they continued—"or for Larry O'Toole? or for bletherum skite? How many beans makes five? What's the Latin for poteen, and flummery? You a mathemathitician! could you measure a snail's horn? How does your hat stay up and nothing undher it? Will you fight Barny Farrel wid one hand tied! I'd lick you myself! What's Greek for gosther?"—with many other expressions of a similar stamp.

"Sir," said Mat, "lave the justice of this in my hands. By the sowl of Newton, your own counthryman, ould Isaac, I'll flog the marrow out of them."

"You have heard, Mr. Kavanagh," continued Mr. Johnston, as they went along, "of the burning of Moore's stable and horses, the night before last. The fact is, that the magistrates of the county are endeavoring to get the incendiaries, and would render a service to any person capable, either directly or indirectly, of facilitating the object, or stumbling on a clew to the transaction."

"And how could I do you a sarvice in it, sir,"?" inquired Mat.

"Why," replied Mr. Johnston, "from the children. If you could sift them in an indirect way, so as, without suspicion, to ascertain the absence of a brother, or so, on that particular night, I might have it in my power to serve you, Mr. Kavanagh. There will be a large reward offered to-morrow, besides."

"Oh, damn the penny of the reward ever I'd finger, even if I knew the whole conflagration," said Mat; "but lave the siftin' of the children wid myself, and if I can get anything out of them you'll hear from me; but your honor must keep a close mouth, or you might have occasion to lend me the money for my own funeral some o' these days. Good-morning, gintlemen."

The gentlemen departed.

"May the most ornamental kind of hard fortune pursue you every day you rise, you desavin' villain, that would have me turn *informer*, bekase your brother-in-law, rackrintin' Moore's stables and horses were burnt; and to crown all, make the innocent childre the means of hanging their own fathers or brothers, you rup of the divil! but I'd see you and all your breed in the flames o' hell first." Such was Mat's soliloquy as he entered the school on his return.

"Now, boys, I'm afther givin' yez to-day and to-morrow for a holyday: to-morrow we will have our Gregory;* a fine faste, plinty of poteen, and a fiddle; and you will tell your brothers and sisters to come in the evening to the dance. You must bring plinty of bacon, hung beef, and fowls, bread and cabbage—not forgetting the phaties, and sixpence a-head for the *crathur*, boys, won't yez?"

The next day, of course, was one of festivity; every boy brought, in fact, as much provender as would serve six; but the surplus gave Mat some good dinners for three months to come. This feast was always held upon St. Gregory's day, from which circumstance it had its name. The pupils were at liberty for that day to conduct themselves as they pleased: and the consequence was, that they became generally intoxicated, and were brought home in that state to their parents. If the children of two opposite parties chanced to be at the same school, they usually had a fight, of which the master was compelled to feign ignorance; for if he identified himself with either faction, his

* The *suggaun* was a collar of straw which was put round the necks of the dunces, who were then placed at the door, that their disgrace might be as public as possible.

* This was precisely such a feast as is described in the text. Gregories were in general very beneficial to the masters, inasmuch as there was more provender and drink brought to his house, where the festival was held, than would feed the number of mouths appointed to partake of it a dozen times over. The description of it above is very correct.

residence in the neighborhood would be short. In other districts, where Protestant schools were in existence, a battle-royal commonly took place between the opposite establishments, in some field lying half-way between them. This has often occurred.

Every one must necessarily be acquainted with the ceremony of *barring out*. This took place at Easter and Christmas. The master was brought or sent out on some fool's errand, the door shut and barricaded, and the pedagogue excluded, until a certain term of vacation was extorted. With this, however, the master never complied until all his efforts at forcing an entrance were found to be ineffectual; because if he succeeded in getting in, they not only had no claim to a long vacation, but were liable to be corrected. The schoolmaster had also generally the clerkship of the parish; an office, however, which in the country parts of Ireland is without any kind of salary, beyond what results from the patronage of the priest; a matter of serious moment to a teacher, who, should he incur his Reverence's displeasure, would be immediately driven out of the parish. The master, therefore, was always tyrannical and insolent to the people, in proportion as he stood high in the estimation of the priest. He was also a regular attendant at all wakes and funerals, and usually sat among a crowd of the village sages engaged in exhibiting his own learning, and in recounting the number of his religious and literary disputations.

One day, soon after the visit of the gentlemen above mentioned, two strange men came into Mat's establishment—rather, as Mat thought, in an unceremonious manner.

"Is your name Matthew Kavanagh?" said one of them.

"That is indeed the name that's upon me," said Mat, with rather an infirm voice, whilst his face got as pale as ashes.

"Well," said the fellow, "we'll just trouble you to walk with us a bit."

"How far, with submission, are yez goin' to bring me?" said Mat.

"Do you know Johnny Short's hotel?" *

"My curse upon you, Findramore," exclaimed Mat, in a paroxysm of anguish, "every day you rise! but your breath's unlucky to a schoolmaster; and it's no lie what was often said, that no schoolmaster ever thruv in you, but something ill came over him."

"Don't curse the town, man alive," said the constable, "but curse your own ignorance and folly; any way, I wouldn't stand in your coat for the wealth of the three kingdoms. You'll undoubtedly swing, unless you turn king's evidence. It's about Moore's business, Mr. Kavanagh."

"Damn the bit of that I'd do, even if I knew anything about it; but, God be praised for it, I can set them all at defiance—that I'm sure of. Gentlemen, innocence is a jewel."

"But Barny Brady, that keeps the shebeen house—you know *him*—is of another opinion. You and some of the Findramore boys took a sup in Barny's on a sartin night?"

"Ay, did we, on many a night, and will agin, plase Providence—no harm in takin' a sup any how—by the same token, that may be you and yer friend here would have a drop of rale stuff, as a thrate from me?"

"I know a thrick worth two of that," said the man; "I thank ye kindly, Mr. Kavanagh."

One Tuesday morning, about six weeks after this event, the largest crowd ever remembered in that neighborhood was assembled at Findramore Hill, whereon had been erected a certain wooden machine, yclept—a gallows. A little after the hour of eleven o'clock two carts were descried winding slowly down a slope in the southern side of the town and church, which I have already mentioned, as terminating the view along the level road north of the hill. As soon as they were observed, a low, suppressed ejaculation of horror ran through the crowd, painfully perceptible to the ear—in the expression of ten thousand murmurs all blending into one deep groan—and to the eye, by a simultaneous motion that ran through the crowd like an electric shock. The place of execution was surrounded by a strong detachment of military; and the carts that conveyed the convicts were also strongly guarded.

As the prisoners approached the fatal spot which was within sight of the place where the outrage had been perpetrated, the shrieks and lamentations of their relations and acquaintances were appalling indeed. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, cousins, and all persons to the most remote degree of kindred and acquaintanceship, were present—all excited by the alternate expression of grief and low-breathed vows of retaliation; not only relations, but all who were connected with them by the bonds of their desperate and illegal oaths. Every eye, in fact, corus-

* The county jail.—Johnny Short was for many years the Governor of Monaghan jail. It was to him the *Mittimus* of "Fool Art," mentioned in Phelim O'Toole's Courtship, was directed. If the reader will suspend his curiosity, that is, provided he feels any, until he comes to the sketch just mentioned, he will get a more ample account of Johnny Short.

cated with a wild and savage fire, that shot from under brows knit in a spirit that seemed to cry out Blood, vengeance—blood, vengeance! The expression was truly awful; and what rendered it more terrific was the writhing reflection, that numbers and physical force were unavailing against a comparatively small body of armed troops. This condensed the fiery impulse of the moment into an expression of subdued rage, that really shot like livid gleams from their visages.

At length the carts stopped under the gallows; and, after a short interval spent in devotional exercise, three of the culprits ascended the platform, who, after recommending themselves to God, and avowing their innocence, although the clearest possible evidence of guilt had been brought against them, were launched into another life, among the shrieks and groans of the multitude. The other three then ascended; two of them either declined, or had not strength to address the assembly. The third advanced to the edge of the boards—*it was Mat.* After two or three efforts to speak, in which he was unsuccessful from bodily weakness, he at length addressed them as follows:—

"My friends and good people—In hopes that you may be all able to demonstrate the last proposition laid down by a dying man, I undertake to address you before I depart to that world where Euclid, De Cartes, and many other larned men are gone before me. There is nothing in all philosophy more true than that, as the multiplication-table says, 'two and two makes four;' but it is equally veracious and worthy of credit, that if you do not abnegate this system that you work the common rules of your proceedings by—if you don't become loyal men, and give up burnin' and murdherin', the solution of it will be found on the gallows. I acknowledge myself to be guilty, for not separatin' myself clane from yez; we have been all guilty, and may God forgive thim that jist now departed wid a lie in their mouth."

Here he was interrupted by a volley of execrations and curses, mingled with "stag, informer, thraithor to the thrue cause!" which, for some time, compelled him to be silent.

"You may curse," continued Mat; "but it's too late now to abscond the truth—the '*sum*' of my wickedness and folly is worked out, and you see the '*answer*.' God forgive me, many a young crathur I enticed into the *Ribbon* business, and now it's to ind in *Hemp!* Obey the law; or, if you don't, you'll find a *lex talionis*—the construction of which is, that if a man burns or murdhers, he won't miss hanging; take warning by me—by us all; for, although I take God to witness that I was not at the perpetration of the crime that I'm to be suspinded for, yet I often connived, when I might have superseded the carrying of such intintions into effectuality. I die in pace wid all the world, save an' except the Findramore people, whom, may the maledictionary execration of a dying man follow into eternal infinity! My manuscription of conic sections—" Here an extraordinary buz commenced among the crowd, which rose gradually into a shout of wild, astounding exultation. The sheriff followed the eyes of the multitude, and perceived a horseman dashing with breathless fury up towards the scene of execution. He carried and waved a white handkerchief on the end of a rod, and made signals with his hat to stop the execution. He arrived, and brought a full pardon for Mat, and a commutation of sentence to transportation for life for the other two. What became of Mat I know not; but in Findramore he never dared to appear, as certain death would have been the consequence of his not dying *game.* With respect to Barny Brady, who kept the shebeen, and was the principal evidence against those who were concerned in this outrage, he was compelled to enact an *ex tempore* death in less than a month afterwards; having been found dead, with a slip of paper in his mouth, inscribed—"*This is the fate of all Informers.*"

(*Note* to page 834.)

The Author, in order to satisfy his readers that the character of Mat Kavanagh as a hedge schoolmaster is not by any means overdrawn, begs to subjoin (*verbatim*) the following authentic production of one, which will sufficiently explain itself, and give an excellent notion of the mortal feuds and jealousies which subsist between persons of this class:—

"To THE PUBLIC.—Having read a printed Document, emanating, as it were, from a vile, mean, and ignorant miscreant of the name of ——, calumniating and vituperating me; it is evidently the production of a vain, supercilious, disappointed, frantic, purblind maniac of the name of ——, a bedlamite to all intents and purposes, a demon in the disguise of virtue, and a herald of hell in the paradise of innocence, possessing neither principle, honor, nor honesty; a vain and vapid creature whom nature plumed out for the annoyance of —— and its vicinity.

"It is well known and appreciated by as

enlightened and discerning public, that I am as competently qualified to conduct the duties of a Schoolmaster as any Teacher in Munster. (Here I pause, stimulated by dove-eyed humility, and by the fine and exalted feelings of nature, to make a few honorable exceptions, particularly when I memorize the names and immortal fame of a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, ———; a Mr. Matt. ———, ———; a Mr. ———, ———; and many other stars of the first magnitude, too numerous for insertion).

"The notorious impostor and biped animal already alluded to, actuated by an overweening desire of notoriety, and in order to catch the applause of some one, grovelling in the morasses of insignificance and vice, like himself, leaves his native obscurity, and indulges in falsehood, calumny, and defamation. I am convinced that none of the highly respectable Teachers of ——— has had any participation in this scurrilous transaction, as I consider them to be sober, moral, exemplary well-conducted men, possessed of excellent literary abilities; but this expatriated ruffian and abandoned profligate, being aware of the *marked and unremitting attention* which I have heretofore invariably paid to the scholars committed to my care, and the astonishing proficiency which, generally speaking, will be an accompaniment of competency, instruction, assiduity and perseverance, devised this detestable and fiendish course in order to tarnish and injure my *unsullied* character, it being generally known and justly acknowledged that I never gave utterance to an unguarded word — that I have always conducted myself as a man of inoffensive, mild, and gentle habits, of unblemished moral character, and perfectly sensible of the importance of inculcating on the young mind, moral and religious instruction, a love of decency, cleanliness, industry, honesty, and truth— that my only predominant fault some years ago, consisted in partaking of copious libations of the 'Mountain Dew,' which I shall for ever mourn with *heartfelt compunction*.—But I return thanks to the Great God, for more than eighteen months my lips have not partaken of that infuriating beverage to which I was unfortunately attached, and my habitual propensity vanished at the sanctified and ever-memorable sign of the cross—the memento of man's lofty destination, and miraculous injunction, of the great, illustrious, and never-to-be-forgotten Apostle of Temperance. I am now an humble member of this exemplary and excellent society, which is engaged in the glorious and hallowed cause of promoting Temperance, with the zealous solicitude of parents.—I am one of these noble men, *because they are sober men*, who have triumphed over their habits, conquered their passions, and put their predominant propensities to flight; yes, kind-hearted, magnanimous, and lofty high-minded conqueror, I have to announce to you that I have gained repeated victories, and consigned to oblivion the hydra-headed monster, Intemperance; and in consequence of which, have been consigned from poverty and misery, to affluence and happiness, possessing 'ready rino,' or ample pecuniary means to make one comfortable and happy, thereby enjoying 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul,' *i. e.*,—an honest, cozy, warm, comfortable cup of tea, to consign my drooping, sober, and cheerful spirits into the flow of soul, and philosophy of pleasure. I, therefore, do feel I had no occasion to speak a word in vindication of my conduct and character. A conspiracy in embryo, formed by a triumvirate, was brought to maturity by as experienced a calumniator, as Canty, the Hangman from Cork, was in the discharge of his functions, when in the situation of municipal officer; and the hoary-headed cadma and crack-brained Pedagogue was appointed a necessary evil vehicle for industriously circulating said maniac calumny! Why did not this base Plebeian, anterior to his giving publicity to the tartaric nausea that rankled at his gloomy heart, forward the corroding philippic, and bid defiance to my contradiction? No, no; he knew full well that with his scanty stock of English ammunition scattered over the sterile floor of his literary magazine, he could not have the effrontery, impudence, or presumption to enter the list of philosophical and scientific disputation with one who has traversed the thorny paths of literature, explored its mazy windings, and who is thoroughly and radically fortified, as being encompassed with the impenetrable shield of genuine science. This red, hot, fiery, unguarded locust, in the inanity of his mind's incomprehensibleness, has not only incurred my displeasure by his satirical dogged Lampoons, etc., but the abhorrence, animosity, and *holy indignation* of many *who move in the high circle*, as well as the ineffable contempt of the majority of those good and useful members of society, who are engaged in the glorious and delightful task of 'teaching the young idea how to shoot,' and forming the mind to rectitude of conduct; and whose labors are tremendous. —I speak from long and considerable experience in scholastic pursuits. I am as perfectly aware as any man of the friendly intercourse, urbanity, and social reciprocation of kindness and demeanor that ought

to exist among Teachers;—and, in a word, that they should be like the sun and moon —*i. e.*, receptacles of each other's light. But these malicious, ignorant, callous-hearted traducers finding it perfectly congenial to their usual habits, and perhaps feeling no remorse of conscience in departing from those principles which must always accompany men of education, carry into effect their scheme of wanton, atrocious, and deliberate falsehood. And accordingly, in pursuance of their infernal piece of villainy, one of them being sensible of being held in contempt and ridicule by an *enlightened public*—whose approbation alone is the true criterion by which Teachers ought to be sanctioned, countenanced, and patronized—incited, ordered, and directed, the aforesaid Lampooner—a reckless, heartless, illiterate, evil-minded ghost, yes my friends an evil-spirit, created by the wrath of God—to pour out the rigmarole effusions of his silly and contemptible lucubrations. It is a well-known fact, that this vile calumniator is the shame, the disgrace, the opprobrium, and brand of detestation; the sacrilegious and perjured outcast of society, who would cut any man's throat for one glass of the soul-destroying beverage. This accursed viper and well-known hob-goblin, labors under a complication of maladies: at one time you might see him leaving the Court-house of ——, with the awful crime of perjury depicted in capital letters on his forehead, and indeably engraven in the recesses of his heart, considering that every tongueless object was eloquent of his woe, and at periods laboring under a semi-perspicuous, semi-opaque, gutta-serena, attended with an acute palpitation of his pericranium, and a most tormenting delirium of intellects from which he finds not the least mitigation until he conopiates his optics under the influence of Morpheus. There are ties of affinity and consanguinity existing between this manufacturer of atrocious falsehoods and barefaced calumnies, and a Jack-Ass, which ties cannot be easily dissolved, the affinity or similitude is perceptible to an indifferent observer in the accent, pronunciation, modulation of the voice of the biped animal, and in the braying of the quadruped. This Jack-Ass you might also behold perambulating the streets of ——, a second Judas Iscariot—a houseless, homeless, penniless, forlorn fugitive, like Old Nick or Beelzebub, seeking whom he might betray and injure in the public estimation, in rapacity, or in discharging a blunderbuss full of falsehood against the most pure and unimpeachable member of society! Is it not astonishing that this wretched, braying, incorrigible mendicant does not put on a more firm and unalterable resolution of taking pattern by, and living in accordance with the laudable and exemplary habits of members of the Literatii, the ornament of which learned body is the Rev. Dr. King, of Ennis College, a gentleman by birth, by principles, and more than all, a gentleman by education; whose mind is pregnant with inexhaustible stores of classical and mathematical lore, entertainment and knowledge; whose learning and virtues have shed a lustre on the human kind; a gentleman possessing almost superhuman talents. No, he must persevere and run in his accustomed old course of abomination, slander, iniquity, and vice.

"In conclusion, to the R. C. Clergymen of ——, and the respectable portion of the laity, I return my ardent heartfelt thanks—to the former, who are the pious, active, and indefatigable instructors of the peasantry, their consolers in affliction, their resource in calamity, their preceptors and models in religion, the trustees of their interest, their visitors in sickness, and their companions on their beds of death; and from the latter I have experienced considerable gratitude in unison with all the other fine qualities inherent in their nature; while neither time nor place shall ever banish from my grateful heart, their urbanity, hospitality, munificence, and kindness to me on every occasion.

"I have the honor to be their very devoted, much obliged, and grateful Servant,

"JOHN O'KELLY.

"The itinerant cosmopolite, to use his own phraseology, accuses me with being lame—I reply, so was Lord Byron; and why not a Star from Dromcoloher be similarly honored, for

> If God, one member has oppress'd,
> He has made more perfect all the rest.

"The following poetic lines are to be inserted in reply to the doggerel composition of the equivocating and hoary champion of wilful and deliberate falsehood, and a compound of knavery, deception, villainy, and dissimulation, wherever he goes:—

> "O'Kelly's my name,
> I think it no shame,
> Of sempiternal fame in that line,
> As for my being lame,
> The rest of my frame,
> Is somewhat superior to thine.
>
> These addled head swains,
> Of paralyzed brains,
> Who charge me with corrupting youth,
> Are a perjuring pair,
> In Belzebub's chair,
> Stamped with disgrace and untruth."

We are obliged to omit some remarks that accompanied the following poetical effusion :—

"A book to the blind signifies not a feather.
Whose look and whose mind chime both together,
Boreas, pray blow this vile rogue o'er the ferry,
For he is a disgrace and a scandal to Kerry."

The writer of this, after passing the highest eulogium on the Rev. Mr. O'Kelly, P.P., Kilmichael, in speaking of him, says,

"In whom, the Heavenly virtues do unite,
Serenely fair, in glowing colors bright,
The shivering mendicant's attire,
The stranger's friend, the orphan's sire,
Benevolent and mild;
The guide of youth,
The light of truth,
By all condignly styl'd."

A gentleman having applied for a transcript of this interesting document for his daughter, Mr. O'Kelly says, "This transcript is given with perfect cheerfulness, at the suggestion of the amiable, accomplished, highly-gifted, original genius, Miss Margaret Brew, of ———, to whom, with the most respectful deference, I take the liberty of applying the following most appropriate poetic lines :—

"Kilrush, a lovely spot of Erin's Isle,
May you and your fair ones in rapture smile,
By force of genius and superior wit,
Any station in high life, they'd fit.
Raise the praise worthy, in style unknown,
Land her, who has great merit of her own.
Had I the talents of the bards of yore,
I would touch my harp and sing for ever more,
Of Miss Brew, unrivaled, and in her youth,
The ornament of friendship, love and truth.
That fair one, whose matchless eloquence divine,
Finds out the sacred pores of man sublime,
Tells us, a female of Kilrush doth shine.
In point of language, eloquence, and ease,
She equals the celebrated Dowes now-a-days,
A splendid poetess—how sweet her verse.
That which, without a blush, Downes might rehearse;
Her throbbing breast the home of virtue rare,
Her bosom, warm, loving and sincere,
A mild *fair one*, the muses only care,
Of learning, sense, true wit, and talents rare;
Endless her fame, on golden wings she'd fly,
Loud as the trumpet of the rolling sky.

"I avail myself of this opportunity, in the most humble posture, the pardon and indulgence of that nobleman of the most profound considerable talents, unbounded liberality, and genuine worth, Crofton M. Vandeleur, Esq., for the culpable omission, which I have incautiously and inadvertly made, in not prior to, and before all, tendered his honor, my warm hearted and best acknowledgments, and participating in the general joy, visible here on every countenance, occasioned by the restoration to excellent health, which his most humane, truly charitable, and illustrious beloved patroness of virtue and morality, Lady Grace T. Vandeleur, now enjoys. May they very late, when they see their children, as well as their numerous, happy, and contented tenantry, flourish around them in prosperity, virtue, honor, and independence—may they then resign their temporal care, to partake of the never-ending joys, glory, and felicity of Heaven; these are the fervent wishes and ardent prayers of their ever grateful servant,

JOHN O'KELLY.

"O rouse my muse and launch in praise forth,
Dwell with delight, with extasy on worth;
In these kind souls in conspicuous flows,
Their liberal hands expelling human woes.
Tell, when dire want oppressed the needy poor,
They drove the ghastly spectre from the door.
Such noble actions yield more pure content,
Than thousands squander'd or in banquets spent.

"I hope, kind and extremely patient reader, you will find my piece humorous, interesting, instructive, and edifying. In delineating and drawing to life the representation of my assailant, aggressor, and barefaced calumniator. I have preferred the natural order, free, and familiar style, to the artificial order, grave, solemn, and antiquated style; and in so doing, I have had occasion to have reference to the vocal metaphrase of some words. With a due circumspection of the use of their synonymy, taking care that the import and acceptation of each phrase and word should not appear frequently synonymous. Again. I have applied the whip unsparingly to his back, and have given him such a laudable castigation, as to compel him to comport himself in future with propriety and politeness; yes, it is quite obvious that I have done it, by an appropriate selection of catogoramatic and cencatogoramatic terms and words. I have been particularly careful to adorn it with some poetic spontaneous effusions, and although I own to you, that I have no pretensions to be an adept in poetry, as I have only moderately sipped of the Helicon Fountain; yet from my knowledge of Orthometry I can prove the correctness of it; by special and general metric analysis. In conclusion, I have not indulged in Rhetorical figures and Tropes, but have rigidly adhered to the use of figurative and literal language; finally I have used a concatination of appropriate mellifluous epithets, logically and philosophically accurate, copious, sublime, eloquent, and harmonious.

"Adieu! Adieu! Remember, JOHN O'KELLY, *Literary Teacher*, And a native of Dromcoloher.

"The author of this extempore production is writing a Treatise on Mental Calculations, to which are appended more than three hundred scientific, ingenious, and miscellaneous questions, with their solutions.

"Mental calculations for the first time are simplified, which will prove a grand desideratum and of the greatest importance in mercantile affairs.

"You will not wonder when I will ye,
You have read some pieces from O'Kelly;
Halt he does, but 'tis no more
Than Lord Byron did before;
Read his pieces and you'll find
There is no limping in his mind;
Reader, give your kind subscription,
Of you, he will give a grand description.

Price 2s., *to be paid in advance.*

"There are Sixty-eight Subscribers to the forthcoming work, gentlemen of considerable Talents, Liberality, and worth;—who, with perfect cheerfulness, have evinced a most laudable disposition to foster, encourage, and reward, a specimen of *Irish Manufacture and Native Talent,* in so humble a person as their extremely grateful, much obliged, and faithful servant,

"JOHN O'KELLY."

THE MIDNIGHT MASS.

Frank M'Kenna was a snug farmer, frugal and industrious in his habits, and, what is rare amongst most men of his class, addicted to neither drink nor quarrelling. He lived at the skirt of a mountain, which ran up in long successive undulations, until it ended in a dark, abrupt peak, very perpendicular on one side, and always, except on a bright day, capped with clouds. Before his door lay a hard plain, covered only with a kind of bent, and studded with round gray rocks, protruding somewhat above its surface. Through this plain, over a craggy channel, ran a mountain torrent, that issued to the right of M'Kenna's house, from a rocky and precipitous valley which twisted itself round the base of the mountain until it reached the perpendicular side, where the peak actually overhung it. On looking either from the bottom of the valley or the top of the peak, the depth appeared immense; and, on a summer's day, when the black thorns and other hardy shrubs that in some places clothed its rocky sides were green, to view the river sparkling below you in the sun, as it flung itself over two or three cataracts of great depth and boldness, filled the mind with those undefinable sensations of pleasure inseparable from a contemplation of the sublimities of nature. Nor did it possess less interest when beheld in the winter storm. Well do we remember, though then ignorant of our own motives, when we have, in the turmoil of the elements, climbed its steep, shaggy sides, disappearing like a speck, or something not of earth, among the dark clouds that rolled over its summit, for no other purpose than to stand upon its brow, and look down on the red torrent, dashing with impetuosity from crag to crag, whilst the winds roared, and the clouds flew in dark columns around us, giving to the natural wildness of the place an air of wilder desolation.—Beyond this glen the mountains stretched away for eight or ten miles in swelling masses, between which lay many extensive sweeps, well sheltered and abundantly stocked with game, particularly with hares and grouse. M'Kenna's house stood, as I said, at the foot of this mountain, just where the yellow surface of the plain began to darken into the deeper hues of the heath; to the left lay a considerable tract of stony land in a state of cultivation; and beyond the river, exactly opposite the house, rose a long line of hills, studded with houses, and in summer diversified with pasture and corn fields, the beauty of which was heightened by the columns of smoke that slanted across the hills, as the breeze carried them through the lucid haze of the atmosphere.

M'Kenna's family consisted of himself, his wife, two daughters, and two sons. One of these was a young man addicted to drink, idle, ill-tempered, and disobedient; seldom taking a part in the labors of the family, but altogether devoted to field sports, fairs, markets, and dances. In many parts of Ireland it is usual to play at cards for mutton, loaves, fowls, or whiskey, and he was seldom absent from such gambling parties, if held within a reasonable distance. Often had the other members of the family remonstrated with him on his idle and immoral courses; but their remonstrances only excited his bad passions, and produced, on his part, angry and exasperating language, or open determination to abandon the family altogether and enlist. For some years he went on in this way, a hardened, ungodly profligate, spurning the voice of reproof and of conscience, and insensible to the entreaties of domestic

affection, or the commands of parental authority. Such was his state of mind and mode of life when our story opens.

At the time in which the incidents contained in this sketch took place, the peasantry of Ireland, being less encumbered with heavy rents, and more buoyant in spirits than the decay of national prosperity has of late permitted them to be, indulged more frequently, and to a greater stretch, in those rural sports and festivities so suitable to their natural love of humor and amusement. Dances, wakes, and weddings, were then held according to the most extravagant forms of ancient usage; the people were easier in their circumstances, and consequently indulged in them with lighter hearts, and a stronger relish for enjoyment. When any of the great festivals of their religion approached, the popular mind, unrepressed by poverty and national dissension, gradually elevated itself to a species of wild and reckless mirth, productive of incidents irresistibly ludicrous, and remarkably characteristic of Irish manners. It is not, however, to be expected, that a people whose love of fighting is so innate a principle in their disposition, should celebrate these festive seasons without an occasional crime, which threw its deep shadow over the mirthful character of their customs. Many such occurred; but they were looked upon then with a degree of horror and detestation of which we can form but a very inadequate idea at present.

It was upon the advent of one of those festivals—Christmas—which the family of M'Kenna, like every other family in the neighborhood, were making preparations to celebrate with the usual hilarity. They cleared out their barn in order to have a dance on Christmas-eve; and for this purpose, the two sons and the servant-man wrought with that kind of industry produced by the cheerful prospect of some happy event. For a week or fortnight before the evening on which the dance was appointed to be held, due notice of it had been given to the neighbors, and, of course, there was no doubt but that it would be numerously attended.

Christmas-eve, as the day preceding Christmas is called, has been always a day of great preparation and bustle. Indeed the whole week previous to it is also remarkable, as exhibiting the importance attached by the people to those occasions on which they can give a loose to their love of fun and frolic. The farm-house undergoes a thorough cleansing. Father and sons are, or rather used to be, all engaged in repairing the out-houses, patching them with thatch where it was wanted, mending mangers, paving stable-floors, fixing cow-stakes, making boraghs,* removing nuisances, and cleaning streets.

On the other hand, the mother, daughters, and maids, were also engaged in their several departments; the latter scouring the furniture with sand: the mother making culinary preparations, baking bread, killing fowls, or salting meat; whilst the daughters were unusually intent upon the decoration of their own dress, and the making up of the family linen. All, however, was performed with an air of gayety and pleasure; the ivy and holly were disposed about the dressers and collar beams with great glee; the chimneys were swept amidst songs and laughter; many bad voices, and some good ones, were put in requisition; whilst several who had never been known to chaunt a stave, alarmed the listeners by the grotesque and incomprehensible nature of their melody. Those who were inclined to devotion—and there is no lack of it in Ireland—took to carols and hymns, which they sang, for want of better airs, to tunes highly comic. We have ourselves often heard the Doxology sung in Irish verse to the facetious air of "Paudeen O'Rafferty," and other hymns to the tune of "Peas upon a Trencher," and "Cruskeen Lawn." Sometimes, on the contrary, many of them, from the very fulness of jollity, would become pathetic, and indulge in those touching old airs of their country, which may be truly called songs of sorrow, from the exquisite and simple pathos with which they abound. This, though it may seem anomalous, is but natural; for there is nothing so apt to recall to the heart those friends, whether absent or dead, with whom it has been connected, as a stated festival. Affection is then awakened, and summons to the hearth where it presides those on whose face it loves to look; if they be living, it places them in the circle of happiness which surrounds it; and if they be removed forever from such scenes, their memory, which, amidst the din of ordinary life, has almost passed away, is now restored, and their loss felt as if it had been only just then sustained.

For this reason, at such times, it is not at all unusual to see the elders of Irish families touched by pathos as well as humor. The Irish are a people whose affections are as strong as their imaginations are vivid; and, in illustration of this, we may add, that many a time have we seen them raised to mirth and melted into tears almost at the same time, by a song of the most comic character. The mirth, however, was for the song, and the sorrow for the memory of some beloved

* The rope with which a cow is tied in the cow house.

relation who had been remarkable for singing it, or with whom it had been a favorite.

We do not affirm that in the family of the M'Kennas there were, upon the occasion which we were describing, any tears shed. The enjoyments of the season and the humors of the expected dance, both combined to give them a more than usual degree of mirth and frolic. At an early hour all that was necessary for the due celebration of that night and the succeeding day, had been arranged and completed. The whiskey had been laid in, the Christmas candles bought, the barn cleared out, the seats laid; in short, every thing in its place, and a place for everything. About one o'clock, however, the young members of the family began to betray some symptoms of uneasiness; nor was M'Kenna himself, though the *farithee* or *man of the house*, altogether so exempt from what they felt, as might, if the cause of it were known to our readers, be expected from a man of his years and experience.

From time to time one of the girls tripped out as far as the stile before the door, where she stood looking in a particular direction until her sight was fatigued.

"Och, och," her mother exclaimed during her absence, "but that colleen's sick about Barny!—musha, but it would be the beautiful joke, all out, if he'd disappoint the whole of yez. Faix, it wouldn't be unlike the same man, to go wherever he can make most money; and sure small blame to him for that; what's one place to him more than another?"

"Hut," M'Kenna replied, rising, however, to go out himself, "the girsha's makin' a *bauliore* * of herself."

"An' where's yourself slippin' out to?" rejoined his wife, with a wink of shrewd humor at the rest. "I say, Frank, are *you* goin' to look for him too? Mavrone, but that's sinsible! Why, thin, you snakin' ould rogue, is that the way wid you? Throth I have often hard it said, that 'one fool makes many;' but sure enough, 'an ould fool's worse nor any.' Come in here this minute, I say—walk back—you to have your horn up!—Faix, indeed!"

"Why, I am only goin' to get the small phaties boiled for the pigs, poor crathurs, for their Christmas dinner. Sure we oughtn't to neglect thim no more than ourselves, the crathurs, that can't spake their wants, except by gruntin'."

"Saints above!—the Lord forgive me for bringin' down *their* names upon a Christmas eve!—but it's beside himself the man is! an' him knows that the phaties wor boiled an' made up into balls for them airly this mornin'!"

In the meantime, the wife's good-natured attack upon her husband produced considerable mirth in the family. In consequence of what she said, he hesitated; but ultimately was proceeding towards the door, when the daughter returned, her brow flushed, and her eye sparkling with mirth and delight.

"Ha!" said the father, with a complacent smile, "all's right, Peggy, you seen him, alanna. The music's in your eye, acushla; an' the feet of you can't keep themselves off o' the ground; an' all bekase you seen Barny *Dhal* * pokin' acrass the fields, wid his head up, an' his skirt stickin' out behind him wid Granua Waile."†

The father had conjectured properly, for the joy which animated the girl's countenance could not be misunderstood.

"Barny's comin'," she exclaimed, clapping her hands with great glee, "an' our Frank wid him; they're at the river, and Frank has him on his back, and Granua Waile undher his arm! Come out, come out! You'll die for good, lookin' at them staggerin' acrass. I knew he'd come! I knew it! God be good to thim that invinted Christmas; it's a brave time, faix!"

In a moment the inmates were grouped before the door, all anxious to catch a glimpse of Barny and Granua Waile.

"Faix ay! Sure enough. Sarra doubt of it! Wethen, I'd never mistrust Barny!" might be heard in distinct exclamations from each.

"Faith he's a Trojan," said the *farithee*, "an' must get lashins of the best we have. Come in, childher, an' red the hob for him.

"'Och, Christmas comes but wanst a year,
An' Christmas comes but wanst a year;
An' the divil a mouth
Shall be friends wid drouth,
While I have whiskey, ale, or beer.

Och, Christmas comes but wanst a year,
An' Christmas comes but wanst a year;
Wid han' in han',
An' can to can,
Then Hi for the whiskey, ale, and beer.

Och, Christmas comes but wanst a year,
An' Christmas comes but wanst a year;
Then the high and the low
Shall shake their toe,
When primed wid whiskey, ale, an' beer.'

For all that, the sorra fig I care for either ale or beer, barrin' in regard of mere drouth; give me the whiskey. Eh, Alley—won't we have a jorum any how?"

* A laughing-stock.

* Barny Dhal—blind Barny.
† The name of his fiddle.

"Why, thin," replied the wife, "the devil be from me (the crass about us for namin' him) but you're a greater *Brinoge* than some of your childher! I suppose its *your* capers Frank has in him. Will you behave yourself, you old slingpoke? Behave, I say, an let me go. Childher, will you help me to flake this man out o' the place? Look at him, he-o, caperin' an' crackin' his fingers afore me, an' pullin' me out to dance!"

"Och, och, murdher alive," exclaimed the good man out of breath, "I seen the day, any way! An', maybe, could show a step or two yet, if I was well fixed. You can't forget ould times, Alley? Eh, you thief?"

"Musha, have sinse, man alive," replied the wife, in a tone of placid gravity, which only betrayed the pleasure she herself felt in his happiness. "Have sinse, an' the strange man comin' in, an' don't let him *see* you in such figaries."

The observation of the good woman produced a loud laugh among them. "Arrah, what are yez laughing at?" she inquired.

"Why, mother," said one of her daughters, "how could Barny *Dhal*, a blind man, *see* anybody?"

Alley herself laughed at her blunder, but wittily replied, "Faith, avourneen, maybe he can often see as nately through his ear as you could do wid your eyes open; sure they say he can hear the grass growin'."

"For that matther," observed the *farithee*, joining in the joke, "he can see as far as any of us—while we're asleep."

The conversation was thus proceeding, when Barney *Dhal* and young Frank M'Kenna entered the kitchen.

In a moment all hands were extended to welcome Barney: "*Millia failte ghud*, Barny!" "*Cead millia failte ghud*, Barny!" "Oh, Barny, did you come at last? You're welcome." "Barny, my Trojan, how is every cart-load of you?" "How is Granua Waile, Barny?"

"Why, thin, holy music, did you never see Barny *Dhal* afore? Clear off from about me, or, by the sweets of rosin, I'll play the devil an' brake things. 'You're welcome, Barny!'—an' 'How are you, Barny?' Why thin, piper o' Moses, don't I know I'm welcome, an' yit you must be tellin' me what everybody knows! But sure I have great news for you all!"

"What is that, Barny?"

"Well, but can yez keep a sacret? Can yez, girls?"

"Faix can we, Barny, achora."

"Well, so can I—ha, ha, ha! Now, are yez sarved? Come, let me to the hob."

"Here, Barny; I'll lead you, Barny."

"No, I *have* him; come, Barny, *I'll* lead you: here, achora, this is the spot—that's it. Why, Barny," said the arch girl, as she placed him in the corner, "sorra one o' the hob but knows you: it never stirs—ha, ha, ha!"

"Throth, a colleen, that tongue o' yours will delude some one afore long, if it hasn't done so already."

"But how is Granua Waile, Barny?"

"Poor Granua is it? Faith, times is hard wid her often. 'Granua,' says I to her, 'what do you say, acushla? we're axed to go to two or three places to-day—what do you say? Do you lead, an' I'll follow: your will is my pleasure.' 'An' where are we axed to?' says Granua, sinsible enough. 'Why,' says I, 'to Paddy Lanigan's, to Mike Hartigan's, to Jack Lynch's, an' at the heel o' the hunt, to Frank M'Kenna's, of the Mountain Bar.' 'By my song,' says she, '*you* may go where you plase; as for me, *I'm* off to Frank M'Kenna's, one of the dacentest men in Europe, an' his wife the same. Divil a toe I'll set a waggin' in any other place this night,' says she; 'for 'tis there we're both well thrated wid the best the house can afford. So,' says she, 'in the name of all that's musical, you're welcome to the poker an' tongs anywhere else; for me, I'm off to Frank's.' An' faith, sure enough, she took to her pumps; an' it was only comin' over the hill there, that young Frank an' I overtuck her: divil a lie in it."

In fact, Barney, besides being a fiddler, was a *senachie* of the first water; could tell a story, or trace a genealogy as well as any man living, and draw the long bow in either capacity much better than he could in the practice of his more legitimate profession.

"Well, here she is, Barny, to the fore," said the aforesaid arch girl, "an' now give us a tune."

"What!" replied the *farithee*, "is it widout either aitin' or dhrinkin'? Why, the girsha's beside herself! Alley, aroon, get him the linin'* an' a sup to tighten his elbow."

The good woman instantly went to provide refreshments for the musician.

"Come, girls," said Barny, "will yez get me a scythe or a handsaw."

"A scythe or a handsaw! eh, then what to do, Barny?"

"Why, to pare my nails, to be sure," replied Barny, with a loud laugh; "but stay—come back here—I'll make shift to do wid a pair of scissors this bout.

"'The parent finds his sons,
The tutherer whips them;
The nailer makes his nails,
The fiddler clips them.'"

* Linin'—lining, so eating and drinking are often humorously termed by the people.

Wherever Barny came there was mirth, and a disposition to be pleased, so that his jokes always told.

"Musha, the sorra *pare* you, Barny," said one of the girls; "but there's no bein' up to you, good or bad."

"The sorra *pair* me, is it? faix, Nancy, you'll soon be paired yourself wid some one, avourneen. Do you know a sartin young man wid a nose on him runnin' to a point like the pin of a sun-dial, his knees brakin' the king's pace, strikin' one another ever since he was able to walk, an' that was about four years afther he could say his *Father Nosther;* an' faith, whatever you may think, there's no makin' them paceable except by puttin' between them! The wrong side of his shin, too, is foremost; an' though the one-half of his two feet is all heels, he keeps the same heels for set days an' bonfire nights, an' savinly walks on his ankles. His leg, too, Nancy, is stuck in the middle of his foot, like a poker in a pick-axe; an', along wid all——"

"Here, Barny, thry your hand at this," said the good woman, who had not heard his ludicrous description of her fictitious son-in-law—"*ech arran agus bee laudher*, Barny, *ate bread and be strong.* I'll warrant when you begin to play, they'll give you little time to do anything but scrape away;—taste the dhrink first, anyway, in the name o' God,"—and she filled him a glass.

"Augh, augh! faith you're the moral of a woman. Are you there, Frank M'Kenna?—here's a sudden disholution to your family! May they be scattered wid all speed—manin' the girls—to all corners o' the parish!—ha, ha, ha! Well, *that* won't vex them, anyhow; an' next, here's a merry Chris'mas to us, an' many o' them! Whooh! blur-an'-age! whooh! oh, by gorra!—that's—that's—Frank run afther my breath—I've lost it—run, you tory: oh, by gor, that's stuff as sthrong as Sampson, so it is. Arrah, what well do you dhraw that from? for, faith, 'twould be mighty convanient to live near it in a hard frost."

Barny was now silent for some time, which silence was produced by the industry he displayed in assailing the substantial refreshments before him. When he had concluded his repast he once more tasted the liquor; after which he got Granna Waile, and continued playing their favorite tunes, and amusing them with anecdotes, both true and false, until the hour drew nigh when his services were expected by the young men and maidens who had assembled to dance in the barn. Occasionally, however, they took a preliminary step in which they were joined by a few of their neighbors. Old Frank himself felt his spirits elevated by contemplating the happiness of his children and their young associates.

"Frank," said he, to the youngest of his sons, "go down to Owen Reillaghan's, and tell him an' his family to come up to the dance early in the evenin'. Owen's a pleasant man," he added, "and a good neighbor, but a small thought too strict in his duties. Tell him to come up, Frank, airly, I say; he'll have time enough to go to the Midnight Mass afther dancin' the 'Rakes of Ballyshanny,' and 'the Baltihorum jig;' an' maybe he can't do both in style!"

"Ay," said Frank, in a jeering manner, "he carries a handy heel at the dancin', and a soople tongue at the prayin'; but let him alone for bringin' the bottom of his glass and his eyebrow acquainted. But if he'd pray less——"

"Go along, *a vechonce*,* an' bring him up," replied the father: "you to talk about prayin'! Them that 'ud catch you at a prayer ought to be showed for the world to wondher at: a man wid two heads an him would be a fool to him. Go along, I say, and do what you're bid."

"I'm goin'," said Frank. "I'm off; but what if he doesn't come? I'll then have my journey for nothin'."

"An' it's good payment for any journey ever you'll make, barrin' it's to the gallows," replied the father, nearly provoked at his reluctance in obeying him: "won't *you* have dancin' enough in the coorse o' the night, for *you'll* not go to the Midnight Mass, and why don't you be off wid you at wanst?"

Frank shrugged his shoulders two or three times, being loth to leave the music and dancing; but on seeing his father about to address him in sharper language, he went out with a frown on his brows, and a half-smothered imprecation bursting from his lips.

He had not proceeded more than a few yards from the door, when he met Rody Teague, his father's servant, on his way to the kitchen. "Rody," said he, "isn't this a purty business? My father wantin' to send *me* down to Owen Reillaghan's; when, by the vartue o' my oath, I'd as soon go half way into hell, as to any place where his son, Mike Reillaghan, 'ud be. How will I manage, Rody?"

"Why," replied Rody, "as to meetin' wid Mike, take my advice and avoid him. And what is more I'd give up Peggy Gartland for good. Isn't it a mane thing for you, Frank, to be hangin' afther a girl that's fonder of another than she is of yourself. By this and

* You profligate.

by that, I'd no more do it—awouh! catch me at it—I'd have spunk in me."

Frank's brow darkened as Rody spoke; instead of instantly replying, he was silent and appeared to be debating some point in his own mind, on which he had not come to a determination.

"My father didn't hear of the fight between Mike and me?" said he, interrogatively—"do you think he did, Rody?"

"Not to my knowledge," replied the servant; "if he did, he wouldn't surely send *you* down; but talking of the fight, you are known to be a stout, well-fought boy—no doubt of that—still, I say, you had no right to provoke Mike as you did, who, it's well known, could bate any two men in the parish; and so sign, you got yourself decently trounced, about a girl that doesn't love a bone in your skin."

"He disgraced me, Rody," observed Frank—"I can't rise my head; and you know I was thought, by all the parish, as good a man as him. No, I wouldn't, this blessed Christmas Eve above us, for all that ever my name was worth, be disgraced by him as I am. But—hould, man—have patience!"

"Throth and, Frank, that's what *you* never had," said Rody; "and as to bein' disgraced, you disgraced yourself. What right had you to challenge the boy to fight, and to strike him into the bargain, bekase Peggy Gartland danced with *him*, and wouldn't go out wid *you?* Death alive, sure that wasn't *his* fault."

Every word of reproof which proceeded from Rody's lips but strengthened Frank's rage, and added to his sense of shame; he looked first in the direction of Reillaghan's house, and immediately towards the little village in which Peggy Gartland lived.

"Rody," said he, slapping him fiercely on the shoulder, "go in—I've—I've made up my mind upon what I'll do; go in, Rody, and get your dinner; but don't be out of the way when I come back."

"And what have you made up your mind to?" inquired Rody.

"Why, by the sacred Mother o' Heaven, Rody, to—to—be friends wid Mike."

"Ay, there's sinse and rason in that," replied Rody; "and if you'd take my advice you'd give up Peggy Gartland, too."

"I'll see you when I come back, Rody; don't be from about the place."

And as he spoke, a single spring brought him over the stile at which they held the foregoing conversation.

On advancing, he found himself in one of his father's fields, under the shelter of an elder-hedge. Here he paused, and seemed still somewhat uncertain as to the direction in which he should proceed. At length he decided; the way towards Peggy Gartland's was that which he took, and as he walked rapidly, he soon found himself at the village in which she lived.

It was now a little after twilight; the night was clear the moon being in her first quarter, and the clouds through which she appeared to struggle, were light and fleecy, but rather cold-looking, such, in short, as would seem to promise a sudden fall of snow. Frank had passed the two first cabins of the village, and was in the act of parrying the attacks of some yelping cur that assailed him, when he received a slap on the back, accompanied by a *gho manhi Dhea ghud, a Franchas, co wul thu guilh a nish, a rogora dhu?* *

"Who's this?" exclaimed Frank: "eh! why, Darby More, you sullin' thief o' the world, is this you?"

"Ay, indeed; an' you're goin' down to Peggy's?" said the the other, pointing significantly towards Peggy Gartland's house. "Well, man, what's the harm? She may get worse, that is, hopin' still that you'll mend your manners, a bouchal: but isn't your nose out o' joint there, Frank, darlin'?"

"No sich thing at all, Darby," replied Frank, gulping down his indignation, which rose afresh on hearing that the terms on which he stood with Peggy were so notorious.

"Throth but it is," said Darby, "an' to tell the blessed thruth, I'm not sarry that it's out o' joint; for when I tould you to lave the case in *my* hands, along wid a small thrifle o' silver that didn't signify much to you—whoo! not at all: you'd rather play it at cards, or dhrink it, or spind it wid no good. Out o' joint! musha, if ever a man's nose was to be pitied, and yours is: why, didn't Mike Reillaghan put it out o' joint, twist? first in regard to Peggy, and secondly by the batin' he gave you an it."

"It's well known, Darby," replied Frank, "that 'twas by a chance blow he did it: and, you know, a chance blow might kill the devil."

"But there was no danger of Mike's *gettin'* the chance blow," observed the sarcastic vagrant, for such he was.

"Maybe it's afore him," replied his companion: "we'll have another thrial for it, any how; but where are you goin', Darby? Is it to the dance?"

"Me! Is it a man wid two holy ordhers an him?† No, no! I might go up, may

* God save you, Frank! where are you going now, you black rogue?

† The religious orders, as they are termed, most commonly entered into by the peasantry, are those of the Scapular and St. Francis. The order of Jesus—or that of the Jesuits, is only entered into by the clergy and the higher lay classes.

be, as far as your father's, merely to see the family, only for the night that's in it; but I'm goin' to another frind's place to spind my Chris'mas, an' over an' above, I must go to the Midnight Mass. Frank, change your coorses, an' mend your life, an' don't be the talk o' the parish. Remimber me to the family, an' say I'll see them soon."

"How long will you stop in the neighborhood?" inquired Frank.

"Arrah why, acushla?" replied the mendicant, softening his language.

"I might be wantin' to see you some o' these days," said the other: "indeed, it's not unlikely, Darby; so don't go, any how, widout seein' me."

"Ah!" said Darby, "had you taken a fool's advice—but it can't be helped now—the harm's done, I doubt; how-an'-ever, for the matther o' that, may be I have as good as Peggy in my eye for you; by the same token, as the night's could, warm your tooth, avick; there's waker wather nor this in Lough Mecall. Sorra sup of it ever I keep for my own use at all, barrin' when I take a touch o' configuration in my bowels, or, may be, when I'm too long at my prayers; for, God help me, sure I'm but shrivin', wid the help o' one thing an' another, to work out my salvation as well as I can! Your health, any how, an' a merry Chris'mas to you!—not forgettin' myself," he added, putting to his lips a large cow's horn, which he kept slung beneath his arm, like the bugle of a coach-guard, only that this was generally concealed by an outside coat, no two inches of which were of the same materials of color. Having taken a tolerably large draught from this, which, by the way, held near two quarts, he handed it with a smack and a shrug to Frank, who immediately gave it a wipe with the skirt of his coat, and pledged his companion.

"I'll be wantin'," observed Frank, "to see you in the hollydays—faith, that stuff's to be christened yet, Darby—so don't go till we have a dish o' discoorse about somethin' I'll mintion to you. As for Peggy Gartland, I'm done wid her; she may marry ould Nick for me."

"Or you for ould Nick," said the cynic, "which would be nearly the same thing: but go an, avick, an' never heed me; sure I must have my spake—doesn't every body know Darby More?"

"I've nothin' else to say *now*," added Frank, "and you have my authority to spread it as far as you plase. I'm done wid her: so good-night, an' good cuttin'* to your horn, Darby!—You damn ould villian!" he subjoined in a low voice, when Darby had got out of his hearing: "surely it's not in yourself, but in the blessed words and things you have about you, that there is any good."

"Musha, good-night, Frank alanna," replied the other;—"an' the divil sweep you, for a skamin' vagabone, that's a curse to the country, and has kep me out o' more weddins than any one I ever met wid, by your roguery in puttin' evil between frinds an' neighbors, jist whin they'd be ready for the priest to say the words over them. Good won't come of you, you proffligate."

The last words were scarcely uttered by the sturdy mendicant, when he turned round to observe whether or not Frank would stop at Larry Gartland's, the father of the girl to whom he had hitherto unsuccessfully avowed his attachment.

"I'd depind an him," said he, in a soliloquy, "as soon as I'd depind upon ice of an hour's growth: an', whether or not, sure as I'm an my way to Owen Reillaghan's, the father of the dacent boy that he's strivin' to outdo, mayn't I as well watch his motions, any way?"

He accordingly proceeded along the shadowy side of the street, in order to avoid Frank's eye, should he chance to look back, and quietly dodged on until he fairly saw him enter the house.

Having satisfied himself that the object of Frank's visit to the village was in some shape connected with Peggy Gartland, the mendicant immediately retraced his steps, and at a pace more rapid than usual, strided on to Owen Reillaghan's, whither he arrived just in time to secure an excellent Christmas-eve dinner.

In Ireland, that description of mendicants which differ so strikingly from the common crowd of beggars as to constitute a distinct species, comprehends within itself as anomalous an admixture of fun and devotion, external rigor and private licentiousness, love of superstition and of good whiskey, as might naturally be supposed, without any great sketch of credulity, to belong to men thrown among a people in whom so many extremes of character and morals meet. The known beggar, who goes his own rounds, and has his own walk, always adapts his character to that of his benefactor, whose whims and peculiarities of temper he studies with industry, and generally with success. By this means, joined to a dexterity in tracing out the private history of families and individuals, he is enabled to humor the caprices, to manage the eccentricities, and to touch with a masterly hand the prejudices and particular opinions, of his patrons; and

* Good cuttin'—May what's in it never fail.

this he contrives to do with great address and tact. Such was the character of Darby More, whose person, naturally large, was increased to an enormous size by the number of coats, blankets, and bags, with which he was encumbered. A large belt, buckled round his body, contained within its girth much more of money, meal, and whiskey, than ever met the eye; his hat was exceedingly low in the crown; his legs were cast in at least three pairs of stockings; and in his hand he carried a long *cant*, spiked at the lower end, with which he slung himself over small rivers and dykes, and kept dogs at bay. He was a devotee, too, notwithstanding the whiskey horn under his arm; attended wakes, christenings, and weddings: rubbed for the *rose** and king's evil, (for the varlet insisted that he was a seventh son); cured toothaches, colics, and headaches, by charms; but made most money by a knack which he possessed of tatooing into the naked breast the representation of Christ upon the cross. This was a secret of considerable value, for many of the superstitious people believed that by having this stained in upon them, they would escape unnatural deaths, and be almost sure of heaven.

When Darby approached Reillaghan's house, he was considering the propriety of disclosing to his son the fact of having left his rival with Peggy Gartland. He ultimately determined that it would be proper to do so; for he was shrewd enough to suspect that the wish Frank had expressed of seeing him before he left the country, was but a *ruse* to purchase his silence touching his appearance in the village. In this, however, he was mistaken.

"God save the house!" exclaimed Darby, on entering—"God save the house, an' all that's in it! God save it to the North!" and he formed the sign of the cross in every direction to which he turned: "God save it to the South! + to the Aiste! + and to the Waiste! + Save it upwards! + and save it downwards! + Save it backwards! + and save it forwards! + Save it right! + and save it left! + Save it by night! + save it by day! + Save it here! + save it there! + Save it this way! + an' save it that way! + Save it atin'! + + + an' save it drinkin'! + + + + + + + + + Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin. An' now that I've blessed the place in the name of the nine Patriarchs, how are yez all, man, woman, an' child? An' a merry Christmas to yez, says Darby More!"

Darby, in the usual spirit of Irish hospitality, received a sincere welcome, was placed up near the fire, a plate filled with the best food on the table laid before him, and requested to want nothing for the asking.

"Why, Darby," said Reillaghan, "we expected you long ago: why didn't you come sooner?"

"The Lord's will be done! for ev'ry man has his throubles," replied Darby, stuffing himself in the corner like an Epicure; "an' why should a sinner like me, or the likes of me, be without thim? 'Twas a dhrame I had last night that kep me. They say, indeed, that dhrames go by contriaries, but not always, to my own knowledge."

"An' what was the dhrame about, Darby?" inquired Reillaghan's wife.

"Why, ma'am, about some that I see on this hearth, well, an' in good health; may they long live to be so! Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin!" + + +

"Blessed Virgin! Darby, sure it would be nothin' bad that's to happen? Would it, Darby?"

"Keep yourself aisy on that head. I have widin my own mind the power of makin' it come out for good—I know the prayer for it. Oxis Doxis!" + +

"God be praised for that, Darby; sure it would be a terrible business, all out, if any thing was to happen. Here's Mike that was born on Whissle* Monday, of all days in the year, an' you know, they say that any child born on that day is to die an unnatural death. We named Mike after St. Michael that he might purtect him."

"Make yourself aisy, I say; don't I tell you I have the prayer to keep it back—hach! hach!—why, there's a bit stuck in my throath, some way! *Wurrah dheelish*, what's this! Maybe, you could give me a sup o' dhrink—wather, or anything to moisten the morsel I'm atin?" *Wurrah*, ma'am dear, make haste, it's goin' agin' the breath wid me!"

"Oh, the sorra taste o' wather, Darby," said Owen; "sure this is Christmas eve, you know; so you see, Darby, for ould acquaintance sake, an' that you may put up an odd prayer now an' thin for us, jist be thryin' this."

Darby honored the gift by immediate acceptance.

"Well, Owen Reillaghan," said he, "you make me take more o' this stuff nor any man I know; and particularly by rason that bein'

* A scrofulous swelling.

* The people believe the superstition to be as is stated above. Any chil born on Whitsunday, or the day after, is supposed to be doomed to die an unnatural death. The consequence is, that the child is named after and dedicated to some particular saint, in the hope that his influence may obviate his evil doom.

given, wid a blessin', to the ranns, an' prayers, an' holy charms, I don't think it so good; barrin', indeed, as Father Donnellan towld me, when the wind, by long fastin', gets into my stomach, as was the case to-day, I'm often throubled, God help me, wid a configuration in the—hugh! ugh—an' thin it's good for me—a little of it."

"This would make a brave powdher-horn, Darby Moore," observed one of Reillaghan's sons, "if it wasn't so big. What do you keep in it, Darby?"

"Why, *avillish*,* nothin' indeed but a sup o' Father Donnellan's holy water, that they say by all accounts it costs him great trouble to make, by rason that he must fast a long time, and pray by the day, afore he gets himself holy enough to consecrate it."

"It smells like whiskey, Darby," said the boy, without any intention, however, of offending him. "It smells very like *poteen*."

"Hould yer tongue, Risthard," said the elder Reillaghan; "what 'nd make the honest man have whiskey in it? Didn't he tell you what's in it?"

"The gorsoon's right enough," replied Darby. "I got the horn from Barny Dalton a couple o' days agone; 'twas whiskey *he* had in it, an' it smells of it sure enough, an' will, indeed, for some time longer. Och! och! the heavens be praised, I've made a good dinner! May they never know want that gave it to me! Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin!" + + +

"Darby, thry this again," said Reillaghan, offering him another bumper.

"Troth an' I will, thin, for I find myself a great dale the betther of the one I tuck. Well, here's health an' happiness to us, an' may we all meet in heaven! Risthard, hand me that horn till I be goin' out to the barn, in ordher to do somethin' for my sowl. The holy wather's a good thing to have about one."

"But the dhrame, Darby?" inquired Mrs. Reillaghan. "Won't you tell it to us?"

"Let Mike follow me to the barn," he replied, "an' I'll tell him as much of it as he ought to hear. An' now let all of yez prepare for the Midnight Mass; go there wid proper intintions, an' not to be coortin' or dhrinkin' by the way. We're all sinners, any way, an' oughtn't to neglect our sowls. Oxis Doxis Glorioxis. Amin!"

He immediately strided with the horn under his arm, towards the barn, where he knelt, and began his orisons in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard in the kitchen.

When he was gone, Mrs. Reillaghan, who, with the curiosity natural to her sex, and the superstition peculiar to her station in life, felt anxious to hear Darby's dream, urged Mike to follow him forthwith, that he might prevail on him to detail it at full length.

Darby, who knew not exactly what the dream ought to be, replied to Mike's inquiries vaguely.

"Mike," said he, "until the proper time comes, I can't tell it; but listen; take my advice, an' slip down to Peggy Gartland's by and by. I have strong suspicions, if my dhrame is thrue, that Frank M'Kenna has a design upon her. People may be abroad this night widout bein' noticed, by rason o' the Midnight Mass; Frank has friends in Kilnaheery, down behind the moors; an' the divil might tempt him to bring her there. Keep your eye an him, or rather an Peggy. If my dhrame's true, he was there this night."

"I thought I gave him enough on her account," said Mike. "The poor girl hasn't a day's pace in regard of him; but, plase goodness, I'll soon put an end to it, for I'll marry her durin' the Hollydays."

"Go, avick, an' let me finish my *Pudheran Partha*: I have to get through it before the Midnight Mass comes. Slip down, and find out what he was doin'; and when you come back, let me know."

Mike, perfectly aware of young M'Kenna's character, immediately went towards Lisdrum, for so the village where Peggy Gartland lived was called. He felt the danger to be apprehended from the interference of his rival the more acutely, inasmuch as he was not ignorant of the feuds and quarrels which the former had frequently produced between friends and neighbors, by the subtle poison of his falsehoods, which were both wanton and malicious. He therefore advanced at an unusually brisk pace, and had nearly reached the village, when he perceived in the distance a person resembling Frank approaching him at a pace nearly as rapid as his own.

"If it's Frank M'Kenna," thought he, "he must pass me, for this is his straight line home."

It appeared, however, that he had been mistaken; for he whom he had supposed to be the object of his enmity, crossed the field by a different path, and seemed to be utterly ignorant of the person whom he was about to meet—so far, at least, as a quick, free, unembarrassed step could intimate his unacquaintance with him.

The fact, however, was, that Reillaghan, had the person whom he met approached him more nearly, would have found his first suspicions correct. Frank was then on his return from Gartland's, and no sooner per

* Avillish—my sweet.

ceived Reillaghan, whom he immediately recognized by his great height, than he took another path in order to avoid him. The enmity between these rivals was deep and implacable; aggravated on the one hand by a sense of unmerited injury, and on the other by personal defeat and the bitterest jealousy. For this reason neither of them wished to meet, particularly Frank M'Kenna, who not only hated, but feared his enemy.

Having succeeded in avoiding Reillaghan, the latter soon reached home; but here he found the door closed, and the family, without a single exception, in the barn, which was now nearly crowded with the youngsters of both sexes from the surrounding villages.

Frank's arrival among them gave a fresh impulse to their mirth and enjoyment. His manners were highly agreeable, and his spirits buoyant almost to levity. Notwithstanding the badness of his character in the opinion of the sober, steady, and respectable inhabitants of the parish, yet he was a favorite with the desolate and thoughtless, and with many who had not an opportunity of seeing him except in his most favorable aspect. Whether he entertained on this occasion any latent design that might have induced him to assume a frankness of manner, and an appearance of good-humor, which he did not feel, it is difficult to determine. Be this as it may, he made himself generally agreeable, saw that every one was comfortable, suggested an improvement in the arrangement of the seats, broke several jests on Barny and Granua Waile—which, however, were returned with interest—and, in fact, acquitted himself so creditably, that his father whispered with a sigh to his mother—

"Alley, achora, wouldn't we be the happy family if that misfortunate boy of ours was to be always the thing he appears to be? God help him! the gommach, if he had sinse, and the fear o' God before him, he'd not be sich a pace o' desate to sthrangers, and such a divil's limb wid ourselves: but he's young, an' may see his evil coorses in time, wid the help o' God."

"Musha, may God grant it!" exclaimed his mother: "a fine slip he is, if his heart 'ud only turn to the right thoughts. One can't help feelin' pride out o' him, when they see him actin' wid any kind o' rason."

The Irish dance, like every other assembly composed of Irishmen and Irishwomen, presents the spectators with those traits which enter into our conception of rollicking fun and broad humor. The very arrangements are laughable; and when joined to the eccentric strains of some blind fiddler like Barny *Dhal*, to the grotesque and caricaturish faces of the men, and the modest, but evidently arch and laughter-loving countenances of the females, they cannot fail to impress an observing mind with the obvious truth, that a nation of people so thoughtless and easily directed from the serious and useful pursuits of life to such scenes, can seldom be industrious and wealthy, nor, despite their mirth and humor, a happy people.

The barn in which they danced on this occasion was a large one. Around the walls were placed as many seats as could be spared from the neighbors' houses; these were eked out by sacks of corn laid length-wise, logs of round timber, old creels, iron pots with their bottoms turned up, and some of them in their usual position. On these were the youngsters seated, many of the "boys" with their sweethearts on their knees, the arms of the fair ones lovingly around their necks; and, on the contrary many of the young women with their bachelors on their laps, their own necks also gallantly encircled by the arms of their admirers. Up in a corner sat Barny, surrounded by the seniors of the village, sawing the fiddle with indefatigable vigor, and leading the conversation with equal spirit. Indeed, his laugh was the loudest, and his joke the best; whilst, ever and anon, his music became perfectly furious—that is to say, when he rasped the fiddle with a desperate effort "to overtake the dancers," from whom, in the heat of the conversation, he had unwittingly lagged behind.

Dancing in Ireland, like everything else connected with the amusement of the people, is frequently productive of bloodshed. It is not unusual for crack dancers from opposite parishes, or from distant parts of the same parish, to meet and dance against each other for victory. But as the judges in those cases consist of the respective friends or factions of the champions, their mode of decision may readily be conjectured. Many a battle is fought in consequence of such challenges, the result usually being that not he who has the lightest heel, but the hardest head, generally comes off the conqueror.

While the usual variety of Irish dances—the reel, jig, fling, three-part-reel, four-part-reel, rowly-powly, country-dance, *cotillion*, or cut-along (as the peasantry call it), and minuet, vulgarly minion, and minionet—were going forward in due rotation, our readers may be assured that those who were seated around the walls did not permit the time to pass without improving it. Many an attachment is formed at such amusements, and many a bitter jealousy is excited: the prude and coquette, the fop and rustic Lothario, stand out here as prominently to the eye of him who is acquainted with human nature, as they do in similar assemblies among the

great: perhaps more so, as there is less art, and a more limited knowledge of intrigue, to conceal their natural character.

The dance in Ireland usually commences with those who sit next the door, from whence it goes round with the sun. In this manner it circulates two or three lines, after which the order is generally departed from, and they dance according as they can. This neglect of the established rule is also a fertile source of discord; for when two persons rise at the same time, if there be not room for both, the right of dancing first is often decided by blows.

At the dance we are describing, however, there was no dissension; every heart appeared to be not only elated with mirth, but also free from resentment and jealousy. The din produced by the thumping of vigorous feet upon the floor, the noise of the fiddle, the chat between Barny and the little sober knot about him, together with the brisk murmur of the general conversation, and the expression of delight which sat on every countenance, had something in them elevating to the spirits.

Barny, who knew their voices, and even the mode of dancing peculiar to almost every one in the barn, had some joke for each. When a young man brings out his sweetheart—which he frequently does in a manner irresistibly ludicrous, sometimes giving a spring from the earth, his *caubeen* set with a knowing air on one side of his head, advancing at a trot on tiptoe, catching her by the ear, leading her out to her position, which is "to face the fiddler," then ending by a snap of the fingers, and another spring, in which he brings his heel backwards in contact with his ham;—we say, when a young man brings out his sweetheart, and places her facing the fiddler, he asks her what will she dance; to which, if she as no favorite tune, she uniformly replies—"*Your* will is *my* pleasure." This usually made Barny groan aloud.

"What ails you, Barny?"

"Oh, thin, murdher alive, how little thruth's in this world! Your will's my pleasure! *Bedhirshin!* but, sowl, if things goes an, it won't be long so!"

"Why, Barny," the young man would exclaim, "is the ravin' fit comin' over you?"

"No, in troth, Jim; *but it's thinkin' of home I am.* Howandiver, do you go an; but, *maboklish!* what'll ye have?"

"'Jig Polthouge,' Barny: but oil your wrist ma bouchal, or Katty will have us both out o' sight in no time. Whoo! success! clear the coorse. Well done, Barny! That's the go."

When the youngsters had danced for some time, the fathers and mothers of the village were called upon "to step out." This was generally the most amusing scene in the dance. No excuse is ever taken on such occasions, for when they refuse, about a dozen young fellows place them, will they nil they, upright upon the floor, from whence neither themselves nor their wives are permitted to move until they dance. No sooner do they commence, than they are mischievously pitted against each other by two sham parties, one encouraging the wife, the other cheering on the good man; whilst the fiddler, falling in with the frolic, plays in his most furious style. The simplicity of character, and, perhaps, the lurking vanity of those who are the butts of the mirth on this occasion, frequently heighten the jest.

"Why, thin, Paddy, is it strivin' to outdo me you are? Faiks, avourneen, you never seen that day, any way," the old woman would exclaim, exerting all her vigor.

"Didn't I? Sowl, I'll sober you before I lave the flure, for all that," her husband would reply.

"An' do you forget," she would rejoin, "that the M'Carthy dhrop is in me; ay, an' it's to the good still."

And the old dame would accompany the boast with a fresh attempt at agility; to which Paddy would respond by "cutting the buckle," and snapping his fingers, whilst fifty voices, amidst roars of laughter, were loud in encouraging each.

"Handle your feet, Kitty, darlin'—the mettle's lavin' him!"

"Off wid the brogues, Paddy, or she'll do you. That's it; kick off the other, an' don't spare the flure."

"A thousand guineas on Katty! M'Carthy agin Gallagher for ever!—whirroo!"

"Blur alive the flure's not benefittin' by you, Paddy. Lay on it, man!—That's it!—Bravo!—Whish!—Our side agin Europe!"

"Success, Paddy! Why you could dance the Dusty Miller upon a flure paved wid drawn razures, you're so soople."

"Katty for ever! The blood's in you, Katty; you'll win the day, *a ban choir!* * More power to you!"

"I'll hould a quart on Paddy. Heel an' toe, Paddy, you sinner!"

"Right an' left, Katty; hould an', his breath's goin'."

"Right an' wrong, Paddy, you spalpeen. The whiskey's an you, man alive: do it decently, an' don't let me lose the wager."

In this manner would they incite some old man, and, perhaps, his older wife, to prolonged exertion, and keep them bobbing and jigging about, amidst roars of laughter.

* Decent woman.

until the worthy couple could dance no longer.

During stated periods of the night, those who took the most prominent part in the dance, got a plate and hat, with which they went round the youngsters, to make collections for the fiddler. Barny reserved his best and most sarcastic jokes for these occasions; for so correct was his ear, that he felt little difficulty in detecting those whose contributions to him were such as he did not relish.

The aptitude of the Irish for enjoying humorous images was well displayed by one or two circumstances which occurred on this night. A few of both sexes, who had come rather late, could get no other seats than the metal pots to which we have alluded. The young women were dressed in white, and their companions, who were also their admirers, exhibited, in proud display, each a bran-new suit, consisting of broadcloth coat, yellow-buff vest, and corduroy small-clothes, with a bunch of broad silk ribbons standing out at each knee. They were the sons and daughters of respectable farmers, but as all distinctions here entirely ceased, they were fain to rest contented with such seats as they could get, which on this occasion consisted of the pots aforesaid. No sooner, however, had they risen to dance than the house was convulsed with laughter, heightened by the sturdy vigor with which, unconscious of their appearance, they continued to dance. That part of the white female dresses which had come in contact with the pots, exhibited a circle like the full moon, and was black as pitch. Nor were their partners more lucky: those who sat on the mouths of the pots had the back part of their dresses streaked with dark circles, equally ludicrous. The mad mirth with which they danced, in spite of their grotesque appearance, was irresistible. This, and other incidents quite as pleasant—such as the case of a wag who purposely sank himself into one of the pots, until it stuck to him through half the dance—increased the laughter, and disposed them to peace and cordiality.

No man took a more active part in these frolics than young Frank M'Kenna. It is true, a keen eye might have noticed under his gayety something of a moody and dissatisfied air. As he moved about from time to time, he whispered something to above a dozen persons, who were well known in the country as his intimate companions, young fellows whose disposition and character were notoriously bad. When he communicated the whisper, a nod of assent was given by his confidants, after which it might be remarked that they moved round to the door with a caution that betrayed a fear of observation, and quietly slunk out of the barn one by one, though Frank himself did not immediately follow them. In about a quarter of an hour afterwards, Rody came in, gave him a signal, and sat down. Frank then followed his companions, and after a few minutes Rody also disappeared. This was about ten o'clock, and the dance was proceeding with great gayety and animation.

Frank's dread of openly offending his parents prevented him from assembling his associates in the dwelling-house; the only convenient place of rendezvous, therefore, of which they could avail themselves, was the stable. Here they met, and Frank, after uncorking a bottle of poteen, addressed them to the following effect:

"Boys, there's great excuse for me, in regard of my fight wid Mike Reillaghan; that you'll all allow. Come, boys, your healths! I can tell yez you'll find this good, the divil a doubt of it; be the same token, that I stole it from my father's Christmas dhrink; but no matther for that—I hope we'll never do worse. So, as I was sayin', you must bear me out as well as you can, when I'm brought before the Dilegates to-morrow, for challengin' and strikin' a brother.* But, I think, you'll stand by me, boys?"

"By the tarn-o'-war, Frank, myself will fight to the knees for you."

"Faith, you may depend on *us*, Frank, or we're not to the fore."

"I know it, boys; and now for a piece of fun for this night. You see—come, Lanty, tare-an'-ounkers, drink, man alive—you see, wid regard to Peggy Gartland—eh? what the hell! is that a cough?"

"One o' the horses, man—go an."

"Rody, did Darby More go into the barn before you came out of it?"

"Darby More? not he. If he did, I'd a seen him surely."

"Why, thin, I'd kiss the book I seen him goin' towards the barn, as I was comin' into the stable. Sowl, he's a made boy, that; an' if I don't mistake, he's in Mike Reillaghan's intherest. You know divil a secret can escape him."

"Hut! the prayin' ould crathur was on his way to the Midnight Mass; he thravels slow, and, of coorse, has to set out early; besides, you know, he has Carols, and bades, and the likes, to sell at the chapel."

"Thrue, for you, Rody; why, I thought he might take it into his head to watch my

* Those connected with illegal combinations are sworn to have no private or personal quarrels, nor to strike nor provoke each other to fight He and Mike were members of such societies

motions, in regard that, as I said, I think him in Mike's intherest."

"Nonsense, man, what the dickens 'ud bring him into the stable loft? Why, you're beside yourself?"

"Be Gor, I bleeve so, but no matther. Boys, I want yez to stand to me to-night: I'm given to know for a sartinty that Mike and Peggy will be buckled to durin' the Hollydays. Now, I wish to get the girl myself; for if I don't get her, may I be ground to atoms if he will."

"Well, but how will you manage? for she's fond of him."

"Why, I'll tell you that. I was over there this eveniu', and I understand that all the family is goin' to the Midnight Mass, barrin' herself. You see, while they are all gone to the 'mallet-office,'* we'll slip down wid a thrifle o' soot on our mugs, and walk down wid her to Kilnaheery, beyant the mountains, to an uncle o' mine; an' afther that, let any man marry her who chooses to run the risk. Be the contints o' the book, Atty, if you don't dhrink I'll knock your head agin the wall, you gommoch!"

"Why, thin, by all that's beautiful, it's a good spree; and we'll stick to you like pitch."

"Be the vartue o' my oath, you don't desarve to be in it, or you'd dhrink dacent. Why, here's another bottle, an' maybe there's more where that was. Well, let us finish what we have, or be the five crasses, I'll give up the whole business."

"Why, thin, here's success to us, any way; an' high hangin' to them that 'ud desart you in your skame this blessed an' holy night that's in it!"

This was re-echoed by his friends, who pledged themselves by the most solemn oaths not to abandon him in the perpetration of the outrage which they had concerted. The other bottle was immediately opened, and while it lasted, the details of the plan were explained at full length. This over, they entered the barn one by one as before, except Frank and Rody, who as they were determined to steal another bottle from the father's stock, did not appear among the dancers until this was accomplished.

The re-appearance of these rollicking and reckless young fellows in the dance, was hailed by all present; for their outrageous mirth was in character with the genius of the place. The dance went on with spirit; brag dancers were called upon to exhibit in hornpipes; and for this purpose a table was brought in from Frank's kitchen on which they performed in succession, each dancer applauded by his respective party as the best in the barn.

In the meantime the night had advanced; the hour might be about half-past ten o'clock; all were in the zenith of enjoyment, when old Frank M'Kenna addressed them as follows:—

"Neighbors, the dickens o' one o' me would like to break up the sport—an', in throth, harmless and dacent sport it is; but you all know that this is Christmas night, and that it's our duty to attind the Midnight Mass. Anybody that likes to hear it may go, for it's near time to be home an' prepare for it; but the sorra one o' me wants to take any of yez from your sport, if you prefer it; all I say is, that I must lave yez; so God be wid yez till we meet agin!"

This short speech produced a general bustle in the barn; many of the elderly neighbors left it, and several of the young persons also. It was Christmas Eve, and the Midnight Mass had from time immemorial so strong a hold upon their prejudices and affections, that the temptation must indeed have been great which would have prevented them from attending it. When old Frank went out, about one-third of those who were present left the dance along with them; and as the hour for mass was approaching, they lost no time in preparing for it.

The Midnight Mass is, no doubt, a phrase familiar to our Irish readers; but we doubt whether those in the sister kingdoms, who may honor our book with a perusal, would, without a more particular description, clearly understand it.

This ceremony was performed as a commemoration not only of the night, but of the hour in which Christ was born. To connect it either with edification, or the abuse of religion, would be invidious; so we overlook that, and describe it as it existed within our own memory, remarking, by the way, that though now generally discontinued, it is in some parts of Ireland still observed, or has been till within in a few years ago.

The parish in which the scene of this story is laid was large, consequently the attendance of the people was proportionably great. On Christmas day a Roman Catholic priest has, or is said to have, the privilege of saying *three* masses, though on every other day in the year he can celebrate but two. Each priest, then, said one at midnight, and two on the following day.

Accordingly, about twenty or thirty years ago, the performance of the Midnight Mass was looked upon as an ordinance highly important and interesting. The preparations for it were general and fervent; so much so, that not a Roman Catholic family slept till

* Mass, humorously so called, from the fact of those who attend it beating their breasts during their devotions.

they heard it. It is true it only occurred once a year; but had any person who saw it *once* been called upon to describe it, he would say that religion could scarcely present a scene so wild and striking.

The night in question was very dark, for the moon had long disappeared, and as the inhabitants of the whole parish were to meet in one spot, it may be supposed that the difficulty was very great, of traversing, in the darkness of midnight, the space between their respective residences, and the place appointed by the priest for the celebration of mass. The difficulty, they contrived to surmount. From about eleven at night till twelve or one o'clock, the parish presented a scene singularly picturesque, and, to a person unacquainted with its causes, altogether mysterious. Over the surface of the surrounding country were scattered myriads of blazing torches, all converging to one point; whilst at a distance, in the central part of the parish, which lay in a valley, might be seen a broad focus of red light, quite stationary, with which one or more of the torches that moved across the fields mingled every moment. These torches were of bog-fir, dried and split for the occasion; all persons were accordingly furnished with them, and by their blaze contrived to make way across the country with comparative ease. This Mass having been especially associated with festivity and enjoyment, was always attended by such excessive numbers, that the ceremony was in most parishes celebrated in the open air, if the weather were at all favorable. Altogether, as we have said, the appearance of the country at this dead hour of the night, was wild and impressive. Being Christmas every heart was up, and every pocket replenished with money, if it could at all be procured. This general elevation of spirits was nowhere more remarkable than in contemplating the thousands of both sexes, old, young, each furnished, as before said, with a blazing flambeau of bog-fir, all streaming down the mountain sides, along the roads, or across the fields, and settling at last into one broad sheet of fire. Many a loud laugh might then be heard ringing the night echo into reverberation; mirthful was the gabble in hard gattural Irish; and now and then a song from some one whose potations had been rather copious, would rise on the night-breeze, to which a chorus was subjoined by a dozen voices from the neighboring groups.

On passing the shebeen and public-houses, the din of mingled voices that issued from them was highly amusing, made up, as it was, of songs, loud talk, rioting and laughter, with an occasional sound of weeping from some one who had become penitent in his drink. In the larger public-houses—for in Ireland there usually are one or two of these in the immediate vicinity of each chapel—family parties were assembled, who set in to carouse both before and after mass. Those, however, who had any love affair on hands generally selected the shebeen house, as being private, and less calculated to expose them to general observation. As a matter of course, these jovial orgies frequently produced such disastrous consequences, both to human life and female reputation, that the intrigues between the sexes, the quarrels, and violent deaths resulting from them, ultimately occasioned the discontinuance of a ceremony which was only productive of evil. To this day, it is an opinion among the peasantry in many parts of Ireland, that there is something unfortunate connected with all drinking bouts held upon Christmas Eve. Such a prejudice naturally arises from a recollection of the calamities which so frequently befell many individuals while Midnight Masses were in the habit of being generally celebrated, although it is not attributed to their existence.

None of Frank M'Kenna's family attended mass but himself and his wife. His children having been bound by all the rules of courtesy to do the honors of the dance, could not absent themselves from it; nor, indeed, were they disposed to do so. Frank, however, and his "good woman," carried their torches, and joined the crowds which flocked to this scene of fun and devotion.

When they had arrived at the cross-roads beside which the chapel was situated, the first object that presented itself so prominently as to attract observation was Darby More, dressed out in all his paraphernalia of blanket and horn, in addition to which he held in his hand an immense torch, formed into the figure of a cross. He was seated upon a stone, surrounded by a ring of old men and women, to whom he sang and sold a variety of Christmas Carols, many of them rare curiosities in their way, inasmuch as they were his own composition. A little beyond them stood Mike Reillaghan and Peggy Gartland, towards both of whom he cast from time to time a glance of latent humor and triumph. He did not simply confine himself to singing his carols, but, during the pauses of the melody, addressed the wondering and attentive crowd as follows:—

"Good Christians—This is the day—how-andiver, it's night now, Glory be to God—that the angel Lucifer appeared to Shud'orth, Meeshach, an' To-bed-we-go, in the village of Constantinople, near Jerocslem. The heavens be praised for it, 'twas a blessed an'

holy *night*, an' remains so from that *day* to this—Oxis doxis glorioxis, Amin! The sarra one of him but appeared to thim at the hour o' midnight, but they were asleep at the time, you see, and didn't persave him. So wid that he pulled out a horn like mine—an', by the same token, it's lucky to wear horns about one from that day to this—an' he put it to his lips, an' *tuck* a good dacent—I mane, *gave* a good dacent blast that soon roused them. 'Are yez asleep?' says he, when they awoke: 'why then, bud-an'-age!' says he, 'isn't it a burnin' shame for able stout fellows like yez to be asleep at the hour o' midnight of all hours o' the night. Tare-an'-age!' says he, 'get up wid yez, you dirty spalpeens! There's St. Pathrick in Jerooslem beyant; the Pope's signin' his mittimus to Ireland, to bless it in regard that neither corn, nor barley, nor platies will grow on the land in quensequence of a set of varmints called *Black-slugs* that ates it up; an' there's not a glass o' whiskey to be had in Ireland for love or money,' says Lucifer. 'Get up wid yez,' says he, 'an' go in an' get his blessin'; sure there's not a Catholic in the counthry, barrin' Swaddlers, but's in the town by this,' says he: 'ay, an' many of the Protestants themselves, and the *Black-mouths*, an' *Blue-belies*,* are gone in to get a share of it. And now,' says he, 'bekase you wor so heavy-headed, I ordher it from this out, that the present night is to be observed in the Catholic church all over the world, an' must be kept holy; an' no thrue Catholic ever will miss from this pariod an opportunity of bein' awake at midnight,' says he, 'glory be to God!' An' now, good Christians, you have an account o' the blessed Carol I was singin' for yez. They're but hapuns a-piece; an' anybody that has the grace to keep one o' these about them, will never meet wid sudden deaths or accidents, sich as hangin', or drownin', or bein' taken suddenly wid a configuration inwardly. I wanst knew a holy man that had a dhrame—about a friend of his, it was——Will any of yez take one?—Thank you, a colleen: my blessin', the blessin' o' the pilgrim, be an you! God bless you, Mike Reillaghan; an' I'm proud that he put it into *your* heart to buy one for the rasons you know. An' now that Father Hoolaghan's comin', any of yez that 'ill want them 'ill find me here agin when mass is over—Oxis doxis glorioxis, Amin!"

The priest at this time made his appearance, and those who had been assembled on the cross-roads joined the crowd at the chapel. No sooner was it bruited among them that their pastor had arrived, than the noise, gabble, singing, and laughing were immediately hushed; the shebeen and public-houses were left untenanted; and all flocked to the chapel-green, where mass was to be said, as the crowd was too large to be contained within the small chapel.

Mike Reillaghan and Peggy Gartland were among the last who sought the "green;" as lovers, they probably preferred walking apart, to the inconvenience of being jostled by the multitude. As they sauntered on slowly after the rest, Mike felt himself touched on the shoulder, and on turning round, found Darby More beside him.

"It's painful to my feelin's," observed the mendicant, "to have to say this blessed night that your father's son should act so shabby an' ondacent."

"Saints above! how, Darby?"

"Why, don't you know that only for me—for what I heard, an' what I tould you—you'd not have the purty girl here at your elbow? Wasn't it, as I said, his intintion to come and whip down the colleen to Kilnaheery while the family 'ud be at mass; sure only for this, I say, you bosthoon, an' that *I* made you bring her to mass, where 'ud the purty colleen be? why half way to Kilnaheery, an' the girl disgraced for ever!"

"Thrue for you, Darby, I grant it: but what do you want me to do?"

"Oh, for that matther, nothin' at all, Mike; only I suppose that when your tailor made the clothes an you, he put no pockets to them?"

"Oh, I see where you are, Darby! well, here's a crown for you; an' when Peggy an' I's made man and wife, you'll get another."

"Mike, achora, I see you *are* your father's son still; now listen to me: first you needn't fear sudden death while you keep that blessed Carol about you; next get your friends together goin' home, for Frank might jist take the liberty, wid about a score of his 'boys,' to lift her from you even thin. Do the thing, I say—don't thrust him; an' moreover, watch in her father's house to-night wid your friends. Thirdly, make it up wid Frank; there's an oath upon you both, *you persave?* Make it up wid him, if he axes you: don't have a broken oath upon you; for if you refuse, he'll put you out o' connection,* an' that 'ud plase him to the back-bone."

Mike felt the truth and shrewdness of this advice, and determined to follow it. Both young men had been members of an illegal society, and in yielding to their passions so far as to assault each other, had been guilty of perjury. The following Christmas-day

* Different denominations of Dissenters.

* That is, out of connection with Ribbonism.

had been appointed by their parish Delegates to take the quarrel into consideration; and the best means of escaping censure was certainly to express regret for what had occurred, and to terminate the hostility by an amicable adjustment of their disputes.

They had now reached the chapel-green, where the scene that presented itself was so striking and strange, that we will give the reader an imperfect sketch of its appearance. He who stood at midnight upon a little mount which rose behind the chapel, might see between five and six thousand torches, all blazing together, and forming a level mass of red dusky light, burning against the dark horizon. These torches were so close to each other that their light seemed to blend, as if they had constituted one wide surface of flame; and nothing could be more preternatural-looking than the striking and devotional countenances of those who were assembled at their midnight worship, when observed beneath this canopy of fire. The Mass was performed under the open sky, upon a table covered with the sacrificial linen, and other apparatus for the ceremony. The priest stood, robed in white, with two large torches on each side of his book, reciting the prayers in a low, rapid voice, his hands raised, whilst the congregation were hushed and bent forward in the reverential silence of devotion, their faces touched by the strong blaze of the torches into an expression of deep solemnity. The scenery about the place was wild and striking; and the stars, scattered thinly over the heavens, twinkled with a faint religious light, that blended well with the solemnity of this extraordinary worship, and rendered the rugged nature of the abrupt cliffs and precipices, together with the still outline of the stern mountains, sufficiently visible to add to the wildness and singularity of the ceremony. In fact, there was an unearthly character about it; and the spectre-like appearance of the white-robed priest as he

"Muttered his prayer to the midnight air,"

would almost impress a man with the belief that it was a meeting of the dead, and that the priest was repeating, like the Gray Friar, his

"Mass of the days that were gone."

On the ceremony being concluded, the scene, however, was instantly changed: the lights were waved and scattered promiscuously among each other, giving an idea of confusion and hurry that was strongly contrasted with the death-like stillness that prevailed a few minutes before. The gabble and laugh were again heard loud and hearty, and the public and shebeen houses once more became crowded. Many of the young people made, on these occasions, what is called "a runaway;"* and other peccadilloes took place, for which the delinquents were "either read out from the altar," or sent probably to St. Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg, to do penance. Those who did not choose to stop in the whiskey-houses now hurried home with all speed, to take some sleep before early Mass, which was to be performed the next morning about daybreak. The same number of lights might therefore be seen streaming in different ways over the parish; the married men holding the torches, and leading their wives; bachelors escorting their sweethearts, and not unfrequently extinguishing their flambeaux, that the dependence of the females upon their care and protection might more lovingly call forth their gallantry.

When Mike Reillaghan considered with due attention the hint which Darby More had given him, touching the necessity of collecting his friends as an escort for Peggy Gartland, he had strong reasons to admit its justness and propriety. After Mass he spoke to about two dozen young fellows who joined him, and under their protection Peggy now returned safely to her father's house.

Frank M'Kenna and his wife reached home about two o'clock; the dance was comparatively thin, though still kept up with considerable spirit. Having solemnized himself by the grace of so sacred a rite, Frank thought proper to close the amusement, and recommend those whom he found in the barn to return to their respective dwellings.

"You have had a merry night, childher," said he; "but too much o' one thing's good for nothin'; so don't make a toil of a pleasure, but go all home dacently an' soberly, in the name o' God."

This advice was accordingly followed. The youngsters separated, and M'Kenna joined his family, "to have a sup along wid them and Barny, in honor of what they had hard." It was upon this occasion he missed his son Frank, whose absence from the dance he had not noticed since his return until then.

"Musha, where's Frank," he inquired: "I'll warrant him, away wid his blackguards upon no good. God look down upon him! Many a black heart has that boy left us! If it's not the will o' heaven, I fear he'll come to no good. Barny, is he long gone from the dance?"

* Rustic elopement.

"Troth, Frank, wid the noise an' dancin', an' me bein' *dark*," replied Barny, shrewdly, "I can't take on me to say. For all you spake agin him, the sorra one of him but's a clane, dacent, spirited boy, as there is wid-in a great ways of him. Here's all your heanihs! Faix, girls, you'll all sleep sound to-night."

"Well," said Mrs. M'Kenna, "the knowledge of that Darby More is unknowable! Here's a Carol I bought from him, an' if you wor but to hear the explanations he put to it! Why Father Hoolaghan could hardly outdo him!"

"Divil a man in the five parishes can dance 'Jig Polthogue' wid him, for all that," said Barny. "Many a time Granua an' I played it for him, an' you'd know the tune upon his feet. He undherstands a power o' rauns and prayers, an' has charms an' holy herbs for all kinds of ailments, no doubt."

"These men, you see," observed Mrs. M'Kenna, in the true spirit of credulity and superstition, "may do many things that the likes of us oughtn't to do, by raison of their great fastin' an' prayin'."

"Thrue for you, Alley," replied her husband: "but come, let us have a sup more in comfort: the sleep's gone *a shraugran* an us this night, any way, so, Barny, give us a song, an' afther that we'll have a taste o' prayers, to close the night."

"But you don't think of the long journey I've before me," replied Barny: "howandiver, if you promise to send some one home wid me, we'll have the song. I wouldn't care, but the night bein' dark, you see, I'll want somebody to guide me."

"Faith, an' it's but rasonable, Barny, an' you must get Rody home wid you. I suppose he's asleep in his bed by this, but we'll rouse him!"

Barny replied by a loud triumphant laugh, for this was one of his standing jests.

"Well, Frank," said he, "I never thought you war so soft, and me can pick my steps the same at night as in daylight! Sure that's the way I *done* them to-night, when one o' Granua's strings broke. 'Sweets o' rosin,' says I; 'a candle—bring me a candle immediately.' An' down came Rody in all haste wid a candle. 'Six eggs to you, Rody,' says myself, 'an' half-a-dozen o' them rotten! but you're a bright boy, to bring a lit candle to a blind man!' and then he stood a *bouloare* to the whole house—ha, ha, ha!"

Barny, who was not the man to rise first from the whiskey, commenced the relation of his choicest anecdotes; old Frank and the family, being now in a truly genial mood, entered into the spirit of his jests, so that between chat, songs, and whiskey, the hour had now advanced to four o'clock. The fiddler was commencing another song, when the door opened, and Frank presented himself, nearly, but not altogether in a state of intoxication; his face was besmeared with blood; and his whole appearance that of a man under the influence of strong passion, such as would seem to be produced by disappointment and defeat.

"What!" said the father, "is it snowin', Frank? Your clothes are covered wid snow!"

"Lord, guard us!" exclaimed the mother, "is that blood upon your face, Frank?"

"It *is* snowin', and it *is* blood that's upon my face," answered Frank, moodily—"do you want to know more news?"

"Why, ay indeed," replied his mother, "we want to hear how you came to be cut?"

"You won't hear it, thin," he replied.

The mother was silent, for she knew the terrible fits of passion to which he was subject.

The father groaned deeply, and exclaimed—"Frank, Frank, God help you, an' show you the sins you're committin', an' the heart-scaldin' you're givin' both your mother and me! What fresh skrimmage had you that you're in that state?"

"Spare yourself the throuble of inquirin'," he replied: "all I can say," he continued, starting up into sudden fury—"all I can say, an' I say it—I swear it—where's the prayer-book?" and he ran frantically to a shelf beside the dresser on which the prayer-book lay,—"ay! by him that made me I'll sware it—by this sacred book, while I live, Mike Reillaghan, the husband of Peggy Gartland you'll never be, if I should swing for it! Now you all seen I kissed the book!" as he spoke, he tossed it back upon the shelf.

The mirth that had prevailed in the family was immediately hushed, and a dead silence ensued; Frank sat down, but instantly rose again, and flung the chair from him with such violence that it was crashed to pieces; he muttered oaths and curses, ground his teeth, and betrayed all the symptoms of jealousy, hatred, and disappointment.

"Frank, a bouchal," said Barny, commencing to address him in a conciliatory tone—"Frank, man alive——"

"Hould your tongue, I say, you blind vagabone, or by the night above us, I'll break your fiddle over your skull, if you dar to say another word. What I swore I'll do, an' let no one crass me."

He was a powerful young man, and such was his temper, and so well was it under-

stood, that not one of the family durst venture a word of remonstrance.

The father arose, went to the door, and returned. "Barny," said he, "you must content yourself where you are for this night. It's snowin' heavily, so you had betther sleep wid Rody; I see a light in the barn, I suppose he's after bringing in his bed an' makin' it."

"I'll do any thing," replied the poor fiddler, now apprehensive of violence from the outrageous temper of young Frank.

"Well, thin," added the good man, "let us all go to bed, in the name of God. Micaul, bring Barny to the barn, and see that he's comfortable."

This was complied with, and the family quietly and timidly retired to rest, leaving the violent young man storming and digesting his passion, behind them.

Mass on Christmas morning was then, as now, performed at day-break, and again the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the parish were up betimes to attend it. Frank M'Kenna's family were assembled, notwithstanding their short sleep, at an early breakfast; but their meal, in consequence of the unpleasant sensation produced by the outrage of their son, was less cheerful than it would otherwise have been. Perhaps, too, the gloom which hung over them, was increased by the snow that had fallen the night before, and by the wintry character of the day, which was such as to mar much of their expected enjoyment. There was no allusion made to their son's violence over-night; neither did he himself appear to be in any degree affected by it. When breakfast was over, they prepared to attend mass, and, what was unusual, young Frank was the first to set out for the chapel.

"Maybe," said the father, after he was gone—"maybe that fool of a boy is sarry for his behavior. It's many a day since I knew him to go to mass of his own accord. It's a good sign, any way."

"Musha," inquired his mother, "what could happen atween him an' that civil boy, Mike Reillaghan?"

"The sorra one o' me knows," replied his father: "an' now that I think of it, sure enough there was none o' them at the dance last night, although I sent himself down for them. Micaul," he added, addressing the other son, "will you put an your big coat, slip down to Reillaghan's, an' bring me word what came atween them at all; an' tell Owen himself the thruth that this boy's brakin' our hearts by his coorses."

Micaul, who, although he knew the cause of the enmity between these rivals, was ignorant of that which occasioned his brother's rash oath, also felt anxious to ascertain the circumstances of the last quarrel. For this purpose, as well as in obedience to his father's wishes, he proceeded to Reillaghan's, and arrived just as Darby More and young Mike had set out for mass.

"What," said the mendicant, "can be bringing Micaul down, I wondher? somethin' about that slip o' grace, his brother."

"I suppose so," said Mike; "an' I wish the same slip was as dacent an' inoffensive as he is. I don't know a boy livin' I'd go farther for nor the same Micaul.—He's a credit to the family as much as the other's a stain upon them."

"Well, any how, you war Frank's match, an' more, last night. How bitther he was bint on bringin' Peggy aff, when he an' his set waited till they seen the country clear, an' thought the family asleep? Had you man for man, Mike?"

"Ay, about that; an' we sat so snug in Peggy's that you'd hear a pin fallin'. A hard tug, too, there was in the beginnin'; but whin they found that we had a strong back, they made away, an' we gave them purshute from about the house."

"You may thank me, any how, for havin' her to the good; but I knew by my dhrame, wid the help o' God, that there was somethin' to happen; by the same a token, that your mother's an' her high horse about that dhrame. I'm to tell it to her, wid the sinse of it, in the evenin', when the day's past, an' all of us in comfort."

"What was it, Darby? sure you may let me hear it."

"Maybe I will in the evenin'. It was about you an' Peggy, the darlin'. But how will you manage in regard of brakin' the oath, an' sthrikin' a brother?"

"Why, that I couldn't get over it, when *he* sthruck me first: sure he's worse off. I'll lave it to the Dilegates, an' whatever judgment they give out, I'll take wid it."

"Well," observed Darby, sarcastically, "it made him do one good turn, any way."

"What was that, Darby? for good turns are but scarce wid him."

"Why, it made him hear mass to-day," replied the mendicant; "an' that's what he hadn't the grace to do this many a year. It's away in the mountains wid his gun he'd be, thracin', an' a fine day it is for it—only this business prevints him. Now, Mike," observed Darby, "as we're comin' out upon the *boreen*, I'll fall back, an' do you go an; I have part of my *padareens* to say, before I get to the chapel, wid a blessin'; an' we had as good not be seen together."

The mendicant, as he spoke, pulled out a long pair of beads, on which he commenced

his prayers, occasionally accosting an acquaintance with the *Gho mhany Deah ghud,** and sometimes taking a partin the con versation for a minute or two, after which he resumed the prayers as before.

The day was now brightening up, although the earlier part of the morning had threatened severe weather. Multitudes were flocking to the chapel; the men well secured in frieze great-coats, in addition to which, many of them had their legs bound with straw ropes, and others with leggings made of old hats, cut up for the purpose. The women were secured with cloaks, the hoods of which were tied with kerchiefs of some showy color over their bonnets or their caps, which, together with their elbows projecting behind, for the purpose of preventing their dress from being dabbled in the snow, gave them a marked and most picturesque appearance.

Reillaghan and M'Kenna both reached the chapel a considerable time before the arrival of the priest; and as a kind of Whiteboy committee was to sit for the purpose of investigating their conduct in holding out so dangerous an example as they did, by striking each other, contrary to their oaths as brothers under the same system, they accordingly were occupied each in collecting his friends, and conciliating those whom they supposed to be hostile to them on the opposite party. It had been previously arranged that this committee should hold a court of inquiry, and that, provided they could not agree, the matter was to be referred to two hedge-schoolmasters, who should act as umpires; but if it happened that the latter could not decide it, there was no other tribunal appointed to which a final appeal could be made.

According to these regulations, a court was opened in a shebeen-house, that stood somewhat distant from the road. Twelve young fellows seated themselves on each side of a deal table, with one of the umpires at each end of it, and a bottle of whiskey in the middle. In a higher sphere of life it is usual to refer such questionable conduct as occurs in duelling, to the arbitration of those who are known to be qualified by experience in the duello. On this occasion the practice was not much departed from, those who had been thus selected as the committee being the notoriously pugnacious "boys" in the whole parish.

"Now, boys," said one of the schoolmasters, "let us proceed to operations wid proper spirit," and he filled a glass of whiskey as he spoke. "Here's all your healths, and next, pace and unanimity to us! Call in the culprits."

Both were accordingly admitted, and the first speaker resumed—"Now, in the second place, I'll read yez that part of the oath which binds us all under the obligation of not strikin' one another—hem! hem! 'No brother is to strike another, knowing him to be such; he's to strike him—hem!—neither in fair nor market, at home nor abroad, neither in public nor in private, neither on Sunday nor week-day, present or absent, nor—'"

"I condimn that," observed the other master—"I condimn it, as bein' too latitudinarian in principle, an' containing a paradogma; besides it's bad grammar."

"You're rather airly in the market wid your bad grammar," replied the other: "I'll grant you the piradogma, but I'll stand up for the grammar of it, while I'm able to stand up for anything."

"Faith, an' if you rise to stand up for that," replied his friend, "and doesn't choose to sit down till you prove it to be good grammar, you'll be a standin' joke all your life."

"I bleeve it's purty conspicuous in the parish, that I have often, in our disputations about grammar, left you widout a leg to stand upon at all," replied the other.

This sally was well received, but his opponent was determined to push home the argument at once.

"I would be glad to know," he inquired, "by what beautiful invintion a man could contrive to strike another in his *absence?* Have you good grammar for *that?*"

"And did you never hear of detraction?" replied his opponent; "that is, a man who's in the habit of spaking falsehoods of his friends whin their backs are turned—that is to say, whin they are absent. Now, sure, if a man's absent whin his back's turned, mayn't any man whose back's turned be said to be absent—ergo, to strike a man behind his back is to strike him whin he's absent. Does that confound you? where's your logic and grammar to meet proper ratiocination like what I'm displaying?"

"Faith," replied the other, "you may have had logic and grammar, but I'll take my oath it was in your younger years, for both have been *absent* ever since I knew you: they turned their *backs* upon you, man alive; for they didn't like, you see, to be keepin' bad company—ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you poor crathur," said his antagonist, "if I'd choose to let myself out, I could make a hare of you in no time entirely."

"And an ass of yourself," retorted the other: "but you may save yourself the throuble in regard of the last, for your frinds

* God save you!

know you to be an ass ever since they remimber you. You have them here, man alive, the auricles," and he pointed to his ears.

"Hut! get out wid you, you poor Jamaica-headed castigator, you; sure you never had more nor a thimbleful o' sinse ou any subject."

"Faith, an' the thimble that measured yours was a tailor's, one widout a bottom in it an' good measure you got, you miserable flagellator! what are you but a *nux vomica?* A fit of the ague's a thrife compared to your asinity."

The "boys" were delighted at this encounter, and utterly forgetful of the pacific occasion on which they had assembled, began to pit them against each other with great glee.

"That's a hard hit, Misther Costigan; but you won't let it pass, any how."

"The ague an' you are ould acquaintances," retorted Costigan; "whenever a skrimmage takes place, you're sure to resave a visit from it."

"Why, I'm not such a hare as yourself," replied his rival, "nor such a great hand at batin' the *absent*—ha, ha, ha!"

"Bravo, Misther Connell—that's a leveller; come, Misther Costigan, bedad, if you don't answer that you're bate."

"By this and by that, man alive, if you don't mend your manners, maybe I'd make it betther for you to be absent also. You'll only put *me* to the throuble of mendin' them *for* you."

"Mend my manners!" exclaimed his opponent, with a bitter sneer,—"*you* to mend them! out wid your budget and your hammer, then; you're the very tinker of good manners—bekase for one dacency you'd mend, you'd spoil twenty."

"I'm able to hammer you at all events, or, for that matther, any one of your illiterate gineration. Sure it's well known that you can't tach Voshther (Voster) widout the Kay."

"Hould there, if you plase," exclaimed one of his opponent's relations; "don't lug in *his family; that's* known to be somewhat afore your own, I bleeve. There's no *Informers* among them, Misther Costigan: keep at home, masther, if you plase."

"At *home!* That's more than some o' your own *cleavings** have been able to do," rejoined Costigan, alluding to one of the young fellow's acquaintances who had been transported.

"Do you mane to put an affront upon me?" said the other.

"Since the *barrhad** fits you, wear it," replied Costigan.

"Very right, masther, make him a present of it," exclaimed one of Costigan's distant relations; "he desarves that, an' more if he'd get it."

"Do I?" said the other; "an' what have *you* to say on the head of it, Bartle?"

"Why, not much," answered Bartle, "only that you ought to've left it betune them; an' that *I'll* back Misther Costigan agin any rascal that 'nd say there was ever a dhrop of his blood in an Informer's veins."

"*I* say it for one," replied the other.

"And I, for another," said Connell; "an' what's worse, I'll hould a wager, that if he was searched this minute, you'd find a Kay to Gough in his pocket, although he throws Vosther in *my* teeth: the dunce never goes widout one. Sure he's not able to set a dacent copy, or headline, or to make a dacent hook, nor a hanger, nor a down stroke, and was a poor scholar, too!"

"I'll give you a down stroke in the mane time, you ignoramus," said the pedagogue, throwing himself to the end of the table at which his enemy sat, and laying him along the floor by a single blow.

He was instantly attacked by the friend of the prostrate academician, who was in his turn attacked by the friend of Costigan. The adherents of the respective teachers were immediately rushing to a general engagement, when the door opened, and Darby More made his appearance.

"Asy!—stop wid yees!—hould back, ye disgraceful villains!" exclaimed the mendicant, in a thundering voice. "Be asy, I say. Saints in glory! is this the way you're settlin' the dispute between the two dacent young men, that's sorry, both o' them, I'll go bail, for what they done. Sit down, every one o' yez, or, by the blessed ordhers I wear about me, I'll report yez to Father Hoolaghan, an' have yez read out from the althar, or sint to Lough Derg! Sit down, I say!"

As he spoke, he extended his huge cant between the hostile parties, and thrust them one by one to their seats with such muscular energy, that he had them sitting before another blow could be given.

"Saints in glory!" he exclaimed again, "isn't this blessed doins an the sacred day that's in it! that a poor helpless ould man like me can't come to get somethin' to take away this misfortunit touch o' configuration that I'm afflicted wid in cowld weather—that I can't take a little sup of the only thing that cures me—widout your ructions and battles! You came here to make pace between two

* Distant relations.

* Cap.

dacent men's childher, an' you're as bad, if not worse, yourselves!—Oh, wurrah dheelish, what's this! I'm in downright agony! Oh, murdher sheery! Has none o' yez a hand to thry if there's e'er a dhrop of relief in that bottle? or an I to die all out, in the face o' the world, for want of a sup o' somethin' to warm me?"

"Darby, thry the horn," said M'Kenna.

"Here, Darby," said one of them, "dhrink this off, an' my life for yours, it'll warm you to the marrow!"

"Och, musha, but I wanted it badly," replied Darby, swallowing it at once; "it's the only thing that does me good when I'm this way. *Deah Grasthias!* * Oxis Doxis Gloriaxis. Amin!"

"I think," said M'Kenna, "that what's in the horn's far afore it."

"Oh, thin, you thoughtless crathur, if you knew somethin' I hard about you a while ago, you'd think otherwise. But, indeed, it's thrue for you; I'm sure I'd be sarry to compare what's in *it* to anything o' the kind I tuck. *Deah Grasthias!* Throth, I'm asier now a great dale nor I was."

"Will you take another sup, Darby?" inquired the young fellow in whose hands the bottle was now nearly empty; there's jist about another glass."

"Indeed, an' I will, *avillish;* † an' sure you'll have my blessin' for it, an' barrin' the priest's own, you couldn't have a more luckier one—blessed be God for it—sure *that's* well known. In throth, they never came to ill that had it, an' never did good that got my curse! Hou p! do you hear how that rises the wind off o' my stomach! Houp!—*Deah Grasthias* for that!"

"How did you larn all the prayers an' charms you have, Darby?" inquired the bottle-holder.

"It would take me too long to tell you that, *avillish!* But, childher, now that you're all together, make it up wid one another. Aren't you all frinds an' brothers, *sucorn* brothers, an' why would you be fightin' among other? Misther Costigan, give me your hand; sure I heard a thrifle o' what you were sayin' while I was suckin' my dudeen at the fire widout. Come here, Misther Connell. Now, before the saints in glory, I lay my bitter curse an him that refuses to shake hands wid his inimy. There now—I'm proud to see it. Mike, avourneen, come here—Frank M'Kenna, *gustho,* ‡ walk over here; my bitther heart's curse upon both of yez, if you don't make up all quarrels this minnit! Are you willin', Mike Reillaghan?"

"I have no objection in life," replied Mike, "if he'll say that Peggy Gartland won't be put to any more throuble through his manes."

"There's my hand, Mike," said Frank, "that I forget an' forgive all that's past; and in regard to Peggy Gartland, why, as she's so dark agin me, I lave her to you for good." *

"Well! see what it is to have the good intintions!—to be makin' pace an' friendship atween inimies! That's all I think about, an' nothin' gives me greater pleas—Saints o' glory!—what's this!—Oh wurrah!—that thief of a—wurrah dheelish!—that touch o' configuration's comin' back agin!—O, thin, but it's hard to get it undher!—Oh!"—

"I'm sarry for it, Darby," replied he who held the now empty bottle; "for the whiskey's out."

"Throth, an' I'm sarry myself, for nothin' else does me good; an' Father Hoolaghan says nothin' *can* keep it down, barrin' the sup o' whiskey. It's best burnt, wid a little bit o' butther an it; but I can't get that always, it overtakes me so suddenly, glory be to God!"

"Well," said M'Kenna, "as Mike an' myself was the manes of bringin' us together, why, if he joins me, we'll have another bottle."

"Throth, an' its fair an' dacent, an' he must do it; by the same a token, that I'll not have the house till it's dhrunk, for there's no thrustin' yez together, you're so hot-headed an' ready to rise the hand," said Darby.

M'Kenna and Mike, having been reconciled, appeared in a short time warmer friends than ever. While the last bottle went round, those who had before been on the point of engaging in personal conflict, now laughed at their own foibles, and expressed the kindness and good-will which they felt for each other at heart.

"Now," said the mendicant, "go all of you to mass, an' as soon as you can, to confission, for it's not good to have the broken oath an' the sin of it over one. Confiss it, an' have your conscience light: sure it's a happiness that you *can* have the guilt taken off o' yez, childher."

"Thrue for you, Darby," they replied; "an' we'll be thinkin' of your advice."

"Ay, do, childher; an' there's Father Hoolaghan comin' down the road, so, in the name o' Goodness, we haven't a minnit to lose."

They all left the shebeen-house as he

* God be praised.
† My sweet!—an epithet of endearment.
‡ Come hither.

* In future—altogether.

spoke except Frank and himself, who remained until they had gone out of hearing.

"Darby," said he, "I want you to come up to our house in the mornin', an' bring along wid you the things that you stamp the crass upon the skin wid: I'm goin' to get the crucifix put upon me. But on the paril o' your life, don't brathe a word of it to mortual."

"God enable you, avick! it's a good intintion. I will indeed be up wid you—airly too, wid a blessin'. It is that, indeed—a good intintion, sure enough."

The parish chapel was about one hundred perches from the shebeen-house in which the "boys" had assembled; the latter were proceeding there in a body when Frank overtook them.

"Mike," said he aside to Reillaghan, "we'll have time enough—walk back a bit; I'll tell you what I'm thinkin'; you never seen in your life a finer day for thracin; what 'ud you say if we give the boys the slip, never heed mass, an' set off to the mountains?"

"Won't we have time enough afther mass?" said Reillaghan.

"Why, man, sure you *did* hear mass *once* to-day. Weren't you at it last night? No, indeed, we won't be time enough afther it; for this bein' Chris'mas day, we must be 'home at dinner-time; you know it's not lucky to be from the family upon set days. Hang-an-ounty, come: we'll have fine sport! I have cocksticks * enough. The best part of the day 'll be gone if we wait for mass. Come, an' let us start."

"Well, well," replied Reillaghan, "the sorra hair I care; so let us go. I'd like myself to have a rap at the hares in the Black Hills, sure enough; but as it 'ud be remarkable for us to be seen lavin' mass, why let us crass the field here, an' get out upon the road above the bridge.

To this his companion assented, and they both proceeded at a brisk pace, each apparently anxious for the sport, and resolved to exhibit such a frank cordiality of manner as might convince the other that all their past enmity was forgotten and forgiven.

The direct path to the mountains lay by M'Kenna's house, where it was necessary they should call, in order to furnish themselves with cocksticks, and to bring dogs which young Frank kept for the purpose. The inmates of the family were at mass, with the exception of Frank's mother, and Rody, the servant-man, whom they found sitting on his own bed in the barn, engaged at cards, the right hand against the left.

"Well, Rody," said Frank, "who's winnin'?"

"The left entirely," replied his companion: "the divil a game at all the right's gettin', whatever's the rason of it, an' I'm always turnin' up black. I hope none of my friends or acquaintances will die soon."

"Throw them aside—quit of them," said Frank, "give them to me, I'll put them past; an' do you bring us out the gun. I've the powdher an' shot here; we may as well bring her, an' have a slap at them. One o' the officers in the barracks of —— keeps me in powdher an' shot, besides givin' me an odd crown, an' I keep him in game."

"Why, thin, boys," observed Rody, "what's the manin' o' this?—two o' the biggest inimies in Europe last night an' this mornin' an' now as great as two thieves! How does that come?"

"Very asy, Rody," replied Reillaghan; "we made up the quarrel, shuck hands, an's good frinds as ever."

"Bedad, that bates cock-fightin'," said Rody, as he went to bring in the gun.

In the mean time, Frank, with the cards in his hand, went to the eave of the barn, thrust them up under the thatch, and took out of the same nook a flask of whiskey.

"We'll want this," said he, putting it to his lips, and gulping down a portion. "Come Mike, be tastin'; and afterwards put this in your pocket."

Mike followed his example, and was corking the flask when Rody returned with the gun.

"She's charged," said Frank; "but we'd betther put in fresh primin' for 'fraid of her hangin' fire."

He then primed the gun, and handed it to Reillaghan. "Do *you* keep the gun, Mike," he added, "an' I'll keep the cocksticks. Rody, I'll bet you a shillin' I kill more wid the cockstick, nor he will wid the gun. Will you take me up?"

"I know a safer thrick," replied Rody; "you're a dead aim wid the cockstick, sure enough, an' a deader with the gun, too; catch me at it."

"You show some sinse, for a wondher," observed Frank, as he and his companion left the barn, and turned towards the mountains, which rose frowning behind the house.

Rody stood looking after them until they wound up slowly out of sight among the hills; he then shook his head two or three times, and exclaimed, "By dad, there's somethin' in this, if one could make out what it is. I *know* Frank."

* A cockstick was so called from being used on Cock-Monday, to throw at a cock tied to a stake, which was a game common among the people. It was about the length of a common stick, but much heavier and thicker at one end.

Christmas-day passed among the peasantry, as it usually passes in Ireland. Friends met before dinner in their own, in their neighbors', in shebeen or in public houses, where they drank, sang, or fought, according to their natural dispositions, or the quantity of liquor they had taken. The festivity of the day might be known by the unusual reek of smoke that danced from each chimney, by the number of persons who crowded the roads, by their bran-new dresses,—for if a young man or country girl can afford a dress at all, they provide it for Christmas,—and by the striking appearance of those who, having drunk a little too much, were staggering home in the purest happiness, singing, stopping their friends, shaking hands with them, or kissing them, without any regard to sex. Many a time might be seen two Irishmen, who had got drunk together, leaving a fair or market, their arms about each other's necks, from whence they only removed them to kiss and hug one another more lovingly. Notwithstanding this, there is nothing more probable than that these identical two will enjoy the luxury of a mutual battle, by way of episode, and again proceed on their way, kissing and hugging as if nothing had happened to interrupt their friendship. All the usual effects of jollity and violence, fun and fighting, love and liquor, were, of course, to be seen, felt, heard, and understood on this day, in a manner much more remarkable than on common occasions; for it may be observed, that the national festivals of the Irish bring out their strongest points of character with peculiar distinctness.

The family of Frank M'Kenna were sitting down to their Christmas dinner; the good man had besought a blessing upon the comfortable and abundant fare of which they were about to partake, and nothing was amiss, save the absence of their younger son.

"Musha, where on earth can this boy be stayin'?" said the father: "I'm sure this, above all days in the year, is one he oughtin't to be from home an."

The mother was about to inform him of the son's having gone to the mountains, when the latter returned, breathless, pale, and horror-struck.

Rody eyed him keenly, and laid down the bit he was conveying to his mouth.

"Heavens above us!" exclaimed his mother, "what ails you?"

He only replied by dashing his hat upon the ground, and exclaiming, "Up wid yez!—up wid yez!—quit your dinners! Oh, Rody! what'll be done? Go down to Owen Reillaghan's—go 'way—go down—an' tell thim—Oh, *vick-na-hoie!* but this was the unfortunate day to us all? Mike Reillaghan is shot with my gun; she went off in his hand goin' over a snow wreath, an' he's lyin' dead in the mountains?"

The screams and the wailing which immediately rose in the family were dreadful. Mrs. M'Kenna almost fainted; and the father, after many struggles to maintain his firmness, burst into the bitter tears of disconsolation and affliction. Rody was calmer, but turned his eyes from one to another with a look of deep compassion, and again eyed Frank keenly and suspiciously.

Frank's eye caught his, and the glance which had surveyed him with such a scrutiny did not escape his observation. "Rody," said he, "do you go an' brake it to the Reillaghans: you're the best to do it; for, when we were settin' out, you saw that *he* carried the gun, an' not *me*."

"Thrue for you," said Rody; "I saw that, Frank, and can swear to it; but that's all I *did* see. I know nothing of what happened in the mountains."

"*Damnho sheery orth!** What do you mane, you villain?" exclaimed Frank, seizing the tongs, and attempting to strike him: "do you dar to suspect that I had any hand in it."

"*Wurrah dheelish,*† Frank," screamed the sisters, "are you goin' to murdher Rody?"

"*Murdher,*" he shouted, in a paroxysm of fury, "Why the curse o' God upon you all, what puts murdher into your heads? Is it my own family that's the first to charge me wid it?"

"Why, there's no one chargin' you wid it," replied Rody; "not one, whatever makes you take it to yourself."

"An' what did you look at me for, thin, the way you did? What did you look at me for, I say?"

"Is it any wondher," replied the servant coolly, "when you had sich a dreadful story to tell?"

"Go off," replied Frank, now hoarse with passion—"go off, an' tell the Reillaghans what happened; but, by all the books that ever was opened or shut, if you breathe a word about murdh—about—if you do, you villain, I'll be the death o' you!"

When Rody was gone on this melancholy errand, old M'Kenna first put the tongs, and everything he feared might be used as a weapon by his frantic son, out of his reach; he then took down the book on which he had the night before sworn so rash and mysterious an oath, and desired his son to look upon it.

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* Eternal perdition on you!
† Sweet Virgin!

"Frank," said he, solemnly, "you swore on that blessed book last night, that Mike Reillaghan never would be the husband of Peggy Gartland—*he's a corpse to-day!* Yes," he continued, "the good, the honest, the industhrious boy is"——his sobs became so loud and thick that he appeared almost suffocated. "Oh," said he, "may God pity *us!* As I hope to meet my blessed Savior, who was born on this day, I would rather you wor the corpse, an' not Mike Reillaghan!"

"I don't doubt that," said the son, fiercely; "you never showed me much *grah*,* sure enough."

"Did you ever desarve it?" replied the father. "Heaven above me knows it was too much kindness was showed you. When you ought to have been well corrected, you got your will an' your way, an' now see the upshot."

"Well," said the son, "it's the last day ever I'll stay in the family; thrate me as bad as you plase. I'll take the king's bounty, an' list, if I live to see to-morrow."

"Oh, thin, in the name o' Goodness, do so," said the father; "an' so far from previntin' you, we'll bless you when you're gone, for goin'."

"Arrah, Frank, aroon," said Mrs. M'Kenna, who was now recovered, "maybe, afther all, it was only an accident: sure we often hard of sich things. Don't you reminber Squire Elliott's son, that shot himself by accident, out fowlin'? Frank, can you clear yourself before us?"

"Ah, Alley! Alley!" exclaimed the father, wiping away his tears, "don't you reminber his *oath*, last night?"

"What oath?" inquired the son, with an air of suprise—"What oath, last night? I know I was drunk last night, but I reminber nothing about an oath."

"Do you deny it, you hardened boy?"

"I *do* deny it; an' I'm *not* a hardened boy. What do you all mane? do you want to dhrive me mad? I know nothin' about any oath last night;" replied the son in a loud voice.

The grief of the mother and daughters was loud during the pauses of the conversation. Micaul, the eldest son, sat beside his father in tears.

"Frank," said he, "many an advice I gave you between ourselves, and you know how you tuck them. When you'd stale the oats, an' the meal, and the phaties, an' hay, at night, to have money for your cards an' dhrinkin', I kept it back, an' said nothin' about it. I wish I hadn't done so, for it wasn't for your good: but it was my desire to have as much pace and quietness as possible."

"Frank," said the father, eyeing him solemnly, "it's *possible* that you *do* forget the oath you made last night, for you war in liquor: I would give the wide world that it was thrue. Can you now, in the presence of God, clear yourself of havin' act or part in the death of Mike Reillaghan?"

"What 'ud ail me," said the son, "if I liked?"

"Will you do it now for our satisfaction, an' take a load of misery off of our hearts? It's the laste you may do, if you *can* do it. In the presence of the great God, will you clear yourself now?"

"I suppose," said the son, "I'll have to clear myself to-morrow, an' there's no use in my doin' it more that wanst. When the time comes, I'll do it."

The father put his hands on his eyes, and groaned alond: so deep was his affliction, that the tears trickled through his fingers during this fresh burst of sorrow. The son's refusal to satisfy them renewed the grief of all, as well as of the father: it rose again, louder than before, whilst young Frank sat opposite the door, silent and sullen.

It was now dark, but the night was calm and agreeable. M'Kenna's family felt the keen affliction which we have endeavored to describe; the dinner was put hastily aside, and the festive spirit peculiar to this night became changed into one of gloom and sorrow. In this state they sat, when the voice of grief was heard loud in the distance; the strong cry of men, broken and abrupt, mingled with the shrieking wail of female lamentation.

The M'Kennas started, and Frank's countenance assumed an expression which it would be difficult to describe. There was, joined to his extreme paleness, a restless, apprehensive, and determined look; each trait apparently struggling for the ascendancy in his character, and attempting to stamp his countenance with its own expression.

"Do you hear *that?*" said his father. "Oh, musha, Father of heaven, look down an' support that family this night! Frank if you take my advice, you'll have their sight; for surely if they brain you on the spot, who could blame them?"

"Why ought I have their sight?" replied Frank. "I tell you all that I had no hand in his death. The gun went off by accident as he was crassin' a wreath o' snow. I was afore him, and when I heard the report, an' turned round, there he lay, shot an' bleedin'. I thought it mighta't signify, but on lookin' at him closely, I found him quite dead. I then ran home, never touchin' the gun at all, till his family and the neighbors 'ud see him. Surely, it's no wondher I'd be distracted in

* Affection.

my mind; but that's no rason you should all open upon me as if *I* had murdhered the boy!"

"Well," said the father, "I'm glad to hear you say even that much. I hope it maybe betther wid you than we all think; an' oh! grant it, sweet mother o' Heaven, this day! Now carry yourself quietly afore the people. If they abuse you, don't fly into a passion, but make allowance for their grief and misery."

In the mean time, the tumult was deepening as it approached M'Kenna's house. The report had almost instantly spread through in the village which Reillaghan lived; and the loud cries of his father and brothers, who, in the wildness of their despair, continually called upon his name, had been heard at the houses which lay scattered over the neighborhood. Their inmates, on listening to such unusual sounds, sought the direction from which they proceeded, for it was quite evident that some terrible calamity had befallen the Reillaghans, in consequence of the son's name being borne on the blasts of night with such loud and overwhelming tones of grief and anguish. The assembly, on reaching M'Kenna's, might, therefore, be numbered at thirty, including the females of Reillaghan's immediate family, who had been strung by the energy of despair to a capability of bearing any fatigue, or rather to an utter insensibility of all bodily suffering.

We must leave the scene which ensued to the reader's imagination, merely observing, that as neither the oath which young Frank had taken on the preceding night, nor indeed the peculiar bitterness of his enmity towards the deceased, was known by the Reillaghans, they did not, therefore, discredit the account of his death which they had heard.

Their grief was exclamatory and full of horror: consisting of prolonged shrieks on the part of the women, and frantic howlings on that of the men. The only words they uttered were his name, with epithets and ejaculations. *Oh a Vichaul dheelish—a Vichaul dheelish—a bouchal bane machree—wuil thu marra—wuil thu marra?* "Oh, Michael, the beloved—Michael, the beloved—fair boy of our heart—are you dead?—are you dead?"

From M'Kenna's the crowd, at the head of which was Darby More, proceeded towards the mountains, many of them bearing torches, such as had been used on their way to the Midnight Mass. The moon had disappeared, the darkness was deepening, and the sky was overhung with black heavy clouds, that gave a stormy character to scenery in itself remarkably wild and gloomy.

Young M'Kenna and the pilgrim led them to the dreary waste in which the corpse lay. It was certainly an awful spectacle to behold these unhappy people toiling up the mountain solitude at such an hour, their convulsed faces thrown into striking relief by the light of the torches, and their cries rising in wild irregular cadences upon the blast which swept over them with a dismal howl, in perfect character with their affliction, and the circumstances which produced it.

On arriving within view of the corpse, there was a slight pause; for, notwithstanding the dreadful paroxysms of their grief, there was something still more startling and terrible in contemplating the body thus stretched out in the stillness of death, on the lonely mountain. The impression it produced was peculiarly solemn: the grief was hushed for a moment, but only for a moment; it rose again wilder than before, and in a few minutes the friends of Reillaghan were about to throw themselves upon the body, under the strong impulse of sorrow and affection.

The mendicant, however, stepped forward—"Hould back," said he; "it's hard to ax yez to do it, but still you must. Let the neighbors about us here examine the body, in ordher to see whether it mighn't be possible that the dacent boy came by his death from somebody else's hand than his own. Hould forrid the lights," said he, "till we see how he's lyin', an' how the gun's lyin'."

"Darby," said youmg Frank, "I can't but be oblaged to you for that. You're the last man livin' ought to say what you said, afther you seein' us both forget an' forgive this day. I call upon you now to say whether you didn't see him an' me shakin' hands, and buryin' all bad feelin' between us?"

"I'll spake to you jist now," replied the mendicant. "See here, neighbors, observe this; the boy was shot in the breast, an' here's not a snow wreath, but a weeshy dhrift that a child 'ud step across widout an accident. I tell you all, that I suspect foul play in this."

"H——'s fire," exclaimed the brother of the deceased, "what's that you say? What! Can it be—can it—can it—that you *murdhered* him, you villain, that's known to be nothin' but a villain? But I'll *do* for you!" He snatched at the gun as he spoke, and would probably have taken ample and fearful vengeance upon Frank, had not the mendicant and others prevented him.

"Have sinse," said Darby; "this is not the way to behave, man; lave the gun lyin' where she is, till we see more about us. Stand back there, an' let me look at these marks: ay, about five yards—there's the

track of feet about five yards before him—here they turn about, an' go back. Here, Savior o' the world! see here! the mark, clane an' clear, of the butt o' the gun! Now if that boy stretched afore us had the gun in *his* hand the time she went off, could the mark of it be *here?* Bring me down the gun—an' the curse o' God upon her for an unlucky thief, whoever had her! It's thrue!—it's too thrue!" he continued—"the man that had the gun stood on *this spot*."

"It's a falsity," said Frank; "it's a damnable falsity. Rody Teague, I call upon you to spake for me. Didn't you see, when we went out to the hills, that it was Mike carried the gun, an' not me?"

"I did," replied Rody. "I can swear to that."

"Ay," exclaimed Frank, with triumph; "an' you yourself, Darby, saw us, as I said, makin' up whatsomever little differences there was betwixt us."

"I did," replied the mendicant, sternly; "but I heard you say, no longer ago than last night—*say!*—why you *swhore* it, man alive!—that if *you* wouldn't have Peggy Gartland, *he* never should. In your own stable I heard it, an' I was the manes of disappointin' you an' your gang, when you thought to take away the girl by force. You're well known too often to carry a fair face when the heart under it is black wid you."

"All I can say is," observed young Reillaghan, "that if it comes out agin you that you played him foul, all the earth won't save your life; I'll have your heart's blood, if I should hang for it a thousand times."

This dialogue was frequently interrupted by the sobbings and clamor of the women, and the detached conversation of some of the men, who were communicating to each other their respective opinions upon the melancholy event which had happened.

Darby More now brought Reillaghan's father aside, and thus addressed him:—

"*Gluntho!**—to tell God's thruth, I've sthrong suspicions that your son was murdhered. This sacred thing that I put the crass upon people's breast wid, saves people from *hangin'* an' unnatural deaths. Frank spoke to me last night, no longer ago, to come up an' mark it an' *him* to-morrow. My opinion is, that he intinded to murdher him at that time, an' wanted to have a protection agin what might happen to him in regard o' the black deed."

"Can we prove it agin him?" inquired the disconsolate father: "I know it'll be hard, as there was no one present but themselves; an' if he did it, surely he'll not confess it."

"We may make him do it maybe," said the mendicant; "the villain's easily frightened, an' fond o' charms an' *pisthrogues*,* an' sich holy things, for all his wickedness. Don't say a word. We'll take him by surprise; I'll call upon him to TOUCH THE CORPSE. Make them women—an' och, it's hard to expect it—make them stop clappin' their hands, an' cryin'; an' let there be a dead silence, if you can."

During this and some other observations made by Darby, Frank had got the gun in his possession; and, whilst seeming to be engaged in looking at it, and examining the lock, he actually contrived to reload it without having been observed.

"Now, neighbors," said Darby, "hould your tongues for a weeshy start, till I ax Frank M'Kenna a question or two. Frank M'Kenna, as you hope to meet God, at Judgment, did you take his life that's lyin' a corpse before us?"

"I did *not*," replied M'Kenna; "I could clear myself on all the books in Europe, that he met his death as I tould you; an' more nor that," he added, dropping upon his knees, and uncovering his head, "*may I die widout priest or prayer—widout help, hope, or happiness*, UPON THE SPOT WHERE HE'S NOW STRETCHED, *if I murdhered or shot him.*"

"I say amin to that," replied Darby; "*Oris Doxis Gloriosis!*—So far, that's right, if the blood of him's not an you. But there's one thing more to be done: will you walk over *undher the eye of God*, an' TOUCH THE CORPSE? Hould back, neighbors, an' let him come over alone: I an' Owen Reillaghan will stand here wid the lights, to see if the corpse bleeds."

"Give me, too, a light," said M'Kenna's father; "my son must get fair play, any way: *I* must be a witness myself to it, an' will, too."

"It's but rasonable," said Owen Reillaghan; "come over beside Darby an' myself: I'm willin' that your son should stand or fall by what'll happen."

Frank's father, with a taper in his hand, immediately went, with a pale face and trembling steps, to the place appointed for him beside the corpse, where he took his stand.

When young M'Kenna heard Darby's last question he seemed as if seized by an inward spasm: the start which he gave, and his gaspings for breath, were visible to all present. Had he seen the spirit of the murdered man before him, his horror could not have been greater; for this ceremony had been

* Listen.

* Superstitious spells and witcheries.

considered a most decisive test in cases of suspicion of murder—an ordeal, indeed, to which few murderers wished to submit themselves. In addition to this we may observe, that Darby's knowledge of the young man's character was correct; with all his crimes he was weak-minded and superstitious.

He stood silent for some time after the ordeal had been proposed to him; his hair became literally erect, with the dread of this formidable scrutiny, his cheeks turned white, and the cold perspiration fell from him in large drops. All his strength appeared to have departed from him; he stood, as if hesitating, and even energy necessary to stand seemed to be the result of an effort.

"Remember," said Darby, pulling out the large crucifix which was attached to his beads, "that the eye of God is upon you. If you've committed the murdher, thrimble; if not, Frank, you've little to fear in touchin' the corpse."

Frank had not uttered a word; but, leaning himself on the gun, he looked wildly around him, cast his eyes up to the stormy sky, then turned them with a dead glare upon the corpse and the crucifix.

"Do you confiss the murdher?" said Darby.

"Murdher!" rejoined Frank: "no! I confess *no* murdher: you villain, do you *want* to make me guilty;—do you want to make me guilty, you deep villain?"

It seemed as if the current of his thoughts and feelings had taken a new direction, though it is probable that the excitement which appeared to be rising within him was only the courage of fear.

"You all wish to find me guilty," he added: "but I'll show you that I'm not guilty."

He immediately walked towards the corpse, and stooping down, touched the body with one hand, holding the gun in the other. The interest of that moment was intense, and all eyes were strained towards the spot. Behind the corpse, at each shoulder—for the body lay against a small snow-wreath, in a recumbent position—stood the father of the deceased and the father of the accused, each wound up by feelings of a directly opposite character to a pitch of dreadful excitement. Over them, in his fantastic dress and white beard, stood the tall mendicant, who held up his crucifix to Frank, with an awful menace upon his strongly marked countenance. At a little distance to the left of the body stood the other men who were assembled, having their torches held aloft in their hands, and their forms bent towards the corpse, their faces indicating expectation, dread, and horror. The female relations of the deceased stood nearest his remains, their torches extended in the same direction, their visages exhibiting the passions of despair and grief in their wildest characters, but as if arrested by some supernatural object immediately before their eyes, that produced a new and more awful feeling than grief. When the body was touched, Frank stood as if himself bound by a spell to the spot. At length he turned his eyes to the mendicant, who stood silent and motionless, with the crucifix still extended in his hand.

"Are you satisfied *now?*" said he.

"That's wanst," said the pilgrim: "you're to touch it three times."

Frank hesitated a moment, but immediately stooped again, and touched it twice in succession; but it remained still and unchanged as before! His father broke the silence by a fervent ejaculation of thanksgiving to God for the vindication of his son's character which he had just witnessed.

"Now!" exclaimed M'Kenna, in a loud, exulting tone, "you all see that I did *not* murdher him!"

"You DID!" said a voice, which was immediately recognized to be that of the deceased.

M'Kenna shrieked aloud, and immediately fled with his gun towards the mountains, pursued by Reillaghan's other son. The crowd rushed in towards the body, whilst sorrow, affright, exultation, and wonder, marked the extraordinary scene which ensued.

"Queen o' Heaven!" exclaimed old M'Kenna, "who could believe this only they hard it?"

"The murdher wouldn't lie?" shrieked out Mrs. Reillaghan—"the murdher wouldn't lie!—the blood o' my darlin' son spoke it!—his blood spoke it; or God, or his angel, spoke it for him!"

"It's beyant anything ever known!" some exclaimed, "to come back an' tell the deed upon his murdherer! God presarve us, an' save us, this night! I wish we wor at home out o' this wild place!"

Others said they had heard of such things; but this having happened before their own eyes, surpassed anything that could be conceived.

The mendicant now advanced, and once more mysteriously held up his crucifix.

"Keep silence!" said he, in a solemn, sonorous voice: "Keep silence, I say, an' kneel down all o' yez before what I've in my hand. If you want to know who or what the voice came from, I can tell yez:—IT WAS THE CRUCIFIX THAT SPOKE!!"

This communication was received with a feeling of devotion too deep for words. His injunction was instantly complied with: they

knelt, and bent down in worship before it in the mountain wilds.

"Ay," said he, "little ye know the virtues o' that crucifix! It was consecrated by a friar so holy that it was well known there was but the shadow of him upon the earth, the other part of him bein' night an' day in heaven among the archangels. It shows the power of this Crass, any way; an you may tell your frinds, that I'll sell bades touched wid it to the faithful at sixpence apiece. They can be put an your *padareens* as Dicades, wid a blessin'. Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin! Let us now bear the corpse home, until it's dressed and laid out dacently as it ought to be."

The body was then placed upon an easy litter, formed of great-coats buttoned together, and supported by the strongest men present, who held it one or two at each corner. In this manner they advanced at a slow pace, until they reached Owen Reillaghan's house, where they found several of the country-people assembled, waiting for their return.

It was not until the body had been placed in an inner room, where none were admitted until it should be laid out, that the members of the family first noticed the prolonged absence of Reillaghan's other son. The moment it had been alluded to, they were seized with new alarm and consternation.

"*Hanim an diouol!*" said Reillaghan, bitterly, in Irish, "but I doubt the red-handed villain has cut short the lives of my *two* brave sons! I only hope he may stop in the country: I'm not widout friends an' followers that 'ud think it no sin in a just cause to pay him in his own coin, an' to take from him an' his a pound o' blood for every ounce of ours they shed."

A number of his friends instantly volunteered to retrace their way to the mountains, and search for the other son. "There's little danger of his life," said a relation; "it's a short time Frank 'ud stand him particularly as the gun wasn't charged. We'll go, at any rate, for 'fraid he might lose himself in the mountains, or walk into some o' the lochs on his way home. We had as good bring some whiskey wid us, for he may want it badly."

While they had been speaking, however, the snow began to fall and the wind to blow in a manner that promised a heavy and violent storm. They proceeded, notwithstanding, on their search, and on whistling for the dog, discovered that he was not to be found.

"He went wid us to the mountains, I know," said the former speaker; "an' I think it likely he'll be found wid Owen, wherever he is. Come, boys step out: it's a dismal night, any way, the Lord knows—och, och!" And with sorrowful but vigorous steps they went in quest of the missing brother.

Nothing but the preternatural character of the words which were so mysteriously pronounced immediately before Owen's pursuit of M'Kenna, could have prevented that circumstance, together with the flight of the latter, from exciting greater attention among the crowd. His absence, however, now that they had time to reflect on it, produced unusual alarm, not only on account of M'Kenna's bad character, but from the apprehension of Owen being lost in the mountains.

The inextinguishable determination of revenge with which an Irishman pursues any person who, either directly or indirectly, takes the life of a near relation, or invades the peace of his domestic affections, was strongly illustrated by the nature of Owen's pursuit after M'Kenna, considering the appalling circumstances under which he undertook it. It is certainly more than probable that M'Kenna, instead of flying would have defended himself with the loaded gun, had not his superstitious fears been excited by the words which so mysteriously charged him with the murder. The direction he accidentally took led both himself and his pursuer into the wildest recesses of the mountains. The chase was close and desperate, and certainly might have been fatal to Reillaghan, had M'Kenna thought of using the gun. His terror, however, exhausted him, and overcame his presence of mind to such a degree, that so far from using the weapon in his defence, he threw it aside, in order to gain ground upon his pursuer. This he did but slowly, and the pursuit was as yet uncertain. At length Owen found the distance between himself and his brother's murderer increasing; the night was dark, and he himself feeble and breathless: he therefore gave over all hope of securing him, and returned to follow those who had accompanied him to the spot where his brother's body lay. It was when retracing his path that the nature of his situation occurred to him: the snow had not began to fall, but the appearance of the sky was strongly calculated to depress him.

Every person knows with what remarkable suddenness snow storms descend. He had scarcely advanced homewards more than twenty minutes, when the gray tempest spread its dusky wings over the heavens, and a darker shade rapidly settled upon the white hills—now becoming indistinct in the gloom of the air, which was all in commotion,

and groaned aloud with the noise of the advancing storm. When he saw the deep gloom, and felt the chilling coldness pierce his flesh so bitterly, he turned himself in the direction which led by the shortest possible line towards his father's house. He was at this time nearly three miles from any human habitation; and as he looked into the darkness, his heart began to palpitate with an alarm almost bordering on hopelessness. His dog, which had, up till this boding change, gone on before him, now partook in his master's apprehensions, and trotted anxiously at his feet.

In the meantime the winds howled in a melancholy manner along the mountains, and carried with them from the upper clouds the rapidly descending sleet. The storm-current, too, was against him, and as the air began to work in dark confusion, he felt for the first time how utterly helpless a thing he was under the fierce tempest in this dreadful solitude.

A length the rushing sound which he first heard in the distance approached him in all its terrors; and in a short time he was staggering, like a drunken man, under the incessant drifts which swept over him and about him. Nothing could exceed the horrors of the atmosphere at this moment. From the surface of the earth the whirlwinds swept immense snow-clouds that rose up instantaneously, and shot off along the brows and ravines of the solitary wild, sometimes descending into the valleys, and again rushing up the almost perpendicular sides of the mountains, with a speed, strength, and noise, that mocked at everything possessing life; whilst in the air the tumult and the darkness continued to deepen in the most awful manner. The winds seemed to meet from every point of the compass, and the falling drifts flew backward and forward in every direction; the cold became intense, and Owen's efforts to advance homewards were beginning to fail. He was driven about like an autumn leaf, and his dog, which kept close to him, had nearly equal difficulty in proceeding. No sound but that of the tempest could now be heard, except the screaming of the birds as they were tossed on sidewing through the commotion which prevailed.

In this manner was Owen whirled about, till he lost all knowledge of his local situation, being ignorant whether he advanced towards home or otherwise. His mouth and eyes were almost filled with driving sleet; sometimes a cloud of light sandlike drift would almost bury him, as it crossed, or followed, or opposed his path; sometimes he would sink to the middle in a snow-wreath, from which he extricated himself with great difficulty; and among the many terrors by which he was beset, that of walking into a lake, or over a precipice, was not the least paralyzing. Owen was a young man of great personal strength and activity, for the possession of which, next to his brother, he had been distinguished among his companions; but he now became totally exhausted; the chase after M'Kenna, his former exertion, his struggles, his repeated falls, his powerful attempts to get into the vicinity of life, the desperate strength he put forth in breaking through the vortex of the whirlwind, all had left him faint, and completely at the mercy of the elements.

The cold sleet scales were now frozen to ice on his cheeks; his clothes were completely incrusted with the hard snow, which had been beating into them by the strength of the blast, and his joints were getting stiff and benumbed. The tumult of the tempest, the whirling of the snow-clouds, and the thick snow, now falling, and again tossed upwards by sudden gusts to the sky, deprived him of all power of reflection, and rendered him, though not altogether blind or deaf, yet incapable of forming any distinct opinion upon what he saw or heard. Still, actuated by the unconscious principle of self preservation, he tottered on, cold, feeble, and breathless, now driven back like a reed by the strong rush of the storm, or prostrated almost to suffocation under the whirlwinds, that started up like savage creatures of life about him.

During all this time his faithful dog never abandoned him; but his wild howlings only heightened the horrors of his situation. When he fell, the affectionate creature would catch the flap of his coat, or his arm, in his teeth, and attempt to raise him; and as long as his master had presence of mind, with the unerring certainty of instinct, he would turn him, when taking a wrong direction, into that which led homewards.

Owen was not, however, reduced to this state without experiencing sensations of which no language could convey adequate notions. At first he struggled heroically with the storm; but when utter darkness threw its impervious shades over the desolation around him, and the fury of the elements grew so tremendous, all the strong propensities to life became roused, the convulsive throes of a young heart on the steep of death threw a wild and corresponding energy into his vigorous frame, and occasioned him to cling to existence with a tenacity rendered still stronger by the terrible consciousness of his unprepared state, and the horror of being plunged into eternity

unsupported by the rites of his church, whilst the crime of attempting to take away human life lay on his soul. Those domestic affections, too, which in Irishmen are so strong, became excited; his home, his fireside, the faces of his kindred, already impressed with affliction for the death of one brother, were conjured up in the powerful imagery of natural feeling, the fountains of which were opened in his heart, and his agonizing cry for life rose wildly from the mountain desert upon the voice of the tempest. Then, indeed, when the gulf of a twofold death yawned before him, did the struggling spirit send up its shrieking prayer to heaven with desperate impulse. These struggles, however, as well as those of the body, became gradually weaker as the storm tossed him about, and with the chill of its breath withered him into total helplessness. He reeled on, stiff and insensible, without knowing whither he went, falling with every blast, and possessing scarcely any faculty of life except mere animation.

After about an hour, however, the storm subsided, and the clouds broke away into light, fleecy columns before the wind; the air, too, became less cold, and the face of nature more visible. The driving sleet and hard, granular snow now ceased to fall; but were succeeded by large feathery flakes, that descended slowly upon the still air.

Had this trying scene lasted much longer, Owen must soon have been a stiffened corpse. The child-like strength, however, which just enabled him to bear up without sinking in despair to die, now supported him when there was less demand for energy. The dog, too, by rubbing itself against him, and licking his face, enabled him, by a last effort, to recollect himself, so as to have a glimmering perception of his situation. His confidence returned, and with a greater degree of strength. He shook, as well as he could, the snow from his clothes, where it had accumulated heavily, and felt himself able to proceed, slowly, it is true, towards his father's house, which he had nearly reached when he met his friends, who were once more hurrying out to the mountains in quest of him, having been compelled to return in consequence of the storm, when they had first set out. The whiskey, their companionship, and their assistance soon revived him. One or two were despatched home before them, to apprise the afflicted family of his safety; and the intelligence was hailed with melancholy joy by the Reillaghans. A faint light played for a moment over the gloom which had settled among them, but it was brief; for on ascertaining the safety of their second son, their grief rushed back with renewed violence, and nothing could be heard but the voice of sorrow and affliction.

Darby More, who had assumed the control of the family, did everything in his power to console them; his efforts, however, were viewed with a feeling little short of indignation.

"Darby," said the afflicted mother, "you have, undher God, in some sense, my fair son's death to account for. You had a dhrame, but you wouldn't tell it to us. If you had, my boy might be livin' this day, for it would be asy for him to be an his guard."

"Musha, poor woman," replied Darby, "sure you don't know, you afflicted crathur, what you're spakin' about. Tell my dhrame! Why, thin, it's myself towld it to him from beginning to end, and that whin we wor goin' to mass this day itself. I desired him, on the paril of his life, not to go out a tracin' or toards the mountains, good or bad."

"You said you had a prayer that 'ud keep it back," observed the mother, "an' why didn't you say it?"

"I did say it," replied Darby, "an' that afore a bit crassed my throath this mornin'; but, you see, he broke his promise of not goin' to the mountains, an' *that* was what made the dhrame come thrue."

"Well, well, Darby, I beg your pardon, an' God's pardon, for judgin' you in the wrong. Oh, wurrah sthrue! my brave son, is it there you're lyin' wid us, avournee machree!" and she again renewed her grief.

"Oh, thin, I'm sure I forgive you," said Darby: "but keep your grief in for a start, till I say the *De Prowhinjis* over him, for the pace an' repose of his sowl. Kneel down all of yez."

He repeated this prayer in language which it would require one of Edward Irving's adepts in the Unknown Tongues to interpret. When he had recited about half of it, Owen, and those who had gone to seek him, entered the house, and after the example of the others, reverently knelt down until he finished it.

Owen's appearance once more renewed their grief. The body of his brother had been removed to a bed beyond the fire in the kitchen; and when Owen looked upon the features of his beloved companion, he approached, and stooped down to kiss his lips. He was still too feeble, however, to bend by his own strength; and it is also probable that the warm air of the house relaxed him. Be this, however, as it may, he fell forward, but supported himself by his hands, which were placed upon the body; a deep groan was heard, and the apparently dead man opened his eyes, and feebly exclaimed—"A dhrink? a dhrink!"

Darby More, had, on concluding the *De profundis*, seated himself beside the bed on which Mike lay; but on hearing the groan, and the call for drink, he leaped rapidly to his legs and exclaimed, "My sowl to hell an' the divil, Owen Reillaghan, but your son's alive!! Off wid two or three of yez, as hard as the divil can dhrive yez, for the priest an' docthor!! Off wid yez! ye damned lazy spalpeens, aren't ye near there by this! Give us my cant! Are yez gone? Oh, by this and by that — hell — eh — aren't yez gone?" but ere he could finish the sentence they had set out.

"Now," he exclaimed in a voice whose tremendous tones were strongly at variance with his own injunctions—"Now, neighbors, d——n yez, keep silence. Mrs. Reillaghan, get a bottle of whiskey an' a mug o' wather. Make haste. *Hanim an diouol!* don't be all night!"

The poor mother, however, could not stir; the unexpected revulsion of feeling which she had so suddenly experienced was more than she could sustain. A long fainting-fit was the consequence, and Darby's commands were obeyed by the wife of a friendly neighbor.

The mendicant immediately wetted Mike's lips, and poured some spirits, copiously diluted with water, down his throat; after which he held the whiskey-bottle, like a connoisseur, between himself and the light. "I hope," said he, "this whiskey is the ra-al crathur." He put the bottle to his mouth as he spoke, and on holding it a second time before his eye, he shook his head complacently—"Ay," said he, "if anything could bring the dead back to this world, my sowl to glory, but *that* would. Oh, thin, it would give the dead life, sure enough!" He put it once more to his lips, from which it was not separated without relinquishing a considerable portion of its contents.

"*Dhea Grashthias!*" he exclaimed; "throth, I find myself the betther o' that sup, in regard that it's good for this touch o' configuration that I'm throubled wid inwardly! Oxis Doxis Glorioxis? Amin!" These words he spoke in a low, placid voice, lest the wounded man might be discomposed by his observations.

The rapidity with which the account of Mike's restoration to life spread among the neighbors was surprising. Those who had gone for the priest and doctor communicated it to all they met, and these again to others: so that in a short time the house was surrounded by great numbers of their acquaintances, all anxious to hear the particulars more minutely.

Darby, who never omitted an opportunity of impressing the people with a belief in his own sanctity, and in that of his crucifix came out among them, and answered their inquiries by a solemn shake of his head, and a mysterious indication of his finger to the crucifix, but said nothing more. This was enough. The murmur of reverence and wonder spread among them, and ere long there were few present who did not believe that Reillaghan had been restored to life by a touch of Darby's crucifix; an opinion which is not wholly exploded until this day.

Peggy Garthand, who fortunately had not heard the report of her lover's death until it was contradicted by the account of his revival, now entered, and by her pale countenance betrayed strong symptoms of affection and sympathy. She sat by his side, gazing mournfully on his features, and with difficulty suppressed her tears.

For some time before her arrival, the mother and sisters of Mike had been removed to another room, lest the tumultuous expression of their mingled joy and sorrow might disturb him. The fair, artless girl, although satisfied that he still lived, entertained no hopes of his recovery; but she ventured, in a low, trembling voice, to inquire from Darby some particulars of the melancholy transaction which was likely to deprive her of her betrothed husband.

"Where did the shot strike him, Darby?"

"Clane through the body, avillish; jist where Captain Cramer was shot at the battle o' Bunker's Hill, where he lay as good as dead for twelve hours, and was near bein' berried a *corp*, an' him alive all the time, only that as they were pullin' him off o' the cart, he gev a shout, an' thin, *a colleen dhas*, they began to think he might be livin' still. Sure enough, he was, too, an' lived successfully, till he died wid dhrinkin' brandy, as a cure for the gout; the Lord be praised!"

"Where's the villain, Darby?"

"He's in the mountains, no doubt, where he had thim to fight wid that's a match for him—God, an' the dark storm that fell awhile agone. *They'll* pay him, never fear, for his thrachery to the noble boy that chastised him for your sake, *acushla oge!* * Sthrong was your hand, *a Veehal*, an' ginerous was your affectionate heart; an' well you loved the fair girl that's sitting beside you! Throth, Peggy, my heart's black with sarrow about the darlin' young man. Still, life's in him; an' while there's life there's hope; glory be to God!"

The eulogium of the pilgrim, who was, in truth, much attached to Mike, moved the heart of the affectionate girl, whose love and

* Acushla oge—my young pulse!

sympathy were pure as the dew on the grass-blade and now as easily affected by the slightest touch. She remained silent for a time, but secretly glided her hand towards that of her lover, which she clasped in hers, and by a gentle and timid pressure, strove to intimate to him that she was beside him. Long, but unavailing, was the struggle to repress her sorrow; her bosom heaved; she gave two or three loud sobs, and burst into tears and lamentations.

"Don't cry, avourneen," whispered Darby—"Don't cry; I'll warrant you that Darby More will ate share of your weddin' dinner an' his, yit. There's a small taste of color comin' to his face, which, I think, undher God, is owin' to my touchin' him wid the cruciwhix. Don't cry, a colleen, he'll get over it an' more than it, yit, a colleen bawn!"

Darby then hurried her into the room where Mike's mother and sisters were. On entering she threw herself into the arms of the former, laid her face on her bosom, and wept bitterly. This renewed the mother's grief: she clasped the interesting girl in a sorrowful embrace; so did his sisters. They threw themselves into each other's arms, and poured forth those touching, but wild bursts of pathetic language, which are always heard when the heart is struck by some desolating calamity.

"Hush!" said a neighboring man who was present; "hush! it's a shame for yez, an' the boy not dead yit."

"I'm not ashamed," said Peggy: "why should I be ashamed of bein' sarry for the likes of Mike Reillaghan? Where was his aquil? Wasn't all hearts upon him? Didn't the very poor on the road bless him whin he passed? Who ever had a bad word agin him, but the villain that murdhered him? Murdhered him! Heaven above! an' why? For *my* sake! For my sake the pride of the parish is laid low! Ashamed! Is it for cryin' for my betrothed husband, that was sworn to me, an' I to him, before the eye o' God above us? This day week I was to be his bride; an' now—now—Oh, Vread Reillaghan, take me to you! Let me go to his mother! My heart's broke, Vread Reillaghan! Let me go to her: nobody's grief for him is like ours. You're his mother, an' I'm his wife in the sight o' God. Proud was I out of him: my eyes brightened when they seen him, an' my heart got light when I heard his voice; an' now, what's afore me?—what's afore me but sorrowful days an' a broken heart!"

Mrs. Reillaghan placed her tenderly and affectionately beside her, on the bed whereon she herself sat. With the corner of her handkerchief she wiped the tears from the weeping girl, although her own flowed fast. Her daughters, also, gathered about her, and in language of the most endearing kind, endeavored to soothe and console her.

"He may live yet, Peggy, avourneen," said his mother; "my brave and noble son may live yet, an' you may be both happy! Don't be cryin' so much, *asthore galh machree;** sure he's in the hands o' God, avourneen; an' your young heart won't be broke, I hope. Och, the Lord pity her young feelins!" exclaimed the mother, affected even by the consolation she herself offered to the betrothed bride of her son: "is it any wondher she'd sink undher sich a blow! for, sure enough, where was the likes of him? No, asthore; it's no wondher—it's no wondher! lonesome will your heart be widout him; for I know what he'd feel if a hair of *your* head was injured."

"Oh, I know it—I know it! There was music in his voice, an' *grah*† and kindness to every crathur on God's earth; but to me—to me—oh, no one knew his love to me, but myself an' God. Oh, if I was dead, that I couldn't feel this, or if my life could save his! Why didn't the villain,—the black villain, wid God's curse upon him—why didn't he shoot me, thin I could never be Mike's wife, an' his hand o' murdher might be satisfied? If he had, I wouldn't feel as I do. Ay! the warmest, an' the best, an' the dearest blood of my heart, I could shed for him. That heart was his, an' he had a right to it. Our love wasn't of yistherday: afore the links of my hair came to my showldhers I loved him, an' thought of him; an many a time he could me that I was his first! God knows he was my first, an' he will be my last, let him live or die."

"Well, but, Peggy achora," said his sister, "maybe it's sinful to be cryin' this way, an' he not dead."

"God forgive me, if it's a sin," replied Peggy; "I'd not wish to do anything sinful or displasin' to God; an' I'll sthrive to keep down my grief: I will, as well as I can."

She put her hands on her face, and by an effort of firmness, subdued the tone of her grief to a low, continuous murmur of sorrow.

"An' along wid that," said the sister, "maybe the noise is disturbin' him. Darby put us all out o' the kitchen to have pace an' quietness about him."

"An' 'twas well thought o' Darby," she replied; "an' may the blessin' o' God rest upon him for it! A male's mate or a night's lodgin' he'll never want under my father's

* The beloved white (girl) of my heart.
† Affection.

roof for that goodness to *him*. I'll be quiet thin."

There was now a short pause, during which those in the room heard a smack, accompanied by the words, "*Dheah Grashthias!* Throth I'm the betther o' that sup, so I am. Nothin' keeps this thief of a configuration down but it. *Dheah Grashthias* for that! Oh, thin, this *is* the stuff! It warms the body to the top o' the nails!"

"Don't spare it, Darby," said old Reillaghan, "if it does you good."

"Avourneen," said Darby, "it's only what gives me a little relief I ever take, *jist by way of cure*, for it's the only thing does me good, when I am this-a-way."

Several persons in the neighborhood were, in the mean time, flocking to Reillaghan's house. A worthy man, accompanied by his wife, entered as the pilgrim had concluded. The woman, in accordance with the custom of the country, raised the Irish cry, in a loud melancholy wail, that might be heard at a great distance.

Darby, who prided himself on maintaining silence, could not preserve the consistency of his character upon this occasion, any more than on that of Mike's recent symptoms of life.

"Your sowl to the divil, you faggot!" he exclaimed, "what do you mane? The divil whip the tongue out o' you! are you going to come here only to disturb the boy that's not dead yet? Get out o' this, an' be asy wid your skhreechin', or by the crass that died for us, only you're a woman, I'd tumble you wid a lick o' my cant. Keep asy, you vagrant, an' the dacent boy not dead yet. Hell bellows you, what do you mane?"

"Not dead!" exclaimed the woman, with her body bent in the proper attitude, her hands extended, and the crying face turned with amazement to Darby. "Not dead! Wurrah, man alive, isn't he murdhered?"

"Hell resave the matther for that!" replied Darby. "I tell you he's livin' an' will live I hope, barrin' your skirlin' dhrives the life that's in him out of him. Go into the room there to the women, an' make yourself scarce out o' this, or by the padareens about me, I'll malivogue you."

"We can't be angry wid the dacent woman," observed old Reillaghan, "in regard that she came to show her friendship and respect."

"I'd be angry wid St. Pether," said Darby, "an' 'ud not scruple to give him a lick o' my c—— Lord presarve us! what was I goin' to say! Why, throth, I believe the little wits I had are all gone a shaughran! I must fast a Friday or two for the same words agin St. Pether. Oxis Doxis Gloriosis—Amin."

Hope is strong in love and in life. Peggy, now that grief had eased her heart of its load of accumulated sorrow, began to reflect upon Darby's anecdote of Captain Cramer, which she related to those about her. They all rejoiced to hear that it was possible to be wounded so severely and live. They also consoled and supported each other, and expressed their trust that Mike might also recover. The opinion of the doctor was waited for with such anxiety as a felon feels when the foreman of the jury hands down the verdict which consigns him to life or death.

Whether Darby's prescription was the result of chance or sagacity we know not. We are bound, however, to declare that Reillaghan's strength was in some degree restored, although the pain he suffered amounted to torture. The surgeon (who was also a physician, and, moreover, supplied his own medicines) and the priest, as they lived in the same town, both arrived together. The latter administered the rites of his church to him; and the former, who was a skilful man, left nothing undone to accomplish his restoration to health. He had been shot through the body with a *bullet*—a circumstance which was not known until the arrival of the surgeon. This gentlemen expressed much astonishment at his surviving the wound, but said that circumstances of a similar nature had occurred, particularly on the field of battle, although he admitted that they were few.

Darby, however, who resolved to have something like a decided opinion from him, without at all considering whether such a thing was possible, pressed him strongly upon the point.

"Arrah, blur-an-age, Docthor Swither, say one thing or other. Is he to live or die? Plain talk, Docthor, is all we want, an' no *feasthalagh*."*

"The bullet, I am inclined to think," replied the Doctor, "must either not have touched a vital part, or touched it only slightly. I have known cases similar, it is true; but it is impossible for me to pronounce a decisive opinion upon him just now."

"The divil resave the yarrib† ever I'll gather for you agin, so long as my name's Darby More, except you say either 'life' or 'death,'" said Darby, who forgot his character of sanctity altogether.

"Darby, achora," said Mrs. Reillaghan, "don't crass the gintleman, an' him sthrivin'

* Nonsense.

† Herb.—Men of Darby's cast were often in the habit of collecting rare medicinal plants for the apothecaries; and not bad botanists some of them were.

to do his best. Here, Paddy Gormly, bring some wather till the doethor washes his hands."

"Darby," replied the Doctor, to whom he was well known, "you are a good herbalist, but even although you should not serve me as usual in that capacity, yet I cannot say exactly either life or death. The case is too critical a one; but I do not despair; Darby, if that will satisfy you."

"More power to you, Doethor, achora. Hell-an-age, where's that bottle? bring it here. Thank you, Vread. Doethor, here's wishin' you all happiness, an' may you set Mike on his legs wanst more! See, Doethor—see, man alive—look at this purty girl here, wid her wet cheeks; give her some hope, ahagur, if you can; keep the crathur's spirits up, an' I'll furnish you wid every yarrib in Europe, from the nettle to the rose."

"Don't despair, my good girl," said the Doctor, addressing Peggy. "I hope, I trust, that he may recover; but he must be kept easy and quiet."

"May the blessing of God, sir, light down on you for the same words," replied Peggy, in a voice tremulous with gratitude and joy.

"Are you done wid him, Doethor?" said old Reillaghan.

"At present," replied the Doctor, "I can do nothing more for him; but I shall see him early to-morrow morning."

"Bekase, sir," continued the worthy man, "here's Darby More, who's afflicted with a comflamboration, or some sich thing, inwardly, an' if you should ase him, sir, I'd pay the damages, whatever they might be."

The Doctor smiled slightly. "Darby's complaint," said he, "is beyond my practice; there is but one cure for it, and that is, if I have any skill, a little of what's in the bottle here, taken, as our prescriptions sometimes say, 'when the patient is inclined for it.'"

"By my sou—sanctity, Doethor," said Darby, "you're a man of skill, any how, an' that's well known, sir. Nothin', as Father Hoolaghan says, but the sup of whiskey does this sarra of a configuration good. It rises the wind off o' my stomach, Doethor!"

"It does, Darby, it does. Now let all be peace and quietness," continued the Doctor: "take away a great part of this fire, and don't attempt to remove him to any other bed until I desire you. I shall call again to-morrow morning early."

The Doctor's attention to his patient was unremitting; everything that human skill, joined to long experience and natural talent, could do to restore the young man to his family was done; and in the course of a few weeks the friends of Reillaghan had the satisfaction of seeing him completely out of danger.

Mike declared, after his recovery, that though incapable of motion on the mountains, he was not altogether insensible to what passed around him. The loud tones of their conversation he could hear. The oath which young M'Kenna uttered in a voice so wild and exalted, fell clearly on his ear, and he endeavored to contradict it, in order that he might be secured and punished in the event of his death. He also said, that the pain he suffered in the act of being conveyed home, occasioned him to groan feebly; but that the sobs, and cries, and loud conversation of those who surrounded him, prevented his moans from being heard. It is probable, after all, that were it not for the accidental fall of Owen upon his body, he might not have survived the wound, inasmuch as the medical skill, which contributed to restore him, would not have been called in.

Though old Frank M'Kenna and his family felt an oppressive load of misery taken off their hearts by the prospect of Reillaghan's recovery, yet it was impossible for them to be insensible to the fate of their son, knowing as they did, that he must have been out among the mountains during the storm. His unhappy mother and Rody sat up the whole night, expecting his return, but morning arrived without bringing him home. For six days afterwards the search for him was general and strict; his friends and neighbors traversed the mountain wastes until they left scarcely an acre of them unexplored. On the sixth day there came a thaw, and towards the close of the seventh he was found a "stiffened corpse," *upon the very spot where he had shot his rival*, and on which he had challenged the Almighty to stretch him in death, without priest or prayer, if he were guilty of the crime with which he had been charged. He was found lying with a circle drawn round him, his head pillowed upon the innocent blood which he had shed with the intention of murder, and a bloody cross marked upon his breast and forehead. It was thought that in the dread of approaching death he had formed it with his hand, which came accidentally in contact with the blood that lay in clots about him.

The manner of his death excited a profound and wholesome feeling among the people, with respect to the crime which he attempted to commit. The circumstances attending it, and his oath upon the spot where he shot Reillaghan, are still spoken of by the fathers of the neighboring villages, and even by some who were present at the search for his body. It was also doubly remarkable on account of a case of spectral il-

THE MANNER OF HIS DEATH EXCITED A PROFOUND AND WHOLESOME FEELING AMONG THE PEOPLE, WITH RESPECT TO THE CRIME WHICH HE ATTEMPTED TO COMMIT.—*Midnight Mass*, p. 886, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

lusion which it produced, and which was ascribed to the effect of M'Kenna's supernatural appearance at the time. The daughter of a herdsman in the mountains was strongly affected by the spectacle of his dead body borne past her father's door. In about a fortnight afterwards she assured her family that he appeared to her. She saw the apparition, in the beginning, only at night; but ere long it ventured, as she imagined, to appear in day-light. Many imaginary conversations took place between them; and the fact of the peasantry flocking to the herd's house to satisfy themselves as to the truth of the rumor, is yet well remembered in the parish. It was also affirmed, that as the funeral of M'Kenna passed to the churchyard, a hare crossed it, which some one present struck on the side with a stone. The hare, says the tradition, was not injured, but the sound of the stroke resembled that produced on striking an empty barrel.

We have nearly wound up our story, in which we have feebly endeavored to illustrate scenes that were, some time ago, not unusual in Irish life. There is little more to be added, except that Mike Reillaghan almost miraculously recovered; that he and Peggy Gartland were happily married, and that Darby More lost his character as a dreamer in that parish. Mike, with whom, however, he still continued a favorite, used frequently to allude to the *speaking crucifix*, the dream aforesaid, and his bit of fiction, in assuring his mother that he had dissuaded him against "tracing" on that eventful day.

"Well, avourneen," Darby would exclaim, "the holiest of us has our failins; but, in throth, the truth of it is, that myself didn't know what I was sayin', I was so *through other*;* for I reminber that I was badly afflicted with this thief of a configuration inwardly at the time. That, you see, and your own throubles, put my mind *ashaughran*† for a start. But, upon my sanctity,—an' sure that's a great oath wid *me*—only for the Holy Carol you bought from me the night before, an' above all touchin' you wid the blessed Cruciwhix, you'd never a' got over the same accident. Oh, you may smile an' shake your head, but it's thruth whether or not! Glory be to God!"

The priest of the parish, on ascertaining correctly the incidents mentioned in this sketch, determined to deprive the people of at least one pretext for their follies. He represented the abuses connected with such a ceremony to the bishop; and from that night to the present time, the inhabitants of Kilnaheery never had, in their own parish, an opportunity of hearing a Midnight Mass.

THE DONAGH; OR, THE HORSE STEALERS.

Carnmore, one of those small villages that are to be found in the outskirts of many parishes in Ireland, whose distinct boundaries are lost in the contiguous mountain-wastes, was situated at the foot of a deep gorge or pass, overhung by two bleak hills, from the naked sides of which the storm swept over it, without disconposing the peaceful little nook of cabins that stood below. About a furlong farther down were two or three farm-houses, inhabited by a family named Cassidy, men of simple, inoffensive manners, and considerable wealth. They were, however, acute and wise in their generation; intelligent cattle-dealers, on whom it would have been a matter of some difficulty to impose an unsound horse, or a cow older than was intimated by her horn-rings, even when conscientiously dressed up for sale by the ingenious aid of the file or burning-iron. Between their houses and the hamlet rose a conical pile of rocks, loosely heaped together, from which the place took its name of Carnmore.

About three years before the time of this story, there came two men with their families to reside in the upper village, and the house which they chose as a residence was one at some distance from those which composed the little group we have just been describing. They said their name was Meehan, although the general report went, that this was not true; that the name was an assumed one, and that some dark mystery, which none could penetrate, shrouded their history and character. They were certainly remarkable men. The elder, named Anthony, was a dark, black-browed person, stern in his manner, and atrociously cruel in his disposition. His form was Herculean, his bones strong and hard as iron, and his sinews stood out in undeniable evidence of a life hitherto spent in severe toil and exertion, to bear which he appeared to an amazing degree capable. His brother Denis was a small man, less savage and daring in his character,

* Agitated.
† Ashaughran—astray.

and consequently more vacillating and cautious than Anthony; for the points in which he resembled him were superinduced upon his natural disposition by the close connection that subsisted between them, and by the identity of their former pursuits in life, which, beyond doubt, had been such as could not bear investigation.

The old proverb of "birds of a feather flock together," is certainly a true one, and in this case it was once more verified. Before the arrival of these men in the village, there had been two or three bad characters in the neighborhood, whose delinquencies were pretty well known. With these persons the strangers, by that sympathy which assimilates with congenial good or evil, soon became acquainted; and although their intimacy was as secret and cautious as possible, still it had been observed, and was known, for they had frequently been seen skulking together at daybreak, or in the dusk of evening.

It is unnecessary to say that Meehan and his brother did not mingle much in the society of Carnmore. In fact, the villagers and they mutually avoided each other. A mere return of the common phrases of salutation was generally the most that passed between them; they never entered into that familiarity which leads to mutual intercourse, and justifies one neighbor in freely entering the cabin of another, to spend a winter's night, or a summer's evening, in amusing conversation. Few had ever been in the house of the Meehans since it became theirs; nor were the means of their subsistence known. They led an idle life, had no scarcity of food, were decently clothed, and never wanted money; circumstances which occasioned no small degree of conjecture in Carnmore and its vicinity.

Some said they lived by theft; others that they were coiners; and there were many who imagined, from the diabolical countenance of the older brother, that he had sold himself to the devil, who, they affirmed, set his mark upon him, and was his paymaster. Upon this hypothesis several were ready to prove that he had neither breath nor shadow; they had seen him, they said, standing under a hedge-row of *elder*—that unholy tree which furnished wood for the cross, and on which Judas hanged himself—yet, although it was noon-day in the month of July, his person threw out no shadow. Worthy souls! because the man stood in the shade at the time. But with these simple explanations Superstition had nothing to do, although we are bound in justice to the reverend old lady to affirm that she was kept exceedingly busy in Carnmore. If a man had a sick cow, she was elf-shot; if his child became consumptive, it had been overlooked, or received *a blast* from the fairies; if the whooping-cough was rife, all the afflicted children were put three times under an ass; or when they happened to have the "mumps," were led, before sunrise, to a south-running stream, with a halter hanging about their necks, under an obligation of silence during the ceremony. In short, there could not possibly be a more superstitious spot than that which these men of mystery had selected for their residence. Another circumstance which caused the people to look upon them with additional dread, was their neglect of mass on Sundays and holydays, though they avowed themselves Roman Catholics. They did not, it is true, join in the dances, drinking-matches, football, and other sports with which the Carnmore folk celebrated the Lord's day; but they scrupled not, on the other hand, to mend their garden-ditch or mould a row of cabbages on the Sabbath—a circumstance, for which two or three of the Carnmore boys were, one Sunday evening when tipsy, well-nigh chastising them. Their usual manner, however, of spending that day was by sauntering lazily about the fields, or stretching themselves supinely on the sunny side of the hedges, their arms folded on their bosoms, and their hats lying over their faces to keep off the sun.

In the mean time, loss of property was becoming quite common in the neighborhood. Sheep were stolen from the farmers, and cows and horses from the more extensive graziers in the parish. The complaints against the authors of these depredations were loud and incessant: watches were set, combinations for mutual security formed, and subscriptions to a considerable amount entered into, with a hope of being able, by the temptation of a large reward, to work upon the weakness or cupidity of some accomplice to betray the gang of villains who infested the neighborhood. All, however, was in vain; every week brought some new act of plunder to light, perpetrated upon such unsuspecting persons as had hitherto escaped the notice of the robbers; but no trace could be discovered of the perpetrators. Although theft had from time to time been committed upon a small scale before the arrival of the Meehans in the village, yet it was undeniable that since that period the instances not only multiplied, but became of a more daring and extensive description. They arose in a gradual scale, from the henroost to the stable; and with such ability were they planned and executed, that the people, who in every instance identified Meehan and his brother with them, began

to believe and hint that, in consequence of their compact with the devil, they had power to render themselves invisible. Common Fame, who can best treat such subjects, took up this, and never laid it aside until, by narrating several exploits which Meehan the elder was said to have performed in other parts of the kingdom, she wound it up by roundly informing the Carnmorians, that, having been once taken prisoner for murder, he was caught by the leg, when half through a hedge, but that, being most wickedly determined to save his neck, he left the leg with the officer who took him, shouting out that it was a new species of leg-bail; and yet he moved away with surprising speed, upon two of as good legs as any man in his majesty's dominions might wish to walk off upon, from the insinuating advances of a bailiff or a constable!

The family of the Meehans consisted of their wives and three children, two boys and a girl; the former were the offspring of the younger brother, and the latter of Anthony. It has been observed, with truth and justice, that there is no man, how hardened and diabolical soever in his natural temper, who does not exhibit to some particular object a peculiar species of affection. Such a man was Anthony Meehan. That sullen hatred which he bore to human society, and that inherent depravity of heart which left the trail of vice and crime upon his footsteps, were flung off his character when he addressed his daughter Anne. To him her voice was like music; to her he was not the reckless villain, treacherous and cruel, which the helpless and unsuspecting found him; but a parent kind and indulgent as ever pressed an only and beloved daughter to his bosom. Anne was handsome: had she been born and educated in an elevated rank in society, she would have been softened by the polish and luxury of life into perfect beauty: she was, however, utterly without education. As Anne experienced from her father no unnatural cruelty, no harshness, nor even indifference, she consequently loved him in return; for she knew that tenderness from *such* a man was a proof of parental love rarely to be found in life. Perhaps she loved not her father the less on perceiving that he was proscribed by the world; a circumstance which might also have enhanced in his eyes the affection she bore him. When Meehan came to Carnmore, she was sixteen; and, as that was three years before the incident occurred on which we have founded this narrative, the reader may now suppose her to be about nineteen; an interesting country girl, as to person, but with a mind completely neglected, yet remarkable for an uncommon stock of good nature and credulity.

About the hour of eleven o'clock, one winter's night in the beginning of December, Meehan and his brother sat moodily at their hearth. The fire was of peat which had recently been put down, and, from between the turf, the ruddy blaze was shooting out in those little tongues and gusts of sober light, which throw around the rural hearth one of those charms which make up the felicity of domestic life. The night was stormy, and the wind moaned and howled along the dark hills beneath which the cottage stood. Every object in the house was shrouded in a mellow shade, which afforded to the eye no clear outline, except around the hearth alone, where the light brightened into a golden hue, giving the idea of calmness and peace. Anthony Meehan sat on one side of it, and his daughter opposite him, knitting: before the fire sat Denis, drawing shapes in the ashes for his own amusement.

"Bless me," said he, "how sthrange it is!"

"What is?" inquired Anthony, in his deep and grating tones.

"Why, thin, it *is* sthrange!" continued the other, who, despite of the severity of his brother, was remarkably superstitious—"a coffin I made in the ashes three times runnin'! Isn't it very quare, Anne?" he added, addressing the niece.

"Sthrange enough, of a sartinty," she replied, being unwilling to express before her father the alarm which the incident, slight as it was, created in her mind; for she, like her uncle, was subject to such ridiculous influences. "How did it happen, uncle?"

"Why, thin, no way in life, Anne; only, as I was thryin' to make a shoe, it turned out a coffin on my hands. I thin smoothed the ashes, and began agin, an' sorra bit of it but was a coffin still. Well, says I, I'll give you another chance,—here goes one more;—an', as sure as gun's iron, it was a coffin the third time. Heaven be about us, it's odd enough!"

"It would be little matther you were nailed down in a coffin," replied Anthony, fiercely; "the world would have little loss. What a pitiful cowardly rascal you are! Afraid o' your own shadow afther the sun goes down, except *I'm* at your elbow! Can't you dhrive all them palavers out o' your head? Didn't the sargint tell us, an' prove to us, the time we broke the guardhouse, an' took Friuch lave o' the ridgment for good, that the whole o' that, an' more along wid it, is all priestcraft?"

"I remimber he did, sure enough: I dunna where the same sargint is now, Tony? About no good, any way, I'll be bail. How-

somever, in regard o' that, why doesn't yourself give up fastin' from the mate of a Friday?"

"Do you want me to sthretch you on the hearth?" replied the savage, whilst his eyes kindled into fury, and his grim visage darkened into a satanic expression. "I'll tache you to be puttin' me through my catechiz about aitin' mate. I may manage that as I plase; it comes at first-cost, anyhow: but no cross-questions to me about it, if you regard your health!"

"I must say for you," replied Denis, reproachfully, "that you're a good warrant to put the health astray upon us of an odd start: we're not come to this time o' day widout carryin' somethin' to remimber you by. For my own part, Tony, I don't like such tokens; an' moreover, I wish you had resaved a thrifle o' larnin', espishily in the writin' line; for whenever we have any difference, you're so ready to prove your opinion by settin' your mark upon me, that I'd rather, fifty times over, you could write it with pen an' ink."

"My father will give that up, uncle," said the niece; "it's bad for any body to be fightin', but worst of all for brothers, that ought to live in peace and kindness. Won't you, father?"

"Maybe I will, dear, some o' these days, on your account, Anne; but you must get this creature of an uncle of yours, to let me alone, an' not be aggravatin' me with his folly. As for your mother, she's worse; her tongue's sharp enough to skin a flint, and a batin' a day has little effect on her."

Anne sighed, for she knew how long an irreligious life, and the infamous society with which, as her father's wife, her mother was compelled to mingle, had degraded her.

"Well, but, father, you don't set her a good example yourself," said Anne; "and if she scoulds and drinks *now*, you know she was a different woman when you got her. You allow this yourself; and the crathur, the dhrunkest time she is, doesn't she cry bitterly, remimberin' what she *has* been. Instead of *one* batin' a day, father, thry *no* batin' a day, an' maybe it 'ill turn out betther than thumpin' an' smashin' her as you do."

"Why, thin, there's truth and sinse in what the girl says, Tony," observed Denis.

"Come," replied Anthony, "whatever *she* may say I'll suffer none of *your* interference. Go an' get us the black bottle from the *place*; it'll soon be time to move. I hope *they* won't stay too long."

Denis obeyed this command with great readiness, for whiskey in some degree blunted the fierce passions of his brother, and deadened his cruelty; or rather diverted it from minor objects to those which occurred in the lawless perpetration of his villany.

The bottle was got, and in the meantime the fire blazed up brightly; the storm without, however, did not abate, nor did Meehan and his brother wish that it should. As the elder of them took the glass from the hands of the other, an air of savage pleasure blazed in his eyes, on reflecting that the tempest of the night was favorable to the execution of the villanous deed on which they were bent.

"More power to you!" said Anthony, impiously personifying the storm; "sure that's *one* proof that God doesn't throuble his head about what we do, or we would not get such a murdherin' fine night as is in it any how. That's it! blow and tundher away, an' keep yourself an' us, as black as hell, sooner than we should fail in what we intend! Anne, your health, acushla!—Yours, Dinny! If you keep your tongue off o' me, I'll neither make nor meddle in regard o' the batin' o' you."

"I hope you'll stick to that, any how," replied Denis; "for my part I'm sick and sore o' you every day in the year. Many another man would put salt wather between himself and yourself, sooner nor become a battin'-stone for you, as I have been. Few would bear it, when they could mend themselves."

"What's that you say?" replied Anthony, suddenly laying down his glass, catching his brother by the collar, and looking him with a murderous scowl in the face. "Is it thrachery you hint at?—eh? Sarpent, is it thrachery you mane?" and as he spoke, he compressed Denis's neck between his powerful hands, until the other was black in the face.

Anne flew to her uncle's assistance, and with much difficulty succeeded in rescuing him from the deadly gripe of her father, who exclaimed, as he loosed his hold, "You may thank the girl, or you'd not spake, nor dare to spake, about crossin' the salt wather, or lavin' me in a desateful way agin. If I ever suspect that a thought of thrachery comes into your heart, I'll *do* for you; and you may carry your story to the world I'll send you to."

"Father, dear, why are you so suspicious of my uncle?" said Anne; "sure he's a long time livin' with you, an' goin' step for step in all the danger you meet with. If he had a mind to turn out a Judas agin you, he might a done it long agone; not to mincion the throuble it would bring on his own head, seein' he's as deep in everything as you are."

"If that's all that's throubling you," replied Denis, trembling, "you may make yourself asy on the head of it; but well I know 'tisn't *that* that's on your mind; 'tis your own conscience; but sure it's not fair

nor rasonable for you to vent your evil thoughts on me!"

"Well, he won't," said Anne, "he'll quit it; his mind's throubled; an', dear knows, it's no wonther it should. Och, I'd give the world wide that his conscience was lightened of the load that's upon it! My mother's lameness is nothin'; but the child, poor thing! An' it was only widin three days of her lyin'-in. Och, it was a cruel stroke, father! An' when I seen its little innocent face, dead, an' me widout a brother, I thought my heart would break, thinkin' upon who did it!" The tears fell in showers from her eyes, as she added, "Father, I don't want to vex you; but I wish you to feel sorrow for *that* at laste. Oh, if you'd bring the priest, an' give up sich coorses, father dear, how happy we'd be, an' how happy yourself 'ud be!"

Conscience for a moment started from her sleep, and uttered a cry of guilt in his spirit; his face became ghastly, and his eyes full of horror: his lips quivered, and he was about to upbraid his daughter with more narshness than usual, when a low whistle, resembling that of a curlew, was heard at a chink of the door. In a moment he gulped down another glass of spirits, and was on his feet: "Go, Denis, an' get the arms," said he to his brother, "while I let them in."

On opening the door, three men entered, having their great coats muffled about them, and their hats slouched. One of them, named Kenny, was a short villain, but of a thick-set, hairy frame. The other was known as "the Big Mower," in consequence of his following that employment every season, and of his great skill in performing it. He had a deep-rooted objection against permitting the palm of his hand to be seen; a reluctance which common fame attributed to the fact of his having received on that part the impress of a hot iron, in the shape of the letter T, not forgetting to add, that T was the hieroglyphic for Thief. The villain himself affirmed it was simply the mark of a cross, burned into it by a blessed friar, as a charm against St. Vitus's dance, to which he had once been subject. The people, however, were rather sceptical, not of the friar's power to cure that malady, but of the fact of his ever having moved a limb under it; and they concluded with telling him, good-humoredly enough, that notwithstanding the charm, he was destined to die "wid the threble of it in his toe." The third was a noted pedlar called Martin, who, under pretence of selling tape, pins, scissors, etc., was very useful in *setting* such premises as this virtuous fraternity might, without much risk, make a descent upon.

"I thought yez would out-stay your time," said the elder Meehan, relapsing into his determined hardihood of character; "we're ready, hours agone. Dick Rice gave me two curlew an' two patrich calls to-day. Now pass the glass among yez, while Denny brings the arms. I know there's danger in this business, in regard of the Cassidys livin' so near us. If I see anybody afut, I'll use the *curlew* call: an' if not, I'll whistle twice on the *patrich** one, an' ye may come an'. The horse is worth eighty guineas, if he's worth a shillin'; an' we'll make sixty off him ourselves."

For some time they chatted about the plan in contemplation, and drank freely of the spirits, until at length the impatience of the elder Meehan at the delay of his brother became ungovernable. His voice deepened into tones of savage passion, as he uttered a series of blasphemous curses against this unfortunate butt of his indignation and malignity. At length he rushed out furiously to know why he did not return; but, on reaching a secret excavation in the mound against which the house was built, he found, to his utter dismay, that Denis had made his escape by an artificial passage, scooped out of it to secure themselves a retreat in case of surprise or detection. It opened behind the house among a clump of black-thorn and brushwood, and was covered with green turf in such a manner as to escape the notice of all who were not acquainted with the secret. Meehan's face on his return was worked up into an expression truly awful.

"We're sould!" said he; "but stop, I'll tache the thraithur what revenge is!"

In a moment he awoke his brother's two sons, and dragged them by the neck, one in each hand, to the hearth.

"Your villain of a father's off," said he, "to betray us; go, an' folly him; bring him back, an' he'll be safe from me: but let him become a *stag* agin us, and if I should hunt you both into bowels of the airth, I'll send yez to a short account. I don't care that," and he snapped his fingers—"ha, ha—no, I don't care that for the law; I know how to dale with it, when it comes! An' what's the stuff about the *other* world, but priestcraft and lies!"

"Maybe," said the Big Mower, "Denis is gone to get the foreway of us, an' to take the horse himself. Our best plan is to lose no time, at all events; so let us hurry, for fraid the night might happen to clear up."

"He!" said Meehan, "he go alone! No; the miserable wretch is afeard of his own

* Partridge.

shadow. I only wondher he stuck to me so long: but sure he wouldn't, only I hate the courage in, and the fear out of him. You're right, Brian," said he upon reflection, "let us lose no time, but be off. Do ye mind?" he added to his nephews; "Did ye hear me? If you see him, let him come back, an' all will be berrid; but, if he doesn't, you know your fate!" Saying which, he and his accomplices departed amid the howling of the storm.

The next morning, Carnmore, and indeed the whole parish, was in an uproar; a horse, worth eighty guineas, had been stolen in the most daring manner from the Cassidys, and the hue-and-cry was up after the thief or thieves who took him. For several days the search was closely maintained, but without success; not the slightest trace could be found of him or them. The Cassidys could very well bear to lose him; but there were many struggling farmers, on whose property serious depredations had been committed, who could not sustain their loss so easily. It was natural under these circumstances that suspicion should attach to many persons, some of whom had but indifferent characters before as well as to several who certainly had never deserved suspicion. When a fortnight or so had elapsed, and no circumstances transpired that might lead to discovery, the neighbors, including those who had principally suffered by the robberies, determined to assemble upon a certain day at Cassidy's house, for the purpose of clearing themselves, on oath, of the imputations thrown out against some of them, as accomplices in the thefts. In order, however, that the ceremony should be performed as solemnly as possible, they determined to send for Father Farrell, and Mr. Nicholson, a magistrate, both of whom they requested to undertake the task of jointly presiding upon this occasion; and, that the circumstance should have every publicity, it was announced from the altar by the priest, on the preceding Sabbath, and published on the church-gate in large legible characters ingeniously printed with a pen by the village schoolmaster.

In fact, the intended meeting, and the object of it, were already notorious; and much conversation was held upon its probable result, and the measures which might be taken against those who should refuse to swear. Of the latter description there was but one opinion, which was that their refusal in such a case would be tantamount to guilt. The innocent were anxious to vindicate themselves from suspicion: and, as the suspected did not amount to more than a dozen, of course, the whole body of the people, including the thieves themselves, who applauded as loudly as the other, all expressed their satisfaction at the measures about to be adopted. A day was therefore appointed, on which the inhabitants of the neighborhood, particularly the suspected persons, should come to assemble at Cassidy's house, in order to have the characters of the innocent cleared up, and the guilty, if possible, made known.

On the evening before this took place, were assembled in Meehan's cottage, the elder Meehan, and the rest of the gang, including Denis, who had absconded on the night of the theft.

"Well, well, Denny," said Anthony, who forced his rugged nature into an appearance of better temper, that he might strengthen the timid spirit of his brother against the scrutiny about to take place on the morrow—perhaps, too, he dreaded him—"Well, well, Denny, I thought, sure enough that it was some new piece of cowardice came over you. Just think of him," he added, "shabbin' off, only because he made, with a bit of a rod, three strokes in the ashes that he thought resembled a coffin!—ha, ha, ha!"

This produced a peal of derision at Denis's pusillanimous terror.

"Ay!" said the Big Mower, "he was makin' a coffin, was he? I wondher it wasn't a rope you drew, Denny. If any one dies in the coil, it will be the greatest coward, an' that's yourself."

"You may all laugh," replied Denis, "but I know such things to have a manin'. When my mother died, didn't my father, the heavens be his bed! see a black coach about a week before it? an' sure from the first day she tuck ill, the dead-watch was heard in the house every night: and what was more nor that, she kept *warm* until she went into her grave;* an' accordingly, didn't my sisther Shibby die within a year after?"

"It's no matther about thim things," replied Anthony; "it's thruth about the dead-watch, my mother keepin' warm, an' Shibby's death, any way. But on the night we tuck Cassidy's horse, I thought you were goin' to betray us: I was surely in a murdherin' passion, an' would have done harm, only things turned out as they did."

"Why," said Denis, "the truth is, I was afeard *some* of us would be shot, an' that the lot would fall on myself; for the coffin, thinks I, was sent as a warnin'. How-ever, I spied about Cassidy's stable, till I seen that the coast was clear; so whin I

* It is supposed in Ireland, when a corpse retains, for a longer space of time than usual, any thing like animal heat, that some person belonging to the family of the deceased will die within a year.

heard the low cry of the patrich that Anthony and I agreed on, I joined yez."

"Well, about to-morrow," observed Kenny—"ha, ha, ha!—there'll be lots o' swearin'. Why the whole parish is to switch the primer; many a thumb and coat-cuff will be kissed in spite of priest or magistrate. I remimber once, when I was swearin' an *alibi* for long Paddy Murray, that suffered for the M'Gees, I kissed my thumb, I thought, so smoothly, that no one would notice it; but I had a keen one to dale with, so says he, 'You know for the matther o' that, my good fellow, that you have your *thumb* to kiss every day in the week,' says he, 'but you might salute the *book* out o' dacency and good manners; not,' says he, 'that you an' it are strangers aither; for, if I don't mistake, you're an ould hand at swearin' alibis.'

"At all evints, I had to smack the book itself, and it's I, and Barney Green, and Tim Casserly, that did swear stiffly for Paddy, but the thing was too clear agin him. So he suffered, poor fellow, an' died right game, for he said over his *dhrop*—ha, ha, ha! that he was as innocent o' the murder as a child unborn: an' so he was in *one* sinse, bein' afther gettin' absolution."

"As to thumb-kissin'," observed the elder Meehan; "let there be none of it among us to-morrow; if we're caught at it 'twould be as bad as stayin' away altogether; for my part, I'll give it a smack like a pistol-shot—ha, ha, ha!"

"I hope they won't bring the priest's book," said Denis. "I haven't the laste objection agin payin' my respects to the *magistrate's* paper, but somehow I don't like tastin' the *priest's* in a falsity."

"Don't you know," said the Big Mower, "that whin a magistrate's present, it's ever an' always only the Tistament *by law* that's used. I myself wouldn't kiss the mass-book in a falsity."

"There's none of us sayin' we'd do it in a lie," said the elder Meehan; "an' it's well for thousands that the law doesn't use the priest's book; though, after all, aren't there books that say religion's all a sham? I think myself it is; for if what they talk about justice an' Providence is thrue, would Tom Dillon be transported for the robbery *we* committed at Bantry? Tom, it's true, was an ould offender; but he was innocent of *that*, any way. The world's all chance, boys, as Surgint Eustace used to say, and whin we die there's no more about us; so that I don't see why a man mightn't as well *switch* the priest's book as any other, only that, somehow, a body can't shake the terror of it off o' them."

"I dunna, Anthony, but you and I ought to curse that sargint; only for him we mightn't be as we are, sore in our conscience, an' afeard of every fut we hear passin'," observed Denis.

"Spake for your own cowardly heart, man alive," replied Anthony; "for my part, I'm afeared o' nothin'. Put round the glass, and don't be nursin' it there all night. Sure we're not so bad as the rot among the sheep, nor the black leg among the bullocks, nor the staggers among the horses, any how; an' yet they'd hang us up only for bein' fond of a bit o' mate—ha, ha, ha!"

"Thrue enough," said the Big Mower, philosophizing—"God made the beef and the mutton, and the grass to feed it; but it was man made the ditches: now we're only bringin' things back to the right way that Providence made them in, when ould times were in it, manin' before ditches war invinted—ha, ha, ha!"

"Tis a good argument," observed Kenny, "only that judge and jury would be a little delicate in actin' up to it; an' the more's the pity. Howsomever, as Providence made the mutton, sure it's not harm for us to take what he sends."

"Ay; but," said Denis,

> 'God made man, an' man made money;
> God made bees, and bees made honey;
> God made Satan, an' Satan made sin;
> An' God made a hell to put Satan in.'

Let nobody say there's not a hell; isn't there it plain from Scripthur?"

"I wish you had the Scripthur tied about your neck!" replied Anthony. "How fond of it one o' the greatest thieves that ever missed the rope is! Why the fellow could plan a roguery with any man that ever danced the haugman's hornpipe, and yet he be's repatin' bits an' scraps of ould prayers, an' charms, an' stuff. Ay, indeed! Sure he has a varse out o' the Bible, that he thinks can prevent a man from bein' hung up any day!"

While Denny, the Big Mower, and the two Meehans were thus engaged in giving expression to their peculiar opinions, the Pedlar held a conversation of a different kind with Anne.

With the secrets of the family in his keeping, he commenced a rather penitent review of his own life, and expressed his intention of abandoning so dangerous a mode of accumulating wealth. He said that he thanked heaven he had already laid up sufficient for the wants of a reasonable man; that he understood farming and the management of *sheep* particularly well: that it was his intention to remove to a different part of the kingdom, and take a farm; and that nothing

prevented him from having done this before, but the want of a helpmate to take care of his establishment: he added, that his present wife was of an intolerable temper, and a greater villain by fifty degrees than himself. He concluded by saying, that his conscience twitched him night and day for living with her, and that by abandoning her immediately, becoming truly religious, and taking Anne in her place, he hoped, he said, to atone in some measure for his former errors.

Anthony, however, having noticed the earnestness which marked the Pedlar's manner, suspected him of attempting to corrupt the principles of his daughter, having forgotten the influence which his own opinions were calculated to produce upon her heart.

"Martin," said he, "'twould be as well you ped attention to what we're sayin' in regard o' the thrial to-morrow, as to be palaverin' talk into the girl's ear that can't be good comin' from *your* lips. Quit it, I say, quit it! *Corp an duowol**—I won't allow such proceedins!"

"Swear till you blister your lips, Anthony," replied Martin; "as for me, bein' no residenthur, I'm not bound to it; an' what's more, I'm not suspected. 'Tis settin' some other bit o' work for yez I'll be, while you're all clearin' yourselves from stealin' honest Cassidy's horse. I wish we had him safely disposed of in the mane time, an' the money for him an' the other beasts in our pockets."

Much more conversation of a similar kind passed between them upon various topics connected with their profligacy and crimes. At length they separated for the night, after having concerted their plan of action for the ensuing scrutiny.

The next morning, before the hour appointed arrived, the parish, particularly the neighborhood of Carnmore, was struck with deep consternation. Labor became suspended, mirth disappeared, and every face was marked with paleness, anxiety, and apprehension. If two men met, one shook his head mysteriously, and inquired from the other, 'Did you hear the news?"

"Ay! ay! the Lord be about us all, I did! an' I pray God that it may lave the counthry as it came to it!"

"Oh, an' that it may, I humbly make supplication this day!"

If two women met, it was with similar mystery and fear. "*Vread*,† do you know what's at the Cassidys'?"

"Whisht, abagur, I do; but let what will happen, sure it's best for us to say nothin'."

"Say! the blessed Virgin forbid! I'd cut my hand off o' me, afore I'd spake a word about it; only that——"

"Whisht! woman—for mercy's sake—don't——"

And so they would separate, each crossing herself devoutly.

The meeting at Cassidy's was to take place that day at twelve o'clock; but, about two hours before the appointed time, Anne, who had been in some of the other houses, came into her father's, quite pale, breathless and trembling.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with clasped hands, whilst the tears fell fast from her eyes, "we'll be lost, ruined; did yez hear what's in the neighborhood wid the Cassidys?"

"Girl," said the father, with more severity than he had ever manifested to her before, "I never yet *riz* my hand to you, but *ma corp an duowol*, if you open your lips, I'll *fell* you where you stand. Do you want that cowardly uncle o' yours to be the manes o' hanging your father? Maybe that was one o' the lessons Martin gave you last night?" And as he spoke he knit his brows at her with that murderous scowl which was habitual to him. The girl trembled, and began to think that since her father's temper deepened in domestic outrage and violence as his crimes multiplied, the sooner she left the family the better. Every day, indeed, diminished that species of instinctive affection which she had entertained towards him; and this, in proportion as her reason ripened into a capacity for comprehending the dark materials of which his character was composed. Whether he himself began to consider detection at hand, or not, we cannot say; but it is certain, that his conduct was marked with a callous recklessness of spirit, which increased in atrocity to such a degree, that even his daughter could only *not* look on him with *disgust*.

"What's the matter now?" inquired Denis, with alarm: "is it anything about us, Anthony?"

"No, 'tisn't," replied the other, "anything about us! What 'ud it be about us for? 'Tis a lyin' report that some cannin' knave spread, hopin' to find out the guilty. But hear me, Denis, once for all; we're goin' to clear ourselves—now listen—an' let my words sink deep into you heart: if you refuse to swear this day—no matther *what's* put into your hand—you'll do harm—that's all: have courage, man; but should you *cow*, your coorse will be short; an' mark, even if *you* escape me, your sons won't: I have it all planned: an' *corp an duowol!* thim you won't know from Adam will revenge me, if I am taken up through your unmanliness."

* My body to Satan!

† Vread—*Anglice*, Margaret.

"'Twould be betther for us to lave the counthry," said Anne; "we might slip away as it is."

"Ay," said the father, "an' be taken by the neck afore we'd get two miles from the place! no, no, girl; it's the safest way to brazen thim out. Did you hear me, Denis?"

Denis started, for he had been evidently pondering on the mysterious words of Anne, to which his brother's anxiety to conceal them gave additional mystery. The coffin, too, recurred to him; and he feared that the death shadowed out by it would in some manner or other occur in the family. He was, in fact, one of those miserable villains with but half a conscience;—that is to say, as much as makes them the slaves of the fear which results from crime, without being the slightest impediment to their committing it. It was no wonder he started at the deep pervading tones of his brother's voice, for the question was put with ferocious energy.

On starting, he looked with vague terror on his brother, fearing, but not comprehending, his question.

"What is it, Anthony?" he inquired.

"Oh, for that matther," replied the other, "nothin' at all: think of what I said to you any how; swear through thick an' thin, if you have a regard for your own health, or for your childher. Maybe I had betther repate it again for you?" he continued, eyeing him with mingled fear and suspicion. "Dennis, as a friend, I bid you mind yourself this day, an' see you don't bring aither of us into throuble."

There lay before the Cassidys' houses a small flat of common, trodden into rings by the young horses they were in the habit of training. On this level space were assembled those who came, either to clear their own character from suspicion, or to witness the ceremony. The day was dark and lowering, and heavy clouds rolled slowly across the peaks of the surrounding mountains; scarcely a breath of air could be felt; and, as the country people silently approached, such was the closeness of the day, their haste to arrive in time, and their general anxiety, either for themselves or their friends, that almost every man, on reaching the spot, might be seen taking up the skirts of his "cothamore," or "big coat," (the peasant's handkerchief), to wipe the sweat from his brow; and as he took off his dingy woollen hat, or caubeen, the perspiration rose in strong exhalations from his head.

"Michael, am I in time?" might be heard from such persons, as they arrived: "did this business begin yit?"

"Full time, Larry; myself's here an hour ago, but no appearance of anything as yit. Father Farrell and Squire Nicholson are both in Cassidys' waitin' till they're all *gother*, whin they'll begin to put thim through their facins. You hard about what they've got?"

"No; for I'm only on my way home from the berril of a *cleaveen* of mine, that we put down this mornin' in the Tullyard. What is it?"

"Why man alive, it's through the whole parish *iready;*"—he then went on, lowering his voice to a whisper, and speaking in a tone bordering on dismay.

The other crossed himself, and betrayed symptoms of awe and astonishment, not unmingled with fear.

"Well," he replied, "I dunna whether I'd come here, if I'd known that; for, innocent or guilty, I would'nt wish to be near it. Och, may God pity thim that's to come acrass it, espishily if they dare to do it in a lie!"

"They needn't, I can tell yez both," observed a third person, "be a hair afeard of it, for the best rason livin', that there's no thruth at all in the report, nor the Cassidys never thought of sindin' for anything o' the kind: I have it from Larry Cassidy's own lips, an' he ought to know best."

The truth is, that two reports were current among the crowd: one that the oath was to be simply on the Bible; and the other, that a more awful means of expurgation was resorted to by the Cassidys. The people, consequently, not knowing which to credit, felt that most painful of all sensations—uncertainty.

During the period which intervened between their assembling and the commencement of the ceremony, a spectator, interested in contemplating the workings of human nature in circumstances of deep interest, would have had ample scope for observation. The occasion was to them a solemn one. There was little conversation among them; for when a man is wound up to a pitch of great interest, he is seldom disposed to relish discourse. Every brow was anxious, every cheek blanched, and every arm folded: they scarcely stirred, or when they did, only with slow abstracted movements, rather mechanical than voluntary. If an individual made his appearance about Cassidy's door, a sluggish stir among them was visible, and a low murmur of a peculiar character might be heard; but on perceiving that it was only some ordinary person, all subsided again into a brooding stillness that was equally singular and impressive.

Under this peculiar feeling was the multitude, when Meehan and his brother were seen approaching it from their own house. The elder, with folded arms, and hat pulled over his brows, stalked grimly forward,

having that remarkable scowl upon his face, which had contributed to establish for him so diabolical a character. Denis walked by his side, with his countenance strained to inflation ;—a miserable parody of that sullen effrontery which marked the unshrinking miscreant beside him. He had not heard of the ordeal, owing to the caution of Anthony : but, notwithstanding his effort at indifference, a keen eye might have observed the latent anxiety of a man who was habitually villanous, and naturally timid.

When this pair entered the crowd, a few secret glances, too rapid to be noticed by the people, passed between them and their accomplices. Denis, on seeing them present, took fresh courage, and looked with the heroism of a blusterer upon those who stood about him, especially whenever he found himself under the scrutinizing eye of his brother. Such was the horror and detestation in which they were held, that on advancing into the assembly, the persons on each side turned away, and openly avoided them : eyes full of fierce hatred were bent on them vindictively and "curses, not loud, but deep," were muttered with indignation which nothing but a divided state of feeling could repress within due limits. Every glance, however, was paid back by Anthony with interest, from eyes and black shaggy brows tremendously ferocious ; and his curses, as they rolled up half smothered from his huge chest, were deeper and more diabolical by far than their own. He even jeered at them ; but, however disgusting his frown, there was something truly apalling in the dark gleam of his scoff, which threw them at an immeasurable distance behind him, in the power of displaying on the countenance the worst of human passions.

At length Mr. Nicholson, Father Farrell, and his curate, attended by the Cassidys and their friends, issued from the house : two or three servants preceded them, bearing a table and chairs for the magistrate and priests, who, however, stood during the ceremony. When they entered one of the rings before alluded to, the table and chairs were placed in the centre of it, and Father Farrell, as possessing most influence over the people, addressed them very impressively.

"There are," said he, in conclusion, "persons in this crowd whom we know to be guilty ; but we will have an opportunity of now witnessing the lengths to which crime, long indulged in, can carry them. To such people I would say *beware!* for they know not the situation in which they are placed."

During all this time there was not the slightest allusion made to the mysterious ordeal which had excited so much awe and apprehension among them—a circumstance which occasioned many a pale, downcast face to clear up, and resume its usual cheerful expression. The crowd now were assembled round the ring, and every man on whom an imputation had been fastened came forward, when called upon, to the table at which the priests and magistrate stood uncovered. The form of the oath was framed by the two clergymen, who, as they knew the reservations and evasions commonest among such characters, had ingeniously contrived not to leave a single loophole through which the consciences of those who belonged to this worthy fraternity might escape.

To those acquainted with Irish courts of justice there was nothing particularly remarkable in the swearing. Indeed, one who stood among the crowd might hear from those who were stationed at the greatest distance from the table, such questions as the following :—

"Is the *thing* in it, Art?"

"No ; 'tis nothin' but the *law* Bible, the magistrate's own one."

To this the querist would reply, with a satisfied nod of the head, "Oh is that all? I heard they war to have *it ;*" on which he would push himself through the crowd until he reached the table, where he took his oath as readily as another.

"Jem Hartigan," said the magistrate to one of those persons, "are *you* to swear?"

"Faix, myself doesn't know, your honor ; only that I hard them say that the Cassidys mintioned our names along wid many other honest people ; an' one wouldn't, in that case, lie under a false report, your honor, from any one, when we're as clear as them that never saw the light of anything of the kind."

The magistrate then put the book into his hand, and Jem, in return, fixed his eye, with much apparent innocence, on his face : "Now, Jem Hartigan," etc, etc., and the oath was accordingly administered. Jem put the book to his mouth, with his thumb raised to an acute angle on the back of it ; nor was the smack by any means a silent one which he gave it (his thumb).

The magistrate set his ear with the air of a man who had experience in discriminating such sounds. "Hartigan," said he, "you'll condescend to kiss the *book*, sir, if you please : there's a hollowness in that smack, my good fellow, that can't escape *me*."

"Not kiss it, your honor? why, by this staff in my hand, if ever a man kissed"—

"Silence! you impostor," said the curate ; "I watched you closely, and am confident your lips never touched the book."

"My lips *never* touched the book!—Why,

you know I'd be sarry to contbradict either o' yez; but I was jist goin' to obsarve, wid simmission, that my own lips ought to know best; an' don't you hear them tellin' you that they *did* kiss it?" and he grinned with confidence in their faces.

"You double-dealing reprobate!" said the parish priest, "I'll lay my whip across your jaws. I saw you, too, an' you did *not* kiss the book."

"By dad, an' maybe I did *not*, sure enough," he replied: "any man may make a mistake unknownst to himself; but I'd give my oath, an' be the five crasses, I kissed it as sure as——however, a good thing's never the worse o' bein' twice done, gintlemen; so here goes, jist to satisfy yez;" and, placing the book near his mouth, and altering his position a little, he appeared to comply, though, on the contrary, he touched neither it nor his thumb. "It's the same thing to me," he continued, laying down the book with an air of confident assurance; "it's the same thing to me if I kissed it fifty times over, which I'm ready to do if *that* doesn't satisfy yez."

As every man acquitted himself of the charges brought against him, the curate immediately took down his name. Indeed, before the "clearing" commenced, he requested that such as were to swear would stand together within the ring, that, after having sworn, he might hand each of them a certificate of the fact, which they appeared to think might be serviceable to them, should they happen to be subsequently indicted for the same crime in a court of justice. This, however, was only a plan to keep them together for what was soon to take place.

The detections of thumb kissing were received by those who had already sworn, and by several in the outward crowd, with much mirth. It is but justice, however, to the majority of those assembled to state, that they appeared to entertain a serious opinion of the nature of the ceremony, and no small degree of abhorrence against those who seemed to trifle with the solemnity of an oath.

Standing on the edge of the circle, in the innermost row, were Meehan and his brother. The former eyed, with all the hardness of a Stoic, the successive individuals as they passed up to the table. His accomplices had gone forward, and to the surprise of many who strongly suspected them in the most indifferent manner "cleared" themselves in the trying words of the oath, of all knowledge of, and participation in, the thefts that had taken place.

The grim visage of the elder Meehan was marked by a dark smile, scarcely perceptible; but his brother, whose nerves were not so firm, appeared somewhat confused and distracted by the imperturbable villany of the perjurers.

At length they were called up. Anthony advanced slowly but collectedly, to the table only turning his eye slightly about, to observe if his brother accompanied him. "Denis," said he, "which of us will swear first? you may;" for, as he doubted his brother's firmness, he was prudent enough, should he fail, to guard against having the sin of perjury to answer for, along with those demands which his country had to make for his other crimes. Denis took the book, and cast a slight glance at his brother as if for encouragement; their eyes met, and the darkened brow of Anthony hinted at the danger of flinching in this crisis. The tremor of his hand was not, perhaps, visible to any but Anthony, who, however, did not overlook this circumstance. He held the book, but raised not his eye to meet the looks of either the magistrate or the priests; the color also left his face, as with shrinking lips he touched the Word of God in deliberate falsehood. Having then laid it down, Anthony received it with a firm grasp, and whilst his eye turned boldly in contemptuous mockery upon those who presented it, he impressed it with the kiss of a man whose depraved conscience seemed to goad him only to evil. After "clearing" himself, he laid the Bible upon the table with the affected air of a person who felt hurt at the imputation of theft, and joined the rest with a frown upon his countenance, and a smothered curse upon his lips.

Just at this moment, a person from Cassidy's house laid upon the table a small box covered with black cloth; and our readers will be surprised to hear, that if fire had come down visibly from heaven, greater awe and fear could not have been struck into their hearts, or depicted upon their countenances. The casual conversation, and the commentaries upon the ceremony they had witnessed, instantly settled into a most profound silence, and every eye was turned towards it with an interest absolutely fearful.

"Let," said the curate, "none of those who have sworn depart from within the ring, until they *once more* clear themselves upon this;" and as he spoke, he held it up—"Behold," said he, "and tremble—behold THE DONAGH!!!"

A low murmur of awe and astonishment burst from the people in general, while those within the ring, who with few exceptions, were the worst characters in the parish, appeared ready to sink into the earth. Their countenances, for the most part, paled

into the condemned hue of guilt; many of them became almost unable to stand; and altogether, the state of trepidation and terror in which they stood, was strikingly wild and extraordinary.

The curate proceeded: "Let him now who is guilty depart; or if he wishes, advance and challenge the awful penalty annexed to perjury upon THIS! Who has ever been known to swear falsely upon the Donagh, without being visited by a tremendous punishment, either on the spot, or in twenty-four hours after his perjury? If we ourselves have not seen such instances with our own eyes, it is because none liveth who dare incur such dreadful penalty: but we have heard of those who did, and of their awful punishment afterwards. Sudden death, madness, paralysis, self-destruction, or the murder of some one dear to them, are the marks by which perjury upon the Donagh is known and visited. Advance, now, ye who are innocent, but let the guilty withdraw; for we do not desire to witness the terrible vengeance which would attend a false oath upon the DONAGH. Pause, therefore, and be cautious! for if this grievous sin be committed, a heavy punishment will fall, not only upon you, but upon the parish in which it occurs!"

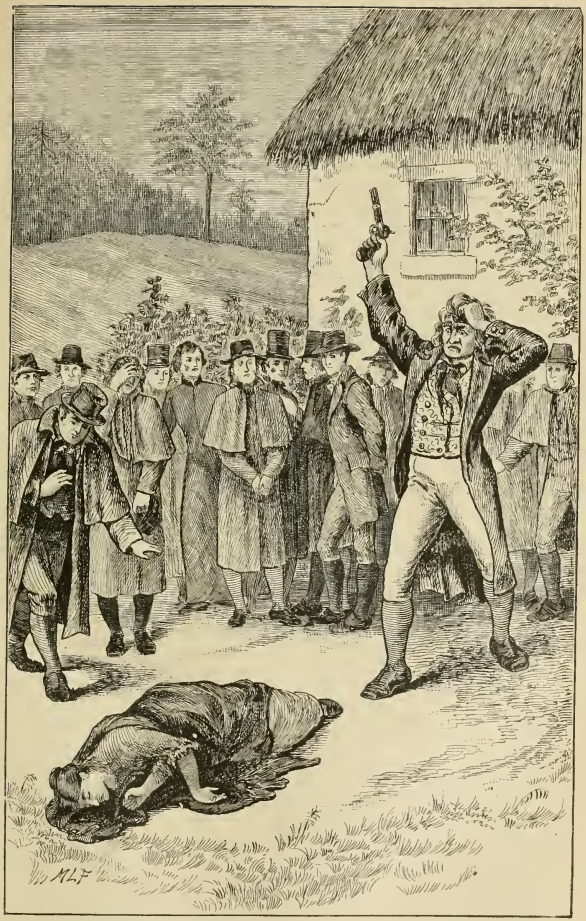
The words of the priest sounded to the guilty like the death-sentence of a judge. Before he had concluded, all, except Meehan and his brother, and a few who were really innocent, had slunk back out of the circle into the crowd. Denis, however, became pale as a corpse; and from time to time wiped the large drops from his haggard brow: even Anthony's cheek, despite of his natural callousness, was less red; his eyes became disturbed; but by their influence, he contrived to keep Denis in sufficient dread, to prevent him from mingling, like the rest, among the people. The few who remained along with them advanced; and notwithstanding their innocence, when the Donagh was presented and the figure of Christ and the Twelve Apostles displayed in the solemn tracery of its carving, they exhibited symptoms of fear. With trembling hands they touched the Donagh, and with trembling lips kissed the crucifix, in attestation of their guiltlessness of the charge with which they had been accused.

"Anthony and Denis Meehan, come forward," said the curate, "and declare your innocence of the crimes with which you are charged by the Cassidys and others."

Anthony advanced; but Denis stood rooted to the ground; on perceiving which, the former sternly returned a step or two, and catching him by the arm with an admonitory grip, that could not easily be misunderstood, compelled him to proceed with himself step by step to the table. Denis, however, could feel the strong man tremble, and perceive that although he strove to lash himself into the energy of despair, and the utter disbelief of all religious sanction, yet the trial before him called every slumbering prejudice and apprehension of his mind into active power. This was a death-blow to his own resolution, or, rather it confirmed him in his previous determination not to swear on the Donagh, except to acknowledge his guilt, which he could scarcely prevent himself from doing, such was the vacillating state of mind to which he felt himself reduced.

When Anthony reached the table, his huge form seemed to dilate by his effort at maintaining the firmness necessary to support him in this awful struggle between conscience and superstition on the one hand, and guilt, habit, and infidelity on the other. He fixed his deep, dilated eyes upon the Donagh, in a manner that betokened somewhat of irresolution: his countenance fell; his color came and went, but eventually settled in a flushed red; his powerful hands and arms trembled so much, that he folded them to prevent his agitation from being noticed; the grimness of his face ceased to be stern, while it retained the blank expression of guilt; his temples swelled out with the terrible play of their blood-vessels, his chest, too, heaved up and down with the united pressure of guilt, and the tempest which shook him within. At length he saw Denis's eye upon him, and his passions took a new direction; he knit his brows at him with more than usual fierceness, ground his teeth, and with a step and action of suppressed fury, he placed his foot at the edge of the table, and bowing down under the eye of God and man, took the awful oath on the mysterious Donagh, in a falsehood! When it was finished, a feeble groan broke from his brother's lips. Anthony bent his eye on him with a deadly glare; but Denis saw it not. The shock was beyond his courage,—he had become insensible.

Those who stood at the outskirts of the crowd, seeing Denis apparently lifeless, thought he must have sworn falsely on the Donagh, and exclaimed, "He's dead! gracious God! Denis Meehan's struck dead by the Donagh! He swore in a lie, and is now a corpse!" Anthony paused, and calmly surveyed him as he lay with his head resting upon the hands of those who supported him. At this moment a silent breeze came over where they stood; and as the Donagh lay upon the table, the black ribbons with which it was ornamented fluttered with a melancholy appearance, that deepened the sensa



"OH, GOD!—GOD OF HEAVEN AN' EARTH!—HAVE I MURDHERED MY DAUGHTER?" AND HE CAST DOWN THE FATAL WEAPON WITH A FORCE WHICH BURIED IT SOME INCHES INTO THE WET CLAY.—*The Horse Stealers*, p. 899, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

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tions of the people into something peculiarly solemn and preternatural. Denis at length revived, and stared wildly and vacantly about him. When composed sufficiently to distinguish and recognize individual objects, he looked upon the gloomy visage and threatening eye of his brother, and shrunk back with a terror almost epileptical. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "save me! save me from that man, and I'll discover all!"

Anthony calmly folded one arm into his bosom, and his lip quivered with the united influence of hatred and despair.

"Hould him," shrieked a voice, which proceeded from his daughter, "hould my father or he'll murdher him! Oh! oh! merciful Heaven!"

Ere the words were uttered she had made an attempt to clasp the arms of her parent, whose motions she understood; but only in time to receive from the pistol which he had concealed in his breast, the bullet aimed at her uncle! She tottered! and the blood spouted out of her neck upon her father's brows, who hastily put up his hand and wiped it away, for it had actually blinded him.

The elder Meehan was a tall man, and as he stood, elevated nearly a head above the crowd, his grim brows red with his daughter's blood—which, in attempting to wipe away, he had deeply streaked across his face—his eyes shooting fiery gleams of his late resentment, mingled with the wildness of unexpected horror—as he thus stood, it would be impossible to contemplate a more revolting picture of that state to which the principles that had regulated his life must ultimately lead, even in this world.

On perceiving what he had done, the deep working of his powerful frame was struck into sudden stillness, and he turned his eyes on his bleeding daughter, with a fearful perception of her situation. Now was the harvest of his creed and crimes reaped in blood; and he felt that the stroke which had fallen upon him was one of those by which God will sometimes bare his arm and vindicate his justice. The reflection, however, shook him not: the reality of his misery was too intense and pervading, and grappled too strongly with his hardened and unbending spirit, to waste its power upon a nerve or a muscle. It was abstracted, and beyond the reach of bodily suffering. From the moment his daughter fell, he moved not: his lips were half open with the conviction produced by the blasting truth of her death, effected prematurely by his own hand.

Those parts of his face which had not been stained with her blood assumed an ashy paleness, and rendered his countenance more terrific by the contrast. Tall, powerful, and motionless, he appeared to the crowd, glaring at the girl like a tiger anxious to join his offspring, yet stunned with the shock of the bullet which has touched a vital part. His iron-gray hair, as it fell in thick masses about his neck, was moved slightly by the blast, and a lock which fell over his temple was blown back with a motion rendered more distinct by his statue-like attitude, immovable as death.

A silent and awful gathering of the people around this impressive scene, intimated their knowledge of what they considered to be a judicial punishment annexed to perjury upon the Donagh. This relic lay on the table, and the eyes of those stood within view of it, turned from Anthony's countenance to it, and again back to his blood-stained visage, with all the overwhelming influence of superstitious fear. Shudderings, tremblings, crossings, and ejaculations marked their conduct and feeling; for though the incident in itself was simply a fatal and uncommon one, yet *they* considered it supernatural and miraculous.

At length a loud and agonizing cry burst from the lips of Meehan—"Oh, God!—God of heaven an' earth!—have I murdhered my daughter?" and he cast down the fatal weapon with a force which buried it some inches into the wet clay.

The crowd had closed upon Anne; but with the strength of a giant he flung them aside, caught the girl in his arms, and pressed her bleeding to his bosom. He gasped for breath: "Anne," said he, "Anne, I am without hope, an' there's none to forgive me except you;—none at all: from God, to the poorest of his creatures, I am hated an' cursed by all, except you! Don't curse me, Anne; don't curse me! Oh, isn't it enough, darlin', that my sowl is now stained with *your* blood, along with my other crimes? In hell, on earth, an' in heaven, there's none to forgive your father but yourself!—NONE! NONE! Oh, what's comin' over me! I'm dizzy an' shiverin'! How cowld the day's got of a sudden! Hould up, *avourneen machree!* I *was* a bad man; but to *you* Anne, I was *not* as I was to every one! Darlin', oh, look at me with forgiveness in your eye, or any way don't *curse* me! Oh! I'm far cowlder now! Tell me that you forgive me, *acushla oge machree!—Manim asthee hu,* * darlin', say it. I DARN'T LOOK TO GOD! but oh! do *you* say the forgivin' word to your father before you die!"

"Father," said she, "I deserve this—it's only just: I have plotted with that divilish Martin to betray them all, except yourself,

* Young pulse of my heart! my soul is within thee!

an' to get the reward; an' then we intended to go—an'—live at a distance—an' in wickedness—where we—might not be known—he's at our house—let him be—secured. Forgive me, father; you said so often that there was no thruth in religion—that I began to—think so. Oh!—God! have mercy upon me!" And with these words she expired.

Meehan's countenance, on hearing this, was overspread with a ghastly look of the most desolating agony: he staggered back, and the body of his daughter, which he strove to hold, would have fallen from his arms, had it not been caught by the bystanders. His eye sought out his brother, but not in resentment. "Oh! she died, but didn't say 'I FORGIVE YOU!' Denis," said he, "Denis, bring me home—I'm sick—very sick—oh, but it's cowld—everything's reeling—how cowld—cowld it is!"—and as he uttered the last words, he shuddered, fell down in a fit of apoplexy, never to rise again; and the bodies of his daughter and himself were both waked and buried together.

The result is brief. The rest of the gang were secured: Denis became approver, by whose evidence they suffered that punishment decreed by law to the crimes of which they had been guilty. The two events which we have just related, of course added to the supernatural fear and reverence previously entertained for this terrible relic. It is still used as an ordeal of expurgation, in cases of stolen property; and we are not wrong in asserting, that many of those misguided creatures, who too frequently hesitate not to swear falsely on the Word of God, would suffer death itself sooner than commit a perjury on the Donagh.

The story of the Donagh, the Author has reason to believe, was the means of first bringing this curious piece of antiquity into notice. There is little to be added here to what is in the sketch, concerning its influence over the people, and the use of it as a blessed relic sought for by those who wished to apply a certain test of guilt or innocence to such well known thieves as scrupled not to perjure themselves on the Bible. For this purpose it was a perfect conscience-trap, the most hardened miscreant never having been known to risk a false oath upon it. Many singular anecdotes are related concerning it.

The Author feels great pleasure in subjoining two very interesting letters upon the subject—one from an accomplished scholar, the late Rev. Dr. O'Beirne, master of the distinguished school of Portora at Enniskillen; the other from Sir William Betham, one of the soundest and most learned of our Irish Antiquaries. Both gentlemen differ in their opinion respecting the antiquity of the Donagh; and, as the author is incompetent to decide between them, he gives their respective letters to the public.

"*Portora, August* 15, 1832.

"MY DEAR CARLETON.—It is well you wrote to me about the Dona. Your letter, which reached me this day, has proved that I was mistaken in supposing that the promised drawing was no longer necessary. I had imagined, that as you must have seen the Dona with Mr. Smith, any communication from me on the subject must be superfluous. And now that I have taken up my pen in compliance with your wish, what can I tell you that you have not perhaps conveyed to yourself by ocular inspection, and better than I can detail it?

"I accompanied Mr. S. to Brookborough, and asked very particularly of the old woman, late the possessor of the Dona, what she knew of its history; but she could say nothing about it, only that it had belonged to 'The Lord of Enniskillen.' This was the Fermanagh Maguire, who took an active part in the shocking rebellion of 1641, and was subsequently executed. His castle, the ruins of which are on the grounds of Portora, was stormed during the wars of that miserable time. When I entered on my inquiries for you, I anticipated much in the way of tradition, which, I hoped, might prove amusing at least; but disappointment met me on every hand. The old woman could not even detail distinctly how the Dona had come into her possession: it was brought into her family, she said, by a priest. The country people had imagined wonders relative to the contents of the box. The chief treasure it was supposed to contain was a lock of the Virgin Mary's hair!!!

"After much inquiry, I received the following vague detail from a person in this country; and let me remark, by the by, that though the possession of the Dona was a matter of boast to the Maguires, yet I could not gain the slightest information respecting it from even the most intelligent of the name. But now for the detail:—

"'Donagh O'Hanlon, an inhabitant of the upper part of this country (Fermanagh), went, about 600 years ago (longer than which time, in the opinion of a celebrated antiquary, the kind of engraving on it could not have been made), on a pious pilgrimage to Rome. His Holiness of the Vatican, whose name has escaped the recollection of the person who gave this information, as a reward for this supererogatory journey, presented him with the Dona. As soon as

Donagh returned, the Dona was placed in the monastery of Aughadurcher (now Aughalurcher). But at the time when Cromwell was in this country, the monastery was destroyed, and this *Ark* of the *Covenant* hid by some of the faithful at a small lake, named Lough Eye, between Lisbellaw and Tempo. It was removed thence when peace was restored, and again placed in some one of the neighboring chapels, when, as before in Aughadurcher, the oaths were administered with all the superstition that a depraved imagination could invent, as "that their thighs might rot off," "that they might go mad," etc., etc.

"'When Kings James and William made their appearance, it was again concealed in Largy, an old Castle at Sir H. Brooke's deer-park. Father Antony Maguire, a priest of the Roman Church, dug it up from under the stairs in this old castle, after the battle of the Boyne, deposited it in a chapel, and it was used as before.

"'After Father Antony's death it fell into the possession of his niece, who took it over to the neighborhood of Florence-court. But the Maguires were not satisfied that a thing so sacred should depart from the family, and at their request it was brought back.'

"For the confirmation of the former part of this account, the informant refers you to Sir James Ware. I have not Ware's book, and cannot therefore tell you how much of this story is given by him, or whether any. In my opinion there is nothing detailed by him at all bearing on the subject. The latter part of this story rests, we are told, on tradition.

"As I confess myself not at all versed in Irish antiquities, it may appear somewhat presumptuous in me to venture an opinion respecting this box and its contents, which is, I understand, opposed to that of our spirited and intelligent antiquary, Sir Wm. Betham. I cannot persuade myself that either the box or the contained MSS. were of such an age as he claims for them. And, first, of the box:—

"At present the MSS. are contained in a wooden box; the wood is, I believe, *yew*. It cannot be pronounced, I think, with any certainty, whether the wooden box was originally part of the shrine of the precious MSS. It is very rude in its construction, and has not a top or lid. Indeed it appears to me to have been a coarse botched-up thing to receive the MSS. after the original box, which was made of brass, had fallen to pieces.

"The next thing that presents itself to us is the remnant of a brass box, washed with silver, and rudely ornamented with tracery. The two ends and the front are all that remain of the brass box.

"You may then notice what was evidently an addition of later times, the highly ornamented gilt-silver work, made fast on the remains of the brass box, and the chased compartments, which seem to have formed the top or lid of the box. But, as you have seen the whole, I need not perhaps have troubled you with this description. I shall only direct your attention to the two inscriptions. In the chasing you will see that they are referred to their *supposed* places.

"The upper inscription, when deciphered, is—

"'Johannes: O'Karbri: Comorbanus: S. Tignacii: Pmisit.' For *S. Tignacii* I would conjecture *St. Ignacii*: P, I should conjecture to be *Presbyterus*. On this I should be very glad to have Sir William's opinion. I cannot imagine, if P stands part of a compound with *misit*, what it can mean. I would read and translate it thus—'John O'Carbery, coadjutor, priest, of the order of St. Ignatius, *sent* it.'

"This inscription is on a narrow slip of silver, and is presumed to have formed part of the *under edge* of the *upper part* of the back of the box. The lower inscription is—

'*Johannes O'Barrdan fabricavit.*'

"This also is on a slip of silver, and appears to have fitted into a space on the upper surface which is supposed to have been the top, and to have lain in between the two square compartments on the left hand: this is marked in the drawing. I have expressed myself here in the language of doubt, for the box is all in confusion.

"Now, on the inscriptions, I would say, that they indicate to me a date much later than some gentlemen who have seen the box are willing to ascribe to it. In the island of Devenish, in our lake (Lough Erne), is an inscription, that was discovered in the ruins (still standing) of a priory, that was built there A. D. 1449. The characters in this inscription are much more remote from the Roman character in use among us than those used in the inscriptions on the box. The letters on the box bespeak a later period, when English cultivation had begun to produce some effect in our island, and the Roman character was winning its way into general use. I shall probably be able to let you see the Devenish inscription, and a *juxtaposition* of it and the others will satisfy you, I think, on this point. In my opinion, then, the box, with all its ornaments, must have been made at some time since the year 1449. I cannot think it reasonable to suppose that

an inscription, containing many letters like the Roman characters, should be more ancient than one not only having fewer letters resembling them, but also having the letters that differ differing essentially.

"Now for the MSS.

"I am deficient in antiquarian lore: this I have already confessed; but perhaps I want also the creative fancy and devoted faith of the genuine antiquary. I cannot, for example, persuade myself, that a MS. written in a clear, uniform, *small* character of the Roman form, could have been written in remote times, when there is reason to think that MSS. were written in uncial characters only, without stops, and with few or no divisions into words, sentences, or paragraphs. The palimpsest MS. examined by Dr. Barrett is in uncial characters, and is referred by him to the 6th or 7th century. *Cic. de Republica*, published by Angelo Mai, is assigned to much the same period. Small letters, and the distinctions above mentioned, were the invention of later times. I cannot therefore persuade myself that this MS. is of so early an age as some would ascribe to it, though I will not take it upon me to assign the precise time in which it was written. The characters are decidedly and distinctly those now called the Roman: they have not many abbreviations, as far as I could judge, and they are written with much clearness and regularity. They are not the *literæ cursivæ*, or those used in writing for the sake of facility and connection: they seem rather formed more in imitation of printed letters. SECUNDUM—This imperfect attempt to present one of the words, will explain my meaning. But I had better not weary you any more with my crude notions. I shall be very glad to hear your opinion, or that of Sir William Betham, to whom I should bow with all the respect due to talent and worth. I must avow my distrust of Irish antiquities; yet, allow me to add, that there is no man more willing to be converted from my heresy, if you would call it so, than

"My dear Carleton,

"Your friend and servant,

"A. O'BEIRNE."

"*Stradbrook House, October*, 1832.

"DEAR SIR,—I have read Dr. O'Beirne's important letter on the Dona: the account he has collected of its recent history is full of interest, and for the most part, I have no doubt, correct. His speculations respecting its antiquity I cannot give my adhesion to, not feeling a doubt myself on the subject. When I have time to investigate it more fully, I am satisfied that this box, like the others, of which accounts have already been published, will be found mentioned in the Irish Annals. The inscriptions, however, fully identify the MS. and the box, and show that antiquaries, from the execution of the workmanship and figures on these interesting reliques, often underrate their antiquity—a fault which the world are little inclined to give them credit for, and which they fall into from an anxiety to err on what they consider the side which is least likely to produce the smile of contempt or the sneer of incredulity, forgetting that it is the sole business of an antiquarian and historian to speak the truth, disregarding even contempt for so doing.

"I had been somewhat lengthy in my description of the Dona, and from habit, entered into a minute account of all its parts, quite forgetting that you, perhaps, do not possess an appetite for antiquarian detail, and therefore might be better pleased to have a general outline than such a recital. I therefore proceed to give it as briefly as possible, not, however, omitting any material points.

"The Irish word Domnach, which is pronounced *Dona*, means the Lord's day, or the first day in the week, sanctified or consecrated to the service of the Lord. It is also in that sense used for a house, church, or chapel. *Donaghmore* means the great church or chapel dedicated to God. This box, being holy, as containing the Gospels, and having the crucifix thereon, was dedicated or consecrated to the service of God. Like the Caah, the Meeshach, and Dhimma's box, it is of brass, covered with plates of silver, and resembles the two former in having a box of yew inside, which was the original case of the MS. and became venerated so much, on that account, as to be deemed worthy of being inclosed with it in the shrine made by permission of John O'Carberry, Abbot of Clonmacnois, in the 14th century.

"The top of the Dona is divided by a cross, on the lower arm of which is a figure of the Savior; over his head is a shield, divided *per pale*, between two crystal settings: on the dexter is a hand holding a scourge or whip of three thongs, and on a chief a ring; on the sinister, on a chief the same charge and three crucifixion nails. In the first compartment, or quarter of the cross, are representations of St. Columbkill, St. Bridget, and St. Patrick. In the second, a bishop pierced with two arrows, and two figures of St. Peter and St. Paul. In the third, the Archangel Michael treading on the dragon, and the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. In the

fourth, St. Tigernach handing to his successor, St. Sinellus, the Dona; and a female figure, perhaps Mary Magdalen.

"The front of the Dona is ornamented with three crystal settings, surmounted by grotesque figures of animals. Between these are four horsemen with swords drawn, in full speed.

"The right hand end has a figure of St. Tigernach, and St. John the Baptist. The left hand end a figure of St. Catherine with her wheel.

"The Dona is nine inches and a half long, seven wide, and not quite four thick.

"So far I have been enabled to describe the Dona from the evidently accurate and well executed drawings you were so good as to present to me. Why the description is less particular than it should have been, I shall take another opportunity of explaining to you.

"There are three inscriptions on the Dona: one on a scroll from the hand of the figure of the Baptist, of ECCE AGNUS DEI. The two others are on plates of silver, but their exact position on the box is not marked in the drawing, but may be guessed by certain places which the plates exactly fit.

"The first is—

"JOHANNES : OBARRDAN : FABRICAVIT.

"The second—

"JOHS : OKARBRI : COMORBANVS : S. TIGNACH : PMISIT.

"i. e.,

"'*John O Barrdan made this box by the permission of John O Carbry, successor of St. Tigernach.*'

"St. Tierny, or St. Tigernach was third Bishop of Clogher, having succeeded St. Maccartin in the year 506. In the list of bishops, St. Patrick is reckoned the first, and founder of the see. Tigernach died the 4th of April, 548.

"John O'Carbry was abbott of Clones, or Clounish, in the County of Monoghan, and as such was *comorb*, or *corb**—i. e., successor—of Tigernach, who was founder of the abbey and removed the episcopal seat from Clogher to Clounish. Many of the abbots were also bishops of the see. He died in 1353. How long he was abbot does not appear; but the age of the outside covering of the Dona is fixed to the 14th century.

"Since the foregoing was written I have seen the Dona, which was exhibited at the last meeting of the Royal Irish Academy. It has been put together at a guess, but different from the drawing. There is inside O'Barrdan's case another of silver plates some centuries older, and inside that the yew box, which originally contained the manuscripts, now so united by damp as to be apparently inseparable, and nearly illegible; for they have lost the color of vellum, and are quite black, and very much decayed. The old Irish version of the New Testament is well worthy of being edited; it is, I conceive, the oldest Latin version extant, and varies much from the Vulgate or Jerome's.

"The MS. inclosed in the yew box appears from the two membranes handed me by your friend Mr.——, to be a copy of the Gospels—at least those membranes were part of the two first membranes of the Gospel of St. Matthew, and, I would say, written in the 5th or 6th century; were, probably, the property of St. Tigernach himself, and passed most likely to the abbots of Clounish, his successors, as an heirloom, until it fell into the hands of the Maguires, the most powerful of the princes of the country now comprising the diocese of Clogher. Dr. O'Beirne's letter I trust you will publish. I feel much indebted to the gentleman for his courteous expressions towards me, and shall be most happy to have the pleasure of being personally known to him.

"You must make allowance for the hasty sketch which is here given. The advanced state of your printing would not allow me time for a more elaborate investigation.

"Believe me, my dear sir,

"Very sincerely yours,

"W. BETHAM."

We cannot close the illustrations of this ancient and venerable relic without adding an extract from a most interesting and authentic history of it contributed by our great Irish antiquarian, George Petrie, Esq., R.H.A., M.R.I.A., to the 18th vol. of the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, together with an engraving of it taken from a drawing made by the same accomplished artist.

"I shall endeavor to arrange these evidences in consecutive order.

"It is of importance to prove that this *cumdach*, or reliquary, has been from time immemorial popularly known by the name of *Domnach*, or, as it is pronounced, Donagh, a word derived from the Latin *Dominicus*. This fact is proved by a recent popular tale of very great power, by Mr. Carleton, called the 'Donagh,' in which the superstitious uses to which this reliquary has been long applied, are ably exhibited, and made subservient to the interests of the story. It is

* *All* the successors of the founder saints were called by the Irish *comorbs* or *corbs*. The reader will perceive that O'Carbry was a distant but *not* the *immediate* successor of St. Tigernach.

also particularly described under this name by the Rev. John Groves, in his account of the parish of Errigal-Keeroge, in the third volume of Shaw Mason's Parochial Survey, page 163, though, as the writer states, it was not actually preserved in that parish.

"2. The inscriptions on the external case leave no doubt that the Domnach belonged to the monastery of Clones, or see of Clogher. The John O'Karbri, the *Comharb*, or successor of St. Tighernach, recorded in one of those inscriptions as the person at whose cost, or by whose permission, the outer ornamental case was made, was, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, Abbot of Clones, and died in the year 1353. He is properly called in that inscription *Comorbanus*, or successor of Tighernach, who was the first Abbot and Bishop of the Church of Clones, to which place, after the death of St. Mac-Carthen, in the year 506, he removed the see of Clogher, having erected a new church, which he dedicated to the apostles Peter and Paul. St. Tighernach, according to all our ancient authorities, died in the year 548.

"3. It appears from a fragment of an ancient life of St. Mac-Carthen, preserved by Colgan, that a remarkable reliquary was given by St. Patrick to that saint when he placed him over the see of Clogher.

"'Et addidit, [Patricius] Accipe, inquit, baculum itineris mei, quo ego membra mea sustento et scrinium in quo de sanctorum Apostolorum reliquiis, et de sanctæ Mariæ capillis, et sancta Cruce Domini, et sepulchro ejus, et aliis reliquiis sanctis continentur. Quibus dictis dimisit cum osculo pacis paterna fultum benedictione.'—*Colgan, Vit. S. Macaerthenni* (24 Mart.) Acta SS. p. 738.

"From this passage we learn one great cause of the sanctity in which this reliquary was held, and of the uses of the several recesses for reliques which it presents. It also explains the historical *rilievo* on the top—the figure of St. Patrick presenting the Domnach to St. Mac-Carthen.

"4. In Jocelyn's Life of St. Patrick (cap. 113) we have also a notice to the same effect, but in which the Domnach is called a *Chrismatorium*, and the relics are not specified—in all probability because they were not then appended to it.

"In these authorities there is evidently much appearance of the Monkish frauds of the middle ages; but still they are evidences of the tradition of the country that such a gift had been made by Patrick to Mac-Carthen. And as we advance higher in chronological authorities, we find the notice of this gift stripped of much of its acquired garb of fiction, and related with more of the simplicity of truth.

"5. In the life of St. Patrick called the Tripartite, usually ascribed to St. Evin, an author of the seventh century, and which, even in its present interpolated state, is confessedly prior to the tenth, there is the following remarkable passage (as translated by Colgan from the original Irish) relative to the gift of the Domnach from the Apostle of Ireland to St. Mac-Carthen, in which it is expressly described under the very same appellation which it still bears.

"'Aliquantis ergo evolutis diebus *Mac-Caertennum*, sive *Caerthennum* Episcopum præfecit sedi Episcopali Clocherensi, ab Ardmacha regni Metropoli haud multum distanti: et apud eum reliquit argenteum quoddam reliquiarium *Domnach-airgidh* vulgo nuncupatum; quod viro Dei, in Hiberniam venienti, cœlitus missum erat.'—*VII. Vita S. Patricii*, Lib. III. cap. 3, *Tr. Th.* p. 149.

"This passage is elsewhere given by Colgan, with a slight change of words in the translation.

"In this version, which is unquestionably prior to all the others, we find the Domnach distinguished by the appellation of *Airgid*—an addition which was applicable only to its more ancient or *silver* plated case, and which could not with propriety be applied to its more recent covering, which in its original state had the appearance of being of gold.

"On these evidences—and more might probably be procured if time had allowed—we may, I think, with tolerable certainty, rest the following conclusions:

"1. That the Domnach is the identical reliquary given by St. Patrick to St. Mac-Carthen.

"2. As the form of the cumdach indicates that it was intended to receive a book, and as the relics are all attached to the outer and the least ancient cover, it is manifest that the use of the box as a reliquary was not its original intention. The natural inference therefore is, that it contained a manuscript which had belonged to St. Patrick; and as a manuscript copy of the Gospels, apparently of that early age, is found within it, there is every reason to believe it to be that identical one for which the box was originally made, and which the Irish apostle probably brought with him on his mission into this country. It is indeed, not merely possible, but even probable, that the existence of this manuscript was unknown to the Monkish biographers of St. Patrick and St. Mac-Carthen, who speak of the box as a *scrinium* or reliquary only. The outer cover was evidently not made to open; and some, at least, of the relics attached to it were not introduced into Ireland before the twelfth cen-

tury. It will be remembered also that no superstition was and is more common in connection with the ancient cumdachs than the dread of their being opened.

"These conclusions will, I think, be strengthened considerably by the facts, that the word *Domnach*, as applied either to a church, as usual, or to a reliquary, as in this instance, is only to be found in our histories in connection with St. Patrick's time; and, that in the latter sense—its application to a reliquary—it only once occurs in all our ancient authorities, namely, in the single reference to the gift to St. Mac-Carthen; no other reliquary in Ireland, as far as can be ascertained, having ever been known by that appellation. And it should also be observed, that all the ancient reliques preserved in Ireland, whether bells, books, croziers, or other remains, have invariably and without any single exception, been preserved and venerated only as appertaining to the original founders of the churches to which they belonged."

There is very little to be added, except that the Donagh was purchased for a few pounds from the old woman who owned it, by Mr. George Smith, of the house of Hodges and Smith, of College Green, Dublin, who very soon sold it for a large sum to the Honorable Mr. Westenra, in whose possession I presume it now is.

PHIL PURCEL, THE PIG-DRIVER.

Phil Purcel was a singular character, for he was never married; but notwithstanding his singularity, no man ever possessed, for practical purposes, a more plentiful stock of duplicity. All his acquaintances knew that Phil was a knave of the first water, yet was he decidedly a general favorite. Now as we hate mystery ourselves, we shall reveal the secret of this remarkable popularity; though, after all, it can scarcely be called so, for Phil was not the first cheat who has been popular in his day. The cause of his success lay simply in this;—that he never laughed; and none of our readers need be told, that the appearance of a grave cheat in Ireland is an originality which almost runs up into a miracle. This gravity induced every one to look upon him as a phenomenon. The assumed simplicity of his manners was astonishing, and the ignorance which he feigned, so apparently natural, that it was scarcely possible for the most keen-sighted searcher into human motives to detect him. The only way of understanding the man was to deal with him: if, after *that*, you did not comprehend him thoroughly, the fault was not Phil's, but your own. Although not mirthful himself, he was the cause of mirth in others; for, without ever smiling at his own gains, he contrived to make others laugh at their losses. His disposition, setting aside laughter, was strictly anomalous. The most incompatible, the most unamalgamatible, and the most uncomeatable qualities that ever refused to unite in the same individual, had no scruple at all to unite in Phil. But we hate metaphysics, which we leave to the mechanical philosophers, and proceed to state that Phil was a miser, which is the best explanation we can give of his gravity.

Ireland, owing to the march of intellect, and the superiority of modern refinement, has been for some years past, and is at present, well supplied with an abundant variety of professional men, every one of whom will undertake, for proper considerations, to teach us Irish all manner of useful accomplishments. The drawing-master talks of his profession; the dancing-master of *his* profession; the fiddler, tooth-drawer, and corn-cutter (who, by the way, *reaps* a richer harvest than we do), since the devil has tempted the schoolmaster to go abroad, are all practising in his absence, as professional men.

Now Phil must be included among this class of grandiloquent gentlemen, for he entered life as a Professor of Pig-driving; and it is but justice towards him to assert, that no corn-cutter of them all ever elevated his profession so high as Phil did that in which he practised. In fact, he raised it to the most exalted pitch of improvement of which it was then susceptible; or to use the cant of the day, he soon arrived at "the head of his profession."

In Phil's time, however, pig-driving was not so general, nor had it made such rapid advances as in modern times. It was, then, simply, pig-driving, unaccompanied by the improvements of poverty, sickness, and famine. Political economy had not then taught the people how to be poor upon the most scientific principles; free trade had not shown the nation the most approved plan of reducing itself to the lowest possible state of distress; nor liberalism enabled the working

classes to scoff at religion, and wisely to stop at the very line that lies between outrage and rebellion. Many errors and inconveniences, now happily exploded, were then in existence. The people, it is true, were somewhat attached to their landlords, but still they were burdened with the unnecessary appendages of good coats and stout shoes; were tolerably industrious, and had the mortification of being able to pay their rents, and feed in comfort. They were not, as they are now, free from new coats and old prejudices, nor improved by the intellectual march of politics and poverty. When either a man or a nation starves, it is a luxury to starve in an enlightened manner; and nothing is more consolatory to a person acquainted with public rights and constitutional privileges, than to understand those liberal principles upon which he fasts and goes naked.

From all we have said, the reader sees clearly that pig-driving did not then proceed upon so extensive a scale as it does at present. The people, in fact, killed many of them for their own use; and we know not how it happened, but political ignorance and good bacon kept them in more flesh and comfort than those theories which have since succeeded so well in introducing the science of starvation as the basis of national prosperity. Irishmen are frequently taxed with extravagance, in addition to their other taxes; but we should be glad to know what people in Europe reduce economy in the articles of food and clothing to such close practice as they do.

Be this as it may, there was, in Ireland, an old breed of swine, which is now nearly extinct, except in some remote parts of the country, where they are still useful in the hunting season, particularly if dogs happen to be scarce.* They were a tall, loose species, with legs of an unusual length, with no flesh, short ears, as if they had been cropped for sedition, and with long faces of a highly intellectual cast. They were also of such activity that few greyhounds could clear a ditch or cross a field with more agility or speed. Their backs formed a rainbow arch, capable of being contracted or extended to an inconceivable degree; and their usual rate of travelling in droves was at mail-coach speed, or eight Irish miles an hour, preceded by an outrider to clear the way, whilst their rear was brought up by another horseman, going at a three-quarter gallop.

In the middle of summer, when all nature reposed under the united influence of heat and dust, it was an interesting sight to witness a drove of them sweeping past, like a whirlwind, in a cloud of their own raising; their sharp and lengthy outlines dimly visible through the shining haze, like a flock of antelopes crossing the deserts of the East.

But alas! for those happy days! This breed is now a curiosity—few specimens of it remaining except in the mountainous parts of the country, whither these lovers of liberty, like the free natives of the back settlements of America, have retired to avoid the encroachments of civilization, and exhibit their Irish antipathy to the slavish comforts of steamboat navigation, and the relaxing luxuries of English feeding.

Indeed, their patriotism, as evinced in an attachment to Ireland and Irish habits, was scarcely more remarkable than their sagacity. There is not an antiquary among the members of that learned and useful body, the Irish Academy, who can boast such an intimate knowledge of the Irish language in all its shades of meaning and idiomatic beauty, as did this once flourishing class of animals. Nor were they confined to the Irish tongue alone, many of them understood English too; and it was said of those that belonged to a convent, the members of which, in their intercourse with each other, spoke only in Latin, that they were tolerable masters of that language, and refused to leave a potato field or plot of cabbages, except when addressed in it. To the English tongue, however, they had a deep-rooted antipathy; whether it proceeded from the national feeling, or the fact of its not being sufficiently guttural, I cannot say; but be this as it may, it must be admitted that they were excellent Irish scholars, and paid a surprising degree of deference and obedience to whatever was addressed to them in their own language. In Munster, too, such of them as belonged to the hedge-schoolmasters were good proficients in Latin; but it is on a critical knowledge of their native tongue that I take my stand. On this point they were unrivalled by the most learned pigs or antiquaries of their day; none of either class possessing, at that period, such a knowledge of Irish manners, nor so keen a sagacity in tracing out Irish *roots*.

Their education, it is true, was not neglected, and their instructors had the satisfaction of seeing that it was not lost. Nothing could present a finer display of true friendship founded upon a sense of equality, mutual interest, and good-will, than the Irishman and his pig. The Arabian and his horse are proverbial; but had our English neighbors known as much of Ireland as they did of Arabia, they would have found as signal instances of attachment subsisting be

* We assure John Bull, on the authority of Phil Purcel himself, that this is a fact.

tween the former as between the latter; and, perhaps, when the superior comforts of an Arabian hut are contrasted with the squalid poverty of an Irish cabin, they would have perceived a heroism and a disinterestedness evinced by the Irish parties, that would have struck them with greater admiration.

The pigs, however, of the present day are a fat, gross, and degenerate breed; and more like well-fed aldermen, than Irish pigs of the old school. They are, in fact, a proud, lazy, carnal race, entirely of the earth, earthy. John Bull assures us it is one comfort, however, that we do not eat, but ship them out of the country; yet, after all, with great respect to John, it is not surprising that we should repine a little on thinking of the good old times of sixty years since, when every Irishman could kill his own pig, and eat it when he pleased. We question much whether any measure that might make the eating of meat compulsory upon us, would experience from Irishmen a *very* decided opposition. But it is very condescending in John to eat our beef and mutton; and as he happens to want both, it is particularly disinterested in him to encourage us in the practice of self-denial. It is possible, however, that we may ultimately refuse to banquet by proxy on our own provisions; and that John may not be much longer troubled to eat for us in that capacity.

The education of an Irish pig, at the time of which we write, was an important consideration to an Irishman. He, and his family, and his pig, like the Arabian and his horse, all slept in the same bed; the pig generally, for the sake of convenience, next the "stock."* At meals the pig usually was stationed at the *serahag*, or potato-basket; where the only instances of bad temper he ever displayed broke out in petty and unbecoming squabbles with the younger branches of the family. Indeed, if he ever descended from his high station as a member of the domestic circle, it was upon these occasions, when, with a want of dignity, accounted for only by the grovelling motive of self-interest, he embroiled himself in a series of miserable feuds and contentions about scraping the pot, or carrying off from the jealous urchins about him more than came to his share. In these heart-burnings about the good things of this world, he was treated with uncommon forbearance: in his owner he always had a friend, from whom, when he grunted out his appeal to him, he was certain of receiving redress: "Barney, behave, avick: lay down the potstick, an' don't be batin' the pig, the crathur."

* That is, at the outside.

In fact, the pig was never mentioned but with this endearing epithet of "crathur" annexed. "Barney, go an' call home the pig, the crathur, to his dinner, before it gets cowld an him." "Barney, go an' see if you can see the pig, the crathur, his buckwhist will soon be ready." "Barney, run an' dhrive the pig, the crathur, out of Larry Neil's phatie-field: an', Barney, whisper, a bouchal bawn, don't run *too* hard, Barney, for fraid you'd lose your breath. What if the crathur *does* get a taste o' the new phaties—small blame to him for the same!"

In short, whatever might have been the habits of the family, such were those of the pig. The latter was usually out early in the morning to take exercise, and the unerring regularity with which he returned at meal-time gave sufficient proof that procuring an appetite was a work of supererogation on his part. If he came before the meal was prepared, his station was at the door, which they usually shut to keep him out of the way until it should be ready. In the meantime, so far as a forenoon serenade and an indifferent voice could go, his powers of melody were freely exercised on the outside. But he did not stop here: every stretch of ingenuity was tried by which a possibility of gaining admittance could be established. The hat and rags were repeatedly driven in from the windows, which from practice and habit he was enabled to approach on his hind legs; a cavity was also worn by the frequent grubbings of his snout under the door, the lower part of which was broken away by the sheer strength of his tusks, so that he was enabled, by thrusting himself between the bottom of it and the ground, to make a most unexpected appearance on the hearth, before his presence was at all convenient or acceptable.

But, independently of these two modes of entrance, *i. e.*, the door and window, there was also a third, by which he sometimes scrupled not to make a descent upon the family. This was by the chimney. There are many of the Irish cabins built for economy's sake against slopes in the ground, so that the labor of erecting either a gable or side-wall is saved by the perpendicular bank that remains after the site of the house is scooped away. Of the facilities presented by this peculiar structure, the pig never failed to avail himself. He immediately mounted the roof (through which, however, he sometimes took an unexpected flight), and traversing it with caution, reached the chimney, into which he deliberately *backed* himself, and with no small share of courage, went down precisely as the northern bears are said to descend the trunks of trees dur-

ing the winter, but with far different motives.

In this manner he cautiously retrograded downwards with a hardihood which set furze bushes, brooms, tongs, and all other available weapons of the cabin at defiance. We are bound, however, to declare, that this mode of entrance, which was only resorted to when every other failed, was usually received by the cottager and his family with a degree of mirth and good-humor that were not lost upon the sagacity of the pig. In order to save him from being scorched, which he deserved for his temerity, they usually received him in a creel, often in a quilt, and sometimes in the tattered blanket, or large pot, out of which he looked with a humorous conception of his own enterprise, that was highly diverting. We must admit, however, that he was sometimes received with the comforts of a hot poker, which Paddy pleasantly called, "givin' him a *warm* welcome."

Another trait in the character of these animals, was the utter scorn with which they treated all attempts to fatten them. In fact, the usual consequences of good feeding were almost inverted in their case; and although I might assert that they became leaner in proportion to what they received, yet I must confine myself to truth, by stating candidly that this was not the fact; that there was a certain state of fleshlessness to which they arrived, but from which they neither advanced nor receded by good feeding or bad.

At this point, despite of all human ingenuity, they remained stationary for life, received the bounty afforded them with a greatness of appetite resembling the fortitude of a brave man, which rises in energy according to the magnitude of that which it has to encounter. The truth is, they were scandalous hypocrites; for with the most prodigious capacity for food, they were spare as philosophers, and fitted evidently more for the chase than the sty; rather to run down a buck or a hare for the larder, than to have a place in it themselves. If you starved them, they defied you to diminish their flesh; and if you stuffed them like aldermen, they took all they got, but disdained to carry a single ounce more than if you gave them whey thickened with water. In short, they gloried in maceration and liberty; were good Irish scholars, sometimes acquainted with Latin; and their flesh, after the trouble of separating it from a superfluity of tough skin, was excellent *venison* so far as it went.

Now Phil Purcel, whom we will introduce more intimately to the reader by and by, was the son of a man who always kept a pig. His father's house had a small loft, to which the ascent was by a step-ladder through a door in the inside gable. The first good thing ever Phil was noticed for he said upon the following occasion. His father happened to be called upon, one morning before breakfast, by his landlord, who it seems occasionally visited his tenantry to encourage, direct, stimulate, or reprove them, as the case might require. Phil was a boy then, and sat on the hob in the corner, eyeing the landlord and his father during their conversation. In the mean time the pig came in, and deliberately began to ascend the ladder with an air of authority that marked him as one in the exercise of an established right. The landlord was astonished at seeing the animal enter the best room in the house and could not help expressing his surprise to old Purcel:

"Why, Purcel, is your pig in the habit of treating himself to the comforts of your best room?"

"The pig is it, the crathur? Why, your haner," said Purcel, after a little hesitation, "it sometimes goes up of a mornin' to waken the childhre, particularly when the buckwhist happens to be late. It doesn't like to be waitin'; and sure none of us likes to be kept from the male's mate, your haner, when we want it, no more than it, the crathur!"

"But I wonder your wife permits so filthy an animal to have access to her rooms in this manner."

"Filthy!" replied Mrs. Purcel, who felt herself called upon to defend the character of the pig, as well as her own, "why, one would think, sir, that any crathur that's among Christyen childhre, like one o' themselves, couldn't be filthy. I could take it to my dyin' day, that there's not a claner or dacenter pig in the kingdom, than the same pig. It never misbehaves, the crathur, but goes out, as wise an' riglar, jist by a look, an' that's enough for it, any day—a single look, your haner, the poor crathur!"

"I think," observed Phil, from the hob, "that nobody has a betther right to the run of the house, whedher up stairs or down stairs, *than him that pays the rint.*"

"Well said, my lad!" observed the landlord, laughing at the quaint ingenuity of Phil's defence. "His payment of the rent is the best defence possible, and no doubt should cover a multitude of his errors."

"A multitude of his shins, you mane, sir," said Phil, "for thrath he's all shin."

In fact, Phil from his infancy had an uncommon attachment to these animals, and by a mind naturally shrewd and observing, made himself as intimately acquainted with their habits and instincts, and the best modes of

managing them, as ever the celebrated *Cahir na Cappul** did with those of the horse.

* I subjoin from Townsend's Survey of the county of Cork a short but authentic account of this most extraordinary character:—"James Sullivan was a native of the county of Cork, and an awkward ignorant rustic of the lowest class, generally known by the appellation of the *Whisperer*, and his profession was horse-breaking. The credulity of the vulgar bestowed that epithet upon him, from an opinion that he communicated his wishes to the animal by means of a whisper; and the singularity of his method gave some color to the superstitious belief. As far as the sphere of his control extended, the boast of *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, was more justly claimed by James Sullivan, than by Cæsar, or even Bonaparte himself. How his art was acquired, or in what it consisted, is likely to remain for ever unknown, as he has lately left the world without divulging it. His son, who follows the same occupation, possesses but a small portion of the art, having either never learned its true secret, or being incapable of putting it in practice. The wonder of his skill consisted in the short time requisite to accomplish his design, which was performed in private, and without any apparent means of coercion. Every description of horse, or even mule, whether previously broke, or unhandled, whatever their peculiar vices or ill habits might have been, submitted, without show of resistance, to the magical influence of his art, and, in the short space of half an hour, became gentle and tractable. The effect, though instantaneously produced, was generally durable. Though more submissive to him than to others, yet they seemed to have acquired a docility unknown before. When sent for to tame a vicious horse, he directed the stable in which he and the object of his experiment were placed, to be shut, with orders not to open the door until a signal given. After a *tête à-tête* between him and the horse for about half an hour, during which little or no bustle was heard, the signal was made; and upon opening the door, the horse was seen lying down, and the man by his side, playing familiarly with him, like a child with a puppy dog. From that time he was found perfectly willing to submit to discipline, however repugnant to his nature before. Some saw his skill tried on a horse, which could never be brought to stand for a smith to shoe him. The day after Sullivan's half hour lecture, I went, not without some incredulity, to the smith's shop, with many other curious spectators, where we were eye-witnesses of the complete success of his art. This, too, had been a troop-horse; and it was supposed, not without reason, that after regimental discipline had failed, no other would be found availing. I observed that the animal seemed afraid, whenever Sullivan either spoke or looked at him. How that extraordinary ascendancy could have been obtained, it is difficult to conjecture. In common cases, this mysterious preparation was unnecessary. He seemed to possess an instinctive power of inspiring awe, the result, perhaps, of natural intrepidity, in which, I believe, a great part of his art consisted; though the circumstance of his *tête-à-tête* shows, that, upon particular occasions, something more must have been added to it. A faculty like this would, in other hands, have made a fortune, and great offers have been made to him for the exercise of his art abroad; but hunting, and attachment to his native soil, were his ruling passions. He lived at home, in the style most agreeable to his disposition, and nothing could induce him to quit Dunhallow and the fox-hounds."

Before he was fifteen, he could drive the most vicious and obstinate pig as quietly before him as a lamb; yet no one knew how, nor by what means he had gained the secret that enabled him to do it. Whenever he attended a fair, his time was principally spent among the pigs, where he stood handling, and examining, and pretending to buy them, although he seldom had half-a-crown in his pocket. At length, by hoarding up such small sums as he could possibly lay his hand on, he got together the price of a "slip," which he bought, reared, and educated in a manner that did his ingenuity great credit. When this was brought to its *ne plus ultra* of fatness, he sold it, and purchased two more, which he fed in the same way. On disposing of these, he made a fresh purchase, and thus proceeded, until, in the course of a few years, he was a well-known pig-jobber.

Phil's journeys as a pig-driver to the leading seaport towns nearest him, were always particularly profitable. In Ireland, swine are not kept in sties, as they are among English feeders, but permitted to go at liberty through pasture fields, commons, and along roadsides, where they make up as well as they can for the scanty pittance allowed them at home during meal-times. We do not, however, impeach Phil's honesty; but simply content ourselves with saying, that when his journey was accomplished, he mostly found the original number with which he had set out increased by three or four, and sometimes by half a dozen. Pigs in general resemble each other, and it surely was not Phil's fault if a stray one, feeding on the roadside or common, thought proper to join his drove and see the world. Phil's object, we presume, was only to take care that his original number was not diminished, its increase being a matter in which he felt little concern.

He now determined to take a professional trip to England, and that this might be the more productive, he resolved to purchase a lot of the animals we have been describing. No time was lost in this speculation. The pigs were bought up as cheaply as possible, and Phil sat out, for the first time in his life, to try with what success he could measure his skill against that of a Yorkshireman. On this occasion, he brought with him a pet, which he had with considerable pains trained up for purposes hereafter to be explained.

There was nothing remarkable in the passage, unless that every creature on board was sea-sick, except the pigs; even to them, however, the change was a disagreeable one; for to be pent up in the hold of a ship was a deprivation of liberty, which, fresh as they were from their native hills, they could not

relish. They felt, therefore, as patriots, a loss of freedom, but not a whit of appetite; for, in truth, of the latter no possible vicissitude short of death could deprive them.

Phil, however, with an assumed air of simplicity absolutely stupid, disposed of them to a Yorkshire dealer at about twice the value they would have brought in Ireland, though as pigs went in England it was low enough. He declared that they had been fed on *tip-top* feeding: which was literally true, as he afterwards admitted that the tops of nettles and potato stalks constituted the only nourishment they had got for three weeks before.

The Yorkshireman looked with great contempt upon what he considered a miserable essay to take him in.

"What a fule this Hirishmun mun bea;" said he, "to think to teake me in! Had he said that them there Hirish swoine were *badly* feade, I'd ha' thought it fairish enough on un; but to seay that they was oll weal feade on *tip-top* feeadin'! Nea, nea! I knaws weal enough that they was noat feade on nothin' at oll, which meakes them loak so poorish! Howsomever, I shall fatten them. I'se warrant—I'se warrant I shall!"

When driven home to sties somewhat more comfortable than the cabins of unfortunate Irishmen, they were well supplied with food which would have been very often considered a luxury by poor Paddy himself, much less by his pigs.

"Measter," said the man who had seen them fed, "them there Hirish pigs ha' not teasted nout for a moonth yet: they feade like nout I seed o' my laife!!"

"Ay! ay!" replied the master, "I'se warrant they'll soon fatten—I'se warrant they shall, Hodge—they be praime feeders—I'se warrant they shall; and then, Hodge, we've bit the soft Hirishmun."

Hodge gave a knowing look at his master, and grinned at this observation.

The next morning Hodge repaired to the sties to see how they were thriving; when, to his great consternation, he found the feeding-troughs clean as if they had been washed, and, not a single Irish pig to be seen or heard about the premises; but to what retreat the animals could have betaken themselves, was completely beyond his comprehension. He scratched his head, and loooked about him in much perplexity.

"Dang un!" he exclaimed, "I never seed nout like this."

He would have proceeded in a strain of cogitation equally enlightened, had not a noise of shouting, alarm, and confusion in the neighborhood, excited his attention. He looked about him, and to his utter astonishment saw that some extraordinary commotion prevailed, that the country was up, and the hills alive with people, who ran, and shouted, and wheeled at full flight in all possible directions. His first object was to join the crowd, which he did as soon as possible, and found that the pigs he had shut up the preceding night in sties whose enclosures were at least four feet high, had cleared them like so many *chamois*, and were now closely pursued by the neighbors, who rose *en masse* to hunt down and secure such dreadful depredators.

The waste and mischief they had committed in one night were absolutely astonishing. Bean and turnip fields, and vegetable enclosures of all descriptions, kitchen-gardens, corn-fields, and even flower-gardens, were rooted up and destroyed with an appearance of system which would have done credit to Terry Alt himself.

Their speed was the theme of every tongue. Hedges were taken in their flight, and cleared in a style that occasioned the country people to turn up their eyes, and scratch their heads in wonder. Dogs of all degrees bit the dust, and were caught up dead in stupid amazement by their owners, who began to doubt whether or not these extraordinary animals were swine at all. The depredators in the meantime had adopted the Horatian style of battle. Whenever there was an ungenerous advantage taken in the pursuit, by slipping dogs across or before their path, they shot off at a tangent through the next crowd, many of whom they prostrated in their flight; by this means they escaped the dogs until the latter were somewhat exhausted, when, on finding one in advance of the rest, they turned, and, with standing bristles and burning tusks, fatally checked their pursuer in his full career. To wheel and fly until another got in advance, was then the plan of fight; but, in fact the conflict was conducted on the part of the Irish pigs with a fertility of expediency that did credit to their country, and established for those who displayed it, the possession of intellect far superior to that of their opponents. The pigs now began to direct their course towards the sties in which they had been so well fed the night before. This being their last flight they radiated towards one common centre, with a fierceness and celerity that occasioned the woman and children to take shelter within doors. On arriving at the sties, the ease with which they shot themselves over the four-feet walls was incredible. The farmer had caught the alarm, and just came out in time to witness their return; he stood with his hands driven down into the pockets of his red, capacious waistcoat, and uttered not a word. When the last of them came bound-

ing into the sty, Hodge approached, quite breathless and exhausted:

"Oh, measter," he exclaimed, "these be not Hirish pigs at oll, they be Hirish deevils; and yau mun ha' bought 'em fra a cunning mon!"

"Hodge," replied his master, "I'se be bit—I'se heard feather talk about un. That breed's *true* Hirish: but I'se try and sell 'em to Squoire Jolly to hunt wi' as beagles, for he wants a pack. They do say all the swoine that the deevils were put into ha' been drawn; but for my peart, I'se sure that some on un must ha' escaped to Hireland."

Phil during the commotion excited by his knavery in Yorkshire, was traversing the country, in order to dispose of his remaining pig; and the manner in which he effected his first sale of it was as follows:

A gentleman was one evening standing with some laborers by the wayside when a tattered Irishman, equipped in a pair of white dusty brogues, stockings without feet, old patched breeches, a bag slung across his shoulder, his coarse shirt lying open about a neck tanned by the sun into a reddish yellow, a hat nearly the color of the shoes, and a hay rope tied for comfort about his waist; in one hand he also held a straw rope, that depended from the hind leg of a pig which he drove before him; in the other was a cudgel, by the assistance of which he contrived to limp on after it, his two shoulder-blades rising and falling alternately with a shrugging motion that indicated great fatigue.

When he came opposite where the gentleman stood he checked the pig, which instinctively commenced feeding upon the grass by the edge of the road.

"Och," said he, wiping his brow with the cuff of his coat, "*mavrone orth a muck*;* but I'm kilt wit you. Musha, Gad bless yer haner, an' maybe ye'd buy a slip of a pig fwhrom me, that has my heart bruck, so she has, if ever any body's heart was bruck wit the likes of her; an' sure so there was, no doubt, or I wouldn't be as I am wid her. I'll give her a dead bargain, sir; for it's only to get her aff av my hands I'm wantin', plase yer haner—*hush amuck—hush, a veehone!* † Be asy, an' me in conwersation wid his haner here!"

"You are an Irishman?" the gentleman inquired.

"I am, sir, from Connaught, yer haner, an' 'ill sell the crathur dag cheap, all out. Asy, you thief!"

"I don't want the pig, my good fellow," replied the Englishman, without evincing curiosity enough to inquire how he came to have such a commodity for sale.

"She'd be the darlint in no time wid you, sir; the run o' your kitchen 'ud make her up a beauty, your haner, along wit no trouble to the sarvints about sweepin' it, or any thing. You'd only have to lay down the potato-basket on the flure, or the misthress, Gad bless her, could do it, an' not have a crumbliu' behind her, besides sleepin, your haner, in the carner beyant, if she'd take the throuble."

The sluggish phlegm of the Englisman was stirred up a little by the twisted, and somewhat incomprehensible nature of these instructions.

"How far do you intend to proceed to-night, Paddy?" said he.

"The sarra one o' myself knows, plaze yer haner: sure we've an ould sayin' of our own in Ireland beyant—that he's a wise man can tell how far he'll go, sir, till he comes to his journey's ind. I'll give this crathur to you at *more* nor her value, yer haner."

"More!—why the man knows not what he's saying," observed the gentleman; "*less* you mean, I suppose, Paddy?"

"More or less, sir: you'll get her a bargain; an' Gad bless you, sir!"

"But it is a commodity which I don't want at present. I am very well stocked with pigs, as it is. Try elsewhere."

"She'd flog the counthry side, sir; an' if the misthress herself, sir, 'ud shake the wishp o' sthraw fwor her in the kitchen, sir, near the whoire. Yer haner could spake to her about it; an' in no time put a knife into her whiu you plazed. In regard o' the other thing, sir—she's like a Christyeen, yer haner, an' no throuble, sir, if you'd be seein' company or any thing."

"It's an extraordinary pig, this, of yours."

"It's no lie fwhor you, sir; she's as clane an' dacent a crathur, sir! Och, if the same pig 'ud come into the care o' the misthress, Gad bliss her! an' I'm sure if she has as much gudness in her face as the hanerable *dinnha ousahl* *—the handsome gintleman she's married upon!—you'll have her thrivin' bravely, sir, shartly, plase Gad, if you'll take courage. Will I dhrive her up the aveny fwor you, sir? A good gintlewoman I'm sure, is the same misthriss! Will I dhrive her up fwor you, sir? *Shadh amuck—shadh dherin!*"†

"No, no; I have no further time to lose; you may go forward."

"Thank your haner; is it whorid toarst the house abow, sir? I wouldn't be standin' up, sir, wit you about a thrifle; an you'll have her, sir, fwhor any thing you plase beyant a

* My sorrow on you for a pig.
† Silence pig! Silence, you vagabond!

* Gentleman.
† Behave yourself pig—behave, I say.

pound, yer haner; an' 'tis throwin' her away it is: but one can't be hard wit a rale gintleman any way."

"You only annoy me, man; besides I don't want the pig; you lose time; I don't want to buy it, I repeat to you."

"Gad bliss you, sir—Gad bliss you. Maybe if I'd make up to the mishthress, yer haner! Thrath she wouldn't turn the crathur from the place, in regard that the tindherness ow the feelin' would come ower her—the rale gintlewoman, any way! 'Tis dag chape you have her at what I said, sir; an' Gad bliss you!"

"Do you want to compel me to purchase it whether I will or no?"

"Thrath, it's whor next to nothin' I'm givin' her to you, sir; but sure you can make your own price at any thing beyant a pound. *Huerish amuck—stadh anish!*—be asy, you crathur, sure you're gettin' into good quarthers, any how—goin' to the hanerable English gintleman's kitchen, an' God knows it's a pleasure to dale wit 'em. Och, the world's differ there is betuxt them, an' our own dirty Irish buckeens, that 'ud shkin a bad skilleen, an' pay their debts wit the remainder. The gateman 'ud let me in, yer haner, an' I'll meet you at the big house, abow."

"Upon my honor this is a good jest," said the gentleman, absolutely teased into a compliance; "you are forcing me to buy that which I don't want."

"Sure you will, sir; you'll want more nor that yit, please Gad, if you be spared. Come, amuck—come, you crathur; faix you're in luck so you are—gettin' so good a place wit his haner, here, that you won't know yourself shortly, please God."

He immediately commenced driving his pig towards the gentleman's residence with such an air of utter simplicity, as would have imposed upon any man not guided by direct inspiration. Whilst he approached the house, its proprietor arrived there by another path a few minutes before him, and, addressing his lady, said:

"My dear, will you come and look at a purchase which an Irishman has absolutely compelled me to make? You had better come and see himself, too, for he is the greatest simpleton of an Irishman I have ever met with."

The lady's curiosity was more easily excited than that of her husband. She not only came out, but brought with her some ladies who had been on a visit, in order to hear the Irishman's brogue, and to amuse themselves at his expense. Of the pig, too, it appeared she was determined to know something.

"George, my love, is the pig also from Ireland?"

"I don't know, my dear; but I should think so from its fleshless appearance. I have never seen so spare an animal of that class in this country."

"Juliana," said one of the ladies to her companion, "don't go too near him. Graious! look at the bludgeon, or beam, or something he carries in his hand, to fight and beat the people, I suppose: yet," she added, putting up her glass, "the man is actually not ill-looking; and, though not so tall as the Irishman in Sheridan's Rivals, he is well made."

"His eyes are good," said her companion—"a bright gray, and keen; and were it not that his nose is rather short and turned up, he would be handsome."

"George, my love," exclaimed the lady of the mansion, "he is like most Irishmen of his class that I have seen; indeed, scarcely so intelligent, for he *does* appear quite a simpleton, except, perhaps, a lurking kind of expression, which is a sign of their humor, I suppose. Don't you think so, my love?"

"No, my dear; I think him a bad specimen of the Irishman. Whether it is that he talks our language but imperfectly, or that he is a stupid creature, I cannot say; but in selling the pig just now, he actually told me that he would let me have it for *more* than it was worth."

"Oh, that was so laughable! We will speak to him, though."

The degree of estimation in which these civilized English held Phil was so low, that this conversation took place within a few yards of him, precisely as if he had been an animal of an inferior species, or one of the aborigines of New Zealand.

"Pray what is your name?" inquired the matron.

"Phadhrumshagh Corfuffle, please yer haner: my fadher carried the same name upon him. We're av the Corfuffles av Leatherum Laghy, my lady; but my grandmudher was a Dornyeen, an' my own mudher, please yer haner, was o' the Shudhurthagans o' Ballymadoghy, my ladyship, *Stadh anish, amuck bradagh!**—be asy, can't you, an' me in conversation wit the beauty o' the world that I'm spakin' to."

"That's the Negus language," observed one of the young ladies, who affected to be a wit and a blue-stocking; "it's Irish and English mixed."

"Thrath, an' but that the handsome young lady's so purty," observed Phil, "I'd be sayin' myself that that's a quare remark upon a poor unlarned man; but, Gad bless her, she *is* so purty what can one say for lookin' an her!"

* Be quiet now, you wicked pig.

"OH! MASTER!" HE EXCLAIMED, "THESE BE NOT B'IRISH PIGS AT ALL; THEY BE B'IRISH DEEVILS."
—*Phil Purcel, the Pig-Driver*, p. 911, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

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"The poor man, Adelaide, speaks as well as he can," replied the lady, rather reprovingly: "he is by no means so wild as one would have expected."

"Candidly speaking, much *tamer* than *I* expected," rejoined the wit. Indeed, I meant the poor Irishman no offence."

"Where did you get the pig, friend? and how came you to have it for sale so far from home?"

"Fwhy it isn't whor sale, my lady," replied Phil, evading the former question; "the masther here, Gad bless him an' spare him to you, ma'am!—thrath, an' it's his four quarthers that knew how to pick out a wife, any how, whor beauty an' all banerable whormations o' grandheur—so he did; an' well he desarves you, my lady: faix, it's a fine houseful o' thim you'll have, plase Gad—an' fwhy not? whin it's all in the coorse o' Providence, bein' both so handsome:—he gev me a pound note whor her my ladyship, an' his own plisure aftherwards; an' I'm now waitin' to be ped."

"What kind of a country is Ireland, as I understand you are an Irishman?"

"Thrath, my lady, it's like fwhat maybe you never seen—a fool's purse, ten guineas goin' out whor one that goes in."

"Upon my word that's wit," observed the young blue-stocking.

"What's your opinion of Irishwomen?" the lady continued; "are they handsomer than the English ladies, think you?"

"Murdher, my lady," says Phil, raising his caubeen, and scratching his head in pretended perplexity, with his finger and thumb, "fwhat am I to say to that, ma'am, and all of yez to the fwhore? But the sarra one av me will give it agin the darlin's beyant."

"But which do you think the more handsome?"

"Thrath, I do, my lady; the Irish and English women would flog the world, an' sure it would be a burnin' shame to go to set them agin one another fwhor beauty."

"Whom do you mean by the 'darlin's beyant?'" inquired the blue-stocking, attempting to pronounce the words.

"Faix, miss, who but the crathers ower the wather, that kills us entirely, so they do."

"I cannot comprehend him," she added to the lady of the mansion.

"Arrah, maybe I'd make bould to take up the manners from you fwhor a while, my lady, plase yer haner?" said Phil, addressing the latter.

"I do not properly understand you," she replied, "speak plainer."

"Troth, that's fwhat they do, yer haner; they never go about the bush wit yez—the gintlemen, ma'am, of our country, fwhin they do be coortin' yez; an' I want to ax, ma'am, if you plase, fwhat *you* think of *thim*, that is if ever any of them had the luck to come acrass you, my lady?"

"I have not been acquainted with many Irish gentlemen," she replied, "but I hear they are men of a remarkable character."

"Faix, 'tis you may say that," replied Phil; "sowl, my lady, 'tis well for the masther here, plase yer haner, sir, that none o' them met wit the misthress before you was both marrid, or, wit riverence be it spoken, 'tis the sweet side o' the tongue they'd be layin' upon you, ma'am, an' the rough side to the masther himself, along wit a few scrapes of a pen on a slip o' paper, jist to appoint the time and place, in regard of her ladyship's purty complexion—an' who can deny that, any way? Faix, ma'am, they've a way wit them, my counthrymen, that the ladies like well enough to thravel by. Asy, you deludher, an' me in conwersaytion wit the quality."

"I am quite anxious to know how you came by the pig, Paddy," said the wit.

"Arrah, miss, sure 'tisn't pigs you're thinkin' on, an' us discoorsin' about the gintlemen from Ireland, that you're all so fond ow here; faix, miss, they're the boys that fwoight for yees, an' 'ud rather be bringing an Englishman to the *sad* fwhor your sakes, nor atin' bread an' butther. Fwhy, now, miss, if you were beyant wit us, sarra ounce o' gunpowdher we'd have in no time, for love or money."

"Upon my word I should like to *see* Ireland!" exclaimed the blue-stocking; "but why would the gunpowder get scarce, pray?"

"Faix, fightin' about you, miss, an' all of yez, sure; for myself sees no differ at all in your banerable fwhormations of beauty and grandheur, an' all high-flown admirations."

"But tell us where you got the pig, Paddy?" persisted the wit, struck naturally enough with the circumstance. "How do you come to have an Irish pig so far from home?"

"Fwhy thin, miss, 'twas to a brother o' my own I was bringing it, that was livin' down the counthry here, an' fwhin I came to fwhere he lived, the sarra one o' me knew the place, in regard o' havin' forgotten the name of it entirely, an' there was I wit the poor crathur an my hands, till his haner here bought it whrom me—Gad bless you, sir!"

"As I live, there's a fine Irish blunder," observed the wit; "I shall put in my commonplace-book—it will be so genuine. I declare I'm quite delighted!"

"Well, Paddy," said the gentleman, "here's your money. There's a pound for you, and that's much more than the miserable animal is worth."

"Troth, sir, you have the crathur at what we call in Ireland a bargain.* Maybe yer haner 'ud spit upon the money fwhor luck, sir. It's the way we do, sir, beyant."

"No, no, Paddy, take it as it is. Good heavens! what barbarous habits these Irish have in all their modes of life, and how far they are removed from anything like civilization!"

"Thank yer haner. Faix, sir, this'll come so handy for the landlord at home, in regard o' the rint for the bit o' phatie ground, so it will, if I can get home agin widout brakin' it. Arrah, maybe yer haner 'ud give me the price o' my bed, an' a bit to ate, sir, an' keep me from brakin' in upon this, sir, Gad bless the money! I'm thinkin' o' the poor wife an' childher, sir—strivin', so I am, to do fwhor the darlins."

"Poor soul," said the lady, "he is affectionate in the midst of his wretchedness and ignorance."

"Here—here," replied the Englishman, anxious to get rid of him, "there's a shilling, which I give because you appear to be attached to your family."

"Och, och, fwhat can I say, sir, only that long may you reign over your family, an' the hanerable ladies to the fwore, sir. Gad fwhorever bliss you, sir, but you're the kind, noble gintleman, an' all belongin' to you, sir!"

Having received the shilling, he was in the act of departing, when, after turning it deliberately in his hand, shrugging his shoulders two or three times, and scratching his head, with a vacant face he approached the lady.

"Musha, ma'am, an maybe ye'd have the tindherness in your heart, seein' that the gudness is in yer hanerable face, any way, an' it would save the skillyeen that the masther gev'd for payin' my passage, so it would, jist to bid the steward, my ladyship, to ardher me a bit to ate in the kitchen below. The hunger, ma'am, is hard upon me, my lady; an' fwhat I'm doin', sure, is in regard o' the wife at home, an' the childher, the crathurs, an' me far fwhrom them, in a sthrange country, Gad help me!"

"What a singular being, George! and how beautifully is the economy of domestic affection exemplified, notwithstanding his half-savage state, in the little plans he devises for the benefit of his wife and children!" exclaimed the good lady, quite unconscious that Phil was a bachelor. "Juliana, my love, desire Timmins to give him his dinner. Follow this young lady, good man, and she will order you refreshment."

"Gad's blessin' upon your beauty an' gudness, my lady; an' a man might travel far afore he'd meet the likes o' you for aither o' them. Is it the other handsome young lady I'm to folly, ma'am?"

"Yes," replied the young wit, with an arch smile; "come after *me*."

"Thrath, miss, an' it's an asy task to do that, any way; wit a heart an' a half I go, acushla; an' I seen the day, miss, that it's not much of mate an' dhrink would tir ruble me, if I jist got lave to be lookin' at you, wit nothing but yourself to think an. But the wife an' childher, miss, makes great changes in us entirely."

"Why you are quite gallant, Paddy."

"Trath, I suppose I am now, miss; but you see, my honerable young lady, that's our fwhilin' at home: the counthry's poor, an' we can't help it, whedor or not. We're fwhorced to it, miss, whin we come ower here, by you, an' the likes o' you, mavourneen!"

Phil then proceeded to the house, was sent to the kitchen by the young lady, and furnished through the steward with an abundant supply of cold meat, bread, and beer, of which he contrived to make a meal that somewhat astonished the servants. Having satisfied his hunger, he deliberately—but with the greatest simplicity of countenance—filled the wallet which he carried slung across his back, with whatever he had left, observing as he did it:—

"Fwhy, thin, 'tis sthrange it is, that the same custom is wit us in Ireland beyant that is here: fwhor whinever a thraveller is axed in, he always brings fwhat he doesn't ate along wit him. An sure enough it's the same here amongst yez," added he, packing up the bread and beef as he spoke, "but Gad bliss the custom, any how, fwhor it's a good one!"

When he had secured the provender, and was ready to resume his journey, he began to yawn, and to exhibit the most unequivocal symptoms of fatigue.

"Arrah, sir," said he to the steward, "you wouldn't have e'er an ould barn that I'd throw myself in fwhor the night? The sarra leg I have to put undher me, now that I've got stiff with the sittin' so lang;* that, an' a wishp o' sthraw, sir, to sleep an, an' Gad bliss you!"

* Ironically—a take in.

* This is pronounced as in the first syllable of "Langolee,"—not like the Scotch "lang."

"Paddy, I cannot say," replied the steward; "but I shall ask my master, and if he orders it, you shall have the comfort of a hard floor and clean straw, Paddy—that you shall."

"Many thanks to you, sir: it's in your face, in thrath, the same gudness an' ginerosity."

The gentleman, on hearing Phil's request to be permitted a sleeping-place in the barn, was rather surprised at his wretched notion of comfort than at the request itself.

"Certainly, Timmins, let him sleep there," he replied; "give him sacks and straw enough. I dare say he will feel the privilege a luxury, poor devil, after his fatigue. Give him his breakfast in the morning, Timmins. Good heavens," he added, "what a singular people! What an amazing progress civilization must make before these Irish can be brought at all near the commonest standard of humanity!"

At this moment Phil, who was determined to back the steward's request, approached them.

"Paddy," said the gentleman, anticipating him, "I have ordered you sacks and straw in the barn, and your breakfast in the morning before you set out."

"Thrath," said Phil, "if there's e'er a stray blissin' goin', depind an it, sir, you'll get it fwhor your hanerable ginerosity to the sthranger. But about the 'slip,' sir—if the misthress herself 'ud shake the whisp o' sthraw fwhor her in the far carner o' the kitchen below, an' see her gettin' her supper, the crathur, before she'd put her to bed, she'd be thrivin' like a salmon, sir, in less than no time; and to ardher the sarwints, sir, if you plase, not to be defraudin' the crathur of the big phaties. Fwhor in regard it cannot spake fwhor itself, sir, it frets as wise as a Christyeen, when it's not honestly thrated."

"Never fear, Paddy; we shall take good care of it."

"Thank you, sir. But I afton heered, sir, that you dunno how to feed pigs in this counthry in ardher to mix the fwhat an' lane, lair (layer) about."

"And how do you manage that in Ireland, Paddy?"

"Fwhy, sir, I'll tell you how the misthress, Gad bless her, will manage it fwhor you: Take the crathur, sir, an' feed it to-morrow, till its as full as a tick—that's for the *fwhat*, sir; thin let her give it nothin' at all the next day, but keep it black fwhastin'—that's fwhor the *lane* (lean). Let her stick to that, sir, keepin' it atin' one day an' fastin' anodher, for six months, thin put a knife in it, an' if you don't have the fwhat an' lane, lair about, beautiful all out, fwhy niver bl'eve Phadrumshagh Corfuffle agin. Ay, indeed!"

The Englishman looked keenly at Phil, but could only read in his countenance a thorough and implicit belief in his own recipe for mixing the fat and lean. It is impossible to express his contempt for the sense and intellect of Phil; nothing could surpass it but the contempt which Phil entertained for him.

"Well," said he to the servant, "I have often heard of the barbarous habits of the Irish, but I must say that the incidents of this evening have set my mind at rest upon the subject. Good heavens! when will ever this besotted country rise in the scale of nations! Did ever a human being hear of such a method of feeding swine! I should have thought it incredible had I heard it from any but an Irishman!"

Phil then retired to the kitchen, where his assumed simplicity highly amused the servants, who, after an hour or two's fun with "Paddy," conducted him in a kind of contemptuous procession to the barn, where they left him to his repose.

The next morning he failed to appear at the hour of breakfast, but his non-appearance was attributed to his fatigue, in consequence of which he was supposed to have overslept himself. On going, however, to call him from the barn, they discovered that he had decamped; and on looking after the "slip," it was found that both had taken French leave of the Englishman. Phil and the pig had actually travelled fifteen miles that morning, before the hour on which he was missed—Phil going at a dog's trot, and the pig following at such a respectful distance as might not appear to identify them as fellow-travellers. In this manner Phil sold the pig to upwards of two dozen intelligent English gentlemen and farmers, and after winding up his bargains successfully, both arrived in Liverpool, highly delighted by their commercial trip through England.

The passage from Liverpool to Dublin, in Phil's time, was far different to that which steam and British enterprise have since made it. A vessel was ready to sail for the latter place on the very day of Phil's arrival in town; and, as he felt rather anxious to get out of England as soon as he could, he came, after selling his pig in good earnest, to the aforesaid vessel to ascertain if it were possible to get a deck passage. The year had then advanced to the latter part of autumn; so that it was the season when those inconceivable hordes of Irishmen who emigrate periodically for the purpose of lightening John Bull's labor, were in the act of returning to that country in which they find little

to welcome them—but domestic affection and misery.

When Phil arrived at the vessel, he found the captain in a state of peculiar difficulty. About twelve or fourteen gentlemen of rank and property, together with a score or upwards of highly respectable persons, but of less consideration, were in equal embarrassment. The fact was, that as no other vessel left Liverpool that day, about five hundred Irishmen, mostly reapers and mowers, had crowded upon deck, each determined to keep his place at all hazards. The captain, whose vessel was small, and none of the stoutest, flatly refused to put to sea with such a number. He told them it was madness to think of it; he could not risk the lives of the other passengers, nor even their own, by sailing with five hundred on the deck of so small a vessel. If the one-half of them would withdraw peaceably, he would carry the other half, which was as much as he could possibly accomplish. They were very willing to grant that what he said was true; but in the meantime, not a man of them would move, and to clear out such a number of fellows, who loved nothing better than fighting, armed, too, with sickles and scythes, was a task beyond either his ability or inclination to execute. He remonstrated with them, entreated, raged, swore, and threatened; but all to no purpose. His threats and entreaties were received with equal good-humor. Gibes and jokes were broken on him without number, and as his passion increased, so did their mirth, until nothing could be seen but the captain in vehement gesticulation, the Irishmen huzzaing him so vociferously, that his damns and curses, uttered against them, could not reach even his own ears.

"Gentlemen," said he to his cabin passengers, "for the love of Heaven, tax your invention to discover some means whereby to get one-half of these men out of the vessel, otherwise it will be impossible that we can sail to-day. I have already proffered to take one-half of them by lot, but they will not hear of it; and how to manage I am sure I don't know."

The matter, however, was beyond their depth; the thing seemed utterly impracticable, and the chances of their putting to sea were becoming fainter and fainter.

"Bl—t their eyes!" he at length exclaimed, "the ragged, hungry devils! If they heard me with decency I could bear their obstinacy better; but no, they must turn me into ridicule, and break their jests, and turn their cursed barbarous grins upon me in my own vessel. I say, boys," he added, proceeding to address them once more—"I say, savages, I have just three observations to make. The first is,"—

"Arrah, Captain, avourneen, badn't you betther get upon a stool," said a voice, "an' put a text before it, thin divide it dacently into three halves, an' make a sarmon of it."

"Captain, you wor intended for the church," added another. "You're the moral* of a Methodist preacher, if you wor dressed in black."

"Let him alone," said a third; "he'd be a jinteel man enough in a wildherness, an' 'ud make an illigant dancin'-masther to the bears."

"He's as graceful as a shaved pig on its hind legs, dancin' the 'Baltithrum Jig.'"

The captain's face was literally black with passion: he turned away with a curse, which produced another huzza, and swore that he would rather encounter the Bay of Biscay in a storm, than have anything to do with such an unmanageable mob.

"Captain," said a little, shrewd-looking Connaught man, "what 'ud you be willin' to give anybody, ower an' abow his free passage, that 'ud tell you how to get one half o' them out?"

"I'll give him a crown," replied the captain, "together with grog and rations to the eyes: I'll be hanged if I don't."

"Then I'll do it fwhor you, sir, if you keep your word wit me."

"Done!" said the captain; "it's a bargain, my good fellow, if you accomplish it; and, what's more, I'll consider you a knowing one."

"I'm a poor Camaught man, your haner," replied our friend Phil; "but what's to prevent me thryin'? Tell thim," he continued, "that you *must* go; purtind to be for takin' thim all wit you, sir. Put Munster agin Connaught, one-half on this side, an' the odher an that, to keep the crathur of a ship steady, your haner; an' fwhin you have thim half an' half, wit a little room betuxt thim, 'now,' says yer haner, 'boys, you're divided into two halves; if one side kicks the other out o' the ship, I'll bring the conquirors.'"

The captain said not a word in reply to Phil, but immediately ranged the Munster and Connaught men on each side of the deck—a matter which he found little difficulty in accomplishing, for each party, hoping that he intended to take themselves, readily declared their province, and stood together. When they were properly separated, there still remained about forty or fifty persons belonging to neither province; but, at Phil's suggestion, the captain paired them off to each division, man for man, until they were drawn up into two bodies.

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* Model.

"Now," said he, "there you stand: let one-half of you drub the other out of the vessel, and the conquerors shall get their passage."

Instant was the struggle that ensued for the sake of securing a passage, and from the anxiety to save a shilling, by getting out of Liverpool on that day. The saving of the shilling is indeed a consideration with Paddy which drives him to the various resources of begging, claiming kindred with his resident countrymen in England, pretended illness, coming to be passed from parish to parish, and all the turnings and shiftings which his reluctance to part with money renders necessary. Another night, therefore, and probably another day, in Liverpool, would have been attended with expense. This argument prevailed with all: with Munster as well as with Connaught, and they fought accordingly.

When the attack first commenced, each party hoped to be able to expel the other without blows. This plan was soon abandoned. In a few minutes the sticks and fists were busy. Throttling, tugging, cuffing, and knocking down—shouting, hallooing, huzzaing, and yelling, gave evident proofs that the captain, in embracing Phil's proposal, had unwittingly applied the match to a mine, whose explosion was likely to be attended with disastrous consequences. As the fight became warm, and the struggle more desperate, the hooks and scythes were resorted to; blood began to flow, and men to fall, disabled and apparently dying. The immense crowd which had now assembled to witness the fight among the Irishmen, could not stand tamely by, and see so many lives likely to be lost, without calling in the civil authorities. A number of constables in a few minutes attended; but these worthy officers of the civil authorities experienced very uncivil treatment from the fists, cudgels, and sickles of *both* parties. In fact, they were obliged to get from among the rioters with all possible celerity, and to suggest to the magistrates the necessity of calling in the military.

In the meantime the battle rose into a furious and bitter struggle for victory. The deck of the vessel was actually slippery with blood, and many were lying in an almost lifeless state. Several were pitched into the hold, and had their legs and arms broken by the fall; some were tossed over the sides of the vessel, and only saved from drowning by the activity of the sailors; and not a few of those who had been knocked down in the beginning of the fray were trampled into insensibility.

The Munster men at length gave way; and their opponents, following up their advantage, succeeded in driving them to a man out of the vessel, just as the military arrived. Fortunately their interference was unnecessary. The ruffianly captain's object was accomplished; and as no lives were lost, nor any injury more serious than broken bones and flesh-wounds sustained, he got the vessel in readiness, and put to sea.

Who would not think that the Irish were a nation of misers, when our readers are informed that all this bloodshed arose from their unwillingness to lose a shilling by remaining in Liverpool another night? Or who could believe that these very men, on reaching home, and meeting their friends in a fair or market, or in a public-house after mass on a Sunday, would sit down and spend, recklessly and foolishly, that very money which in another country they part with as if it were their very heart's blood? Yet so it is! Unfortunately, Paddy is wiser anywhere than at home, where wisdom, sobriety, and industry are best calculated to promote his own interests.

This slight sketch of Phil Purcel we have presented to our readers as a specimen of the low, cunning Connaught-man; and we have only to add, that neither the pig-selling scene, nor the battle on the deck of the vessel in Liverpool, is fictitious. On the contrary, we have purposely kept the tone of our description of the latter circumstance beneath the reality. Phil, however, is not drawn as a general portrait, but as one of that knavish class of men called "jobbers," a description of swindlers certainly not more common in Ireland than in any other country. We have known Connaughtmen as honest and honorable as it was possible to be; yet there is a strong prejudice entertained against them in every other province of Ireland, as is evident by the old adage, "Never *trust* a Connaughtman."

THE GEOGRAPHY OF AN IRISH OATH.

No pen can do justice to the extravagance and frolic inseparable from the character of the Irish people; nor has any system of philosophy been discovered that can with moral fitness be applied to them. Phrenology fails to explain it; for, so far as the craniums of Irishmen are concerned, according to the most capital surveys hitherto made and reported on, it appears that, inasmuch as their moral and intellectual organs predominate over the physical and sensual, the people ought, therefore, to be ranked at the very tip-top of morality. We would warn the phrenologists, however, not to be too sanguine in drawing inferences from an examination of Paddy's head. Heaven only knows the scenes in which it is engaged, and the protuberances created by a long life of hard fighting. Many an organ and development is brought out on it by the cudgel, that never would have appeared had Nature been left to herself.

Drinking, fighting, and swearing, are the three great characteristics of every people. Paddy's love of fighting and of whiskey has been long proverbial; and of his tact in swearing much has also been said. But there is one department of oath-making in which he stands unrivalled and unapproachable; I mean the *alibi*. There is where he shines, where his oath, instead of being a mere matter of fact or opinion, rises up into the dignity of epic narrative, containing within itself, all the complexity of machinery, harmony of parts, and fertility of invention, by which your true epic should be characterized.

The Englishman, whom we will call the historian in swearing, will depose to the truth of this or that fact, but there the line is drawn; he swears his oath so far as he knows, and stands still. "I'm sure, for my part, I don't know; I've said all I knows about it," and beyond this his besotted intellect goeth not.

The Scotchman, on the other hand, who is the metaphysician in swearing, sometimes borders on equivocation. He decidedly goes farther than the Englishman, not because he has less honesty, but more prudence. He will assent to, or deny a proposition; for the Englishman's "I don't know," and the Scotchman's "I dinna ken," are two very distinct assertions when properly understood. The former stands out a monument of dulness, an insuperable barrier against inquiry, ingenuity, and fancy; but the latter frequently stretches itself so as to embrace hypothetically a particular opinion.

But Paddy! Put *him* forward to prove an *alibi* for his fourteenth or fifteenth cousin, and you will be gratified by the pomp, pride, and circumstance of true swearing. Every oath with him *is* an epic — pure poetry, abounding with humor, pathos, and the highest order of invention and talent. He is not at ease, it is true, under *facts;* there is something too commonplace in dealing with them, which his genius scorns. But his flights—his flights are beautiful; and his episodes admirable and happy. In fact, he is an *improvisatore* at oath-taking; with this difference, that his *extempore* oaths possess all the ease and correctness of labor and design.

He is not, however, *altogether* averse to facts; but, like your true poet, he veils, changes, and modifies them with such skill, that they possess all the merit and graces of fiction. If he happen to make an assertion incompatible with the plan of the piece, his genius acquires fresh energy, enables him to widen the design, and to create new machinery, with such happiness of adaptation, that what appeared out of proportion of character is made, in his hands, to contribute to the general strength and beauty of the oath.

'Tis true, there is nothing perfect under the sun; but if there were, it would certainly be Paddy at an *alibi*. Some flaws, no doubt, occur; some slight inaccuracies may be noticed by a critical eye; an occasional anachronism stands out, and a mistake or so in geography; but let it be recollected that Paddy's *alibi* is but a human production; let us not judge him by harsher rules than those which we apply to Homer, Virgil, or Shakspeare.

"Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus," is allowed on all hands. Virgil made Dido and Æneas contemporary, though they were not so; and Shakspeare, by the creative power of his genius, changed an inland town into a seaport. Come, come, have bowels. Let epic swearing be treated with the same courtesy shown to epic poetry, that is, if both are the production of a rare genius. I maintain, that when Paddy commits a blemish he is too harshly admonished for it. When he soars out of sight here, as occasionally happens, does he not frequently alight somewhere about Sydney Bay, much against his own inclination? And if he puts

forth a hasty production, is he not compelled, for the space of seven or fourteen years, to revise his oath? But, indeed, few words of fiction are properly encouraged in Ireland.

It would be unpardonable in us, however, to overlook the beneficial effects of Paddy's peculiar genius in swearing *alibis*. Some persons, who display their own egregious ignorance of morality, may be disposed to think that it tends to lessen the obligation of an oath, by inducing a habit among the people of swearing to what is not true. We look upon such persons as very dangerous to Ireland and to the repeal of the Union; and we request them not to push their principles too far in the disturbed parts of the country. Could society hold together a single day, if nothing but truth were *spoken?* Would not law and lawyers soon become obsolete, if nothing but truth were *sworn?* What would become of parliament if truth alone were uttered there? Its annual proceedings might be dispatched in a month. Fiction is the basis of society, the bond of commercial prosperity, the channel of communication between nation and nation, and not unfrequently the interpreter between a man and his own conscience.

For these, and many other reasons which we could adduce, we say with Paddy, "Long life to fiction!" When associated with swearing, it shines in its brightest colors. What, for instance, is calculated to produce the best and purest of the moral virtues so beautifully, as the swearing an *alibi?* Here are fortitude and a love of freedom resisting oppression; for it is well known that all law is oppression in Ireland.

There is compassion for the peculiar state of the poor boy, who, perhaps, *only* burned a family in their beds; benevolence to prompt the generous effort in his behalf; disinterestedness to run the risk of becoming an involuntary absentee; fortitude in encountering a host of brazen-faced lawyers; patience under the unsparing gripe of a cross-examiner; perseverance in conducting the oath to its close against a host of difficulties; and friendship, which bottoms and crowns them all.

Paddy's merits, however, touching the *alibi*, rest not here. Fiction on these occasions only teaches him how to perform a *duty*. It may be, that he is under the obligation of a previous oath *not* to give evidence *against* certain of his friends and associates. Now, could anything in the whole circle of religion or ethics be conceived that renders the epic style of swearing so incumbent upon Paddy? There is a kind of moral fitness in all things; for where the necessity of invention exists, it is consolatory to reflect that the ability to invent is bestowed along with it.

Next to the *alibi* comes Paddy's powers in sustaining a cross-examination. Many person thinks that *this* is his *forte;* but we cannot yield to such an opinion, nor compromise his originality of conception in the scope and plan of an *alibi*. It is marked by a minuteness of touch, and a peculiarity of expression which give it every appearance of real life. The circumstances are so well imagined, the groups so naturally disposed, the coloring so finished, and the background in such fine perspective, that the whole picture presents you with such keeping and *vraisemblance*, as could be accomplished only by the genius of a master.

In point of interest, however, we must admit that his ability in a cross-examination ranks next to his skill in *planning* an *alibi*. There is, in the former, a versatility of talent that keeps him always ready; a happiness of retort, generally disastrous to the wit of the most established cross-examiner; an apparent simplicity, which is quite as impenetrable as the lawyer's assurance; a *vis comica*, which puts the court in tears; and an originality of sorrow, that often convulses it with laughter. His resources, when he is pressed, are inexhaustible; and the address, with which he contrives to gain time, that he may suit his reply to the object of his evidence, is beyond all praise. And yet his appearance when he mounts the table is anything but prepossessing; a sheepish look, and a loose-jointed frame of body, wrapped in a frieze great-coat, do not promise much. Nay, there is often a rueful blank expression in his visage, which might lead a stranger to anticipate nothing but blunders and dulness. This, however, is hypocrisy of the first water. Just observe the tact with which he places his caubeen upon the table, his kippeen across it, and the experienced air with which he pulls up the waistbands of his breeches, absolutely girding his loins for battle. Tis true his blue eye has at present nothing remarkable in it, except a drop or to of the native; but that is *not* remarkable.

When the direct examination has been concluded, nothing can be finer than the simplicity with which he turns round to the lawyer who is to cross-examine him. Yet, as if conscious that firmness and caution are his main guards, he again pulls up his waistbands with a more vigorous hitch, looks shyly into the very eyes of his opponent, and awaits the first blow.

The question at length comes; and Paddy, after having raised the collar of his big coat on his shoulder, and twisted up the shoulder along with it, directly puts the query back

to the lawyer, without altering a syllable of it, for the purpose of ascertaining more accurately whether that is the precise question that has been put to him; for Paddy is conscientious. Then is the science displayed on both sides. The one, a veteran, trained in all the technicalities of legal puzzles, irony, blarney, sarcasm, impudence, stock jokes, quirks, rigmarolery, brow-beating, ridicule, and subtlety; the other a poor peasant, relying only upon the justice of a good cause and the gifts of nature; without either experience or learning, and with nothing but his native modesty to meet the forensic effrontery of his antagonist.

Our readers will perceive that the odds are a thousand to one against Paddy; yet, when he replies to a hackneyed genius at cross-examination, how does it happen that he uniformly elicits those roars of laughter which rise in the court, and convulse it from the judge to the crier? In this laugh, which is usually at the expense of the cross-examiner, Paddy himself always joins, so that the counsel has the double satisfaction of being made not only the jest of the judge and his brother lawyers, but of the ragged witness whom he attempted to make ridiculous.

It is not impossible that this merry mode of dispensing justice may somewhat encourage Paddy in that independence of mind which relishes not the idea of being altogether bound by oaths that are too often administered with a jocular spirit. To most of the Irish in general an oath is a solemn, to some, an awful thing. Of this wholesome reverence for its sanction, two or three testimonies given in a court of justice usually cured them. The indifferent, business-like manner in which the oaths are put, the sing-song tone of voice, the rapid utterance of the words, give to this solemn act an appearance of excellent burlesque, which ultimately renders the whole proceedings remarkable for the absence of truth and reality; but, at the same time, gives them unquestionable merit as a dramatic representation, abounding with fiction, well related and ably acted.

Thumb-kissing is another feature in Paddy's adroitness too important to be passed over in silence. Here his tact shines out again! It would be impossible for him, in many cases, to meet the perplexities of a cross-examination so cleverly as he does, if he did not believe that he had, by kissing his thumb instead of the book, actually taken no oath, and consequently given to himself a wider range of action. We must admit, however, that this very circumstance involves him in difficulties which are sometimes peculiarly embarrassing. Taking everything into consideration, the prospect of freedom for his sixth consin, the consciousness of having kissed his thumb, or the consoling reflection that he swore only on a *Lave* Bible, it must be granted that the opportunities presented by a cross-examination are well calculated to display his wit, humor, and fertility of invention. He is accordingly great in it; but still we maintain that his execution of an *alibi* is his ablest performance, comprising, as it does, both the conception and construction of the work.

Both the oaths and imprecations of the Irish display, like those who use them, indications of great cruelty and great humor. Many of the former exhibit that ingenuity which comes out when Paddy is on his cross-examination in a court of justice. Every people, it is true, have resorted to the habit of mutilating or changing in their oaths the letters which form the Creator's name; but we question if any have surpassed the Irish in the cleverness with which they accomplish it. Mock oaths are habitual to Irishmen in ordinary conversation; but the use of any or all of them is not considered to constitute an oath: on the contrary, they are in the mouths of many who would not, except upon a very solemn occasion indeed, swear by the name of the Deity in its proper form.

The ingenuity of their mock oaths is sufficient to occasion much perplexity to any one disposed to consider it in connection with the character and moral feelings of the people. Whether to note it as a reluctance on their part to incur the guilt of an oath, or as a proof of habitual tact in evading it by artifice, is manifestly a difficulty hard to be overcome. We are decidedly inclined to the former; for although there is much laxity of principle among Irishmen, naturally to be expected from men whose moral state has been neglected by the legislature, and deteriorated by political and religious asperity, acting upon quick passions and badly regulated minds—yet we know that they possess, after all, a strong, but vague undirected sense of devotional feeling and reverence, which are associated with great crimes and awfully dark shades of character. This explains one chief cause of the sympathy which is felt in Ireland for criminals from whom the law exacts the fatal penalty of death; and it also accounts, independently of the existence of any illegal association, for the terrible retribution inflicted upon those who come forward to prosecute them. It is not in Ireland with criminals as in other countries, where the character of a murderer or incendiary is notoriously bad, as resulting from a life of gradual profligacy and villany. Far from it. In Ireland you will find those crimes perpetrated by men who are good

fathers, good husbands, good sons, and good neighbors—by men who would share their last morsel or their last shilling with a fellow-creature in distress—who would generously lose their lives for a man who had obliged them, provided he had not incurred their enmity—and who would protect a defenseless stranger as far as lay in their power.

There are some mock oaths among Irishmen which must have had their origin amongst those whose habits of thought were much more elevated than could be supposed to characterize the lower orders. "By the powers of death" is never now used as we have written it; but the ludicrous travestie of it, "by the powdhers o' delf," is quite common. Of this and other mock oaths it may be right to observe, that those who swear by them are in general ignorant of their proper origin. There are some, however, of this description whose original form is well known. One of these Paddy displays considerable ingenuity in using. "By the cross" can scarcely be classed under the mock oaths, but the manner in which it is pressed into asseverations is amusing. When Paddy is affirming a truth he swears "by the crass" simply, and this with him is an oath of considerable obligation. He generally, in order to render it more impressive, accompanies it with suitable action, that is, he places the forefinger of each hand across, that he may assail you through two senses instead of one. On the contrary, when he intends to hoax you by asserting what is not true, he ingeniously multiplies the oath, and swears "by the five crasses," that is by his own five fingers, placing at the same time his four fingers and his thumbs across each other in a most impressive and vehement manner. Don't believe him then—the knave is lying as fast as possible, and with no remorse. "By the crass o' Christ" is an oath of much solemnity, and seldom used in a falsehood. Paddy also often places two bits of straws across, and sometimes two sticks, upon which he swears with an appearance of great heat and sincerity—*sed caveto!*

Irishmen generally consider iron as a sacred metal. In the interior of the country, the thieves (but few in number) are frequently averse to stealing it. Why it possesses this hold upon their affections it is difficult to say, but it is certain that they rank it among their sacred things, consider that to find it is lucky, and nail it over their doors when found in the convenient shape of a horse-shoe. It is also used as a medium of asserting truth. We believe, however, that the sanction it imposes is not very strong. "By this blessed iron!"—"by this blessed an' holy iron!" are oaths of an inferior grade; but if the circumstance on which they are founded be a matter of indifference, they seldom depart from truth in using them.

We have said that Paddy, when engaged in a fight, is never at a loss for a weapon, and we may also affirm that he is never at a loss for an oath. When relating a narrative, or some other circumstance of his own invention, if contradicted, he will corroborate it, in order to sustain his credit or produce the proper impression, by an abrupt oath upon the first object he can seize. "Arrah, nonsense! by this pipe in my hand, it's as thrue as"—and then, before he completes the illustration, he goes on with a fine specimen of equivocation—"By the stool I'm sittin' an, *it is;* an' what more would you have from me barrin' I take my book oath of it?" Thus does he, under the mask of an insinuation, induce you to believe that he has actually sworn it, whereas the oath is always left undefined and incomplete.

Sometimes he is exceedingly comprehensive in his adjurations, and swears upon a magnificent scale; as, for instance,—"By the contints of all the books that ever wor opened an' shut, it's as thrue as the sun to the dial." This certainly leaves "the five crasses" immeasurably behind. However, be cautious, and not too confident in taking so sweeping and learned an oath upon trust, notwithstanding its imposing effect. We grant, indeed, that an oath which comprehends within its scope all the learned libraries of Europe, including even the Alexandrian of old, is not only an erudite one, but establishes in a high degree the taste of the swearer, and displays on his part an uncommon grasp of intellect. Still we recommend you, whenever you hear an alleged fact substantiated by it, to set your ear as sharply as possible; for, after all, it is more than probable that every book by which he has sworn might be contained in a nutshell. The secret may be briefly explained:—Paddy is in the habit of substituting the word *never* for ever. "By all the books that never wor opened or shut," the reader perceives, is only a flourish of trumpets—a mere delusion of the enemy.

In fact, Paddy has oaths rising gradually from the lying ludicrous to the superstitious solemn, each of which finely illustrates the nature of the subject to which it is applied. When he swears "By the contints o' Moll Kelly's Primer," or "By the piper that played afore Moses," you are, perhaps, as strongly inclined to believe him as when he draws upon a more serious oath; that is, you almost regret the thing is not the gospel that Paddy asserts it to be. In the former sense,

the humorous narrative which calls forth the laughable burlesque of "By the piper o' Moses," is usually the richest lie in the whole range of fiction.

Paddy is, in his ejaculatory, as well as in all his other mock oaths, a kind of smuggler in morality, imposing as often as he can upon his own conscience, and upon those who exercise spiritual authority over him. Perhaps more of his oaths are blood-stained than would be found among the inhabitants of all Christendom put together.

Paddy's oaths in his amours are generally rich specimens of humorous knavery and cunning. It occasionally happens—but for the honor of our virtuous countrywomen, we say but rarely—that by the honey of his flattering and delusive tongue, he succeeds in placing some unsuspecting girl's reputation in rather a hazardous predicament. When the priest comes to investigate the affair, and to cause him to make compensation to the innocent creature who suffered by his blandishments, it is almost uniformly ascertained that, in order to satisfy her scruples as to the honesty of his promises, he had sworn marriage to her *on a book of ballads!!!* In other cases *blank books* have been used for the same purpose.

If, however, you wish to pin Paddy up in a corner, get him a Relic, a Catholic prayer-book, or a Douay Bible to swear upon. Here is where the fox—notwithstanding all his turnings and windings upon heretic Bibles, books, or ballads, or mock oaths—is caught at last. The strongest principle in him is superstition. It may be found as the prime mover in his best and worst actions. An atrocious man, who is superstitious, will perform many good and charitable actions, with a hope that their merit in the sight of God may cancel the guilt of his crimes. On the other hand, a good man, who is superstitiously the slave of his religious opinions, will lend himself to those illegal combinations, whose object is, by keeping ready a system of organized opposition to an heretical government, to fulfil, if a political crisis should render it practicable, the absurd prophecies of Pastorini and Columbkil. Although the prophecies of the former would appear to be out of date to a rational reader, yet Paddy, who can see farther into prophecy than any rational reader, honestly believes that Pastorini has left for those who are superstitiously given, sufficient range of expectation in several parts of his work.

We might enumerate many other oaths in frequent use among the peasantry; but as our object is not to detail them at full length, we trust that those already specified may be considered sufficient to enable our readers to get a fuller insight into their character, and their moral influence upon the people.

The next thing which occurs to us in connection with the present subject, is *cursing*; and here again Paddy holds the first place. His imprecations are often full, bitter, and intense. Indeed, there is more poetry and epigrammatic point in them than in those of any other country in the world.

We find it a difficult thing to enumerate the Irish curses, so as to do justice to a subject so varied and so liable to be shifted and improved by the fertile genius of those who send them abroad. Indeed, to reduce them into order and method would be a task of considerable difficulty. Every occasion, and every fit of passion, frequently produce a new curse, perhaps equal in bitterness to any that has gone before it.

Many of the Irish imprecations are difficult to be understood, having their origin in some historical event, or in poetical metaphors that require a considerable process of reasoning to explain them. Of this twofold class is that general one, "The curse of Cromwell on you!" which means, may you suffer all that a tyrant like Cromwell would inflict! and "The curse o' the crows upon you!" which is probably an allusion to the Danish invasion—a raven being the symbol of Denmark; or it may be tantamount to "May you rot on the hills, that the crows may feed upon your carcass!" Perhaps it may thus be understood to imprecate death upon you or some member of your house—alluding to the superstition of rooks hovering over the habitations of the sick, when the malady with which they are afflicted is known to be fatal. Indeed, the latter must certainly be the meaning of it, as is evident from the proverb of "Die, an' give the crow a puddin'."

"Hell's cure to you!—the devil's luck to you!—high hanging to you!—hard feeling to you!—a short coorse to you!" are all pretty intense, and generally used under provocation and passion. In these cases the curses just mentioned are directed immediately to the offensive object, and there certainly is no want of the *malus animus* to give them energy. It would be easy to multiply the imprecations belonging to this class among the peasantry, but the task is rather unpleasant. There are a few, however, which, in consequence of their ingenuity, we cannot pass over: they are, in sooth, studies for the swearer. "May you never die till you see your own funeral!" is a very beautiful specimen of the periphrasis: it simply means, may you be hanged; for he who is hanged is humorously said to be favored with a view of that sombre spectacle, by which they mean the crowd that attends an execution. To the

same purpose is, "May you die wid a caper in your heel!"—"May you die in your pumps!"—"May your last dance be a hornpipe on the air!" These are all emblematic of hanging, and are uttered sometimes in jest, and occasionally in earnest. "May the grass grow before your door!" is highly imaginative and poetical. Nothing, indeed, can present the mind with a stronger or more picturesque emblem of desolation and ruin. Its malignity is terrible.

There are also mock imprecations as well as mock oaths. Of this character are, "The devil go with you an' sixpence, an' thin you'll want neither money nor company!" This humorous and considerate curse is generally confined to the female sex. When Paddy happens to be in a romping mood, and teases his sweetheart too much, she usually utters it with a countenance combating with smiles and frowns, while she stands in the act of pinning up her dishevelled hair; her cheeks, particularly the one next Paddy, deepened into a becoming blush.

"Bad scran to you!" is another form seldom used in anger: it is the same as "Hard feeding to you!" "Bad win' to you!" is "Ill health to you!" it is nearly the same as "Consumin' (consumption) to you!" Two other imprecations come under this head, which we will class together, because they are counterparts of each other, with this difference, that one of them is the most subtilely and intensely withering in its purport that can well be conceived. The one is that common curse, "Bad 'cess to you!" that is, bad success to you: we may identify it with "Hard fortune to you!" The other is a keen one, indeed—"*Sweet* bad luck to you!" Now, whether we consider the epithet sweet as bitterly ironical, or deem it as a wish that prosperity may harden the heart to the accomplishment of future damnation, as in the case of Dives, we must in either sense grant that it is an oath of powerful hatred and venom. Occasionally the curse of "Bad luck to you!" produces an admirable retort, which is pretty common. When one man applies it to another, he is answered with "*Good* luck to you, thin; but *may neither of thim ever happen*."

"Six eggs to you, an' half-a-dozen o' them rotten!"—like "The devil go with you an' sixpence!" is another of those pleasantries which mostly occur in the good-humored *badinage* between the sexes. It implies disappointment.

There is a species of imprecation prevalent among Irishmen which we may term neutral. It is ended by the word *bit*, and merely results from a habit of swearing where there is no malignity of purpose. An Irishman, when corroborating an assertion, however true or false, will often say, "Bad luck to the bit but it is;"—"Divil fire the bit but it's thruth!"—"Damn the bit but it is!" and so on. In this form the mind is not moved, nor the passions excited: it is therefore probably the most insipid of all their imprecations.

Some of the most dreadful maledictions are to be heard among the confirmed mendicants of Ireland. The wit, the gall, and the poetry of these are uncommon. "May you melt off the earth like snow off the ditch!" is one of a high order and intense malignity; but it is not exclusively confined to mendicants, although they form that class among which it is most prevalent. Nearly related to this is, "May you melt like butther before a summer sun!" These are, indeed, essentially poetical; they present the mind with appropriate imagery, and exhibit a comparison perfectly just and striking. The former we think unrivalled.

Some of the Irish imprecations would appear to have come down to us from the Ordeals. Of this class, probably, are the following: "May this be poison to me!"—"May I be roasted on red hot iron!" Others of them, from their boldness of metaphor, seem to be of Oriental descent. One expression, indeed, is strikingly so. When a deep offence is offered to an Irishman, under such peculiar circumstances that he cannot immediately retaliate, he usually replies to his enemy—"You'll sup sorrow for this!"—"You'll curse the day it happened!"—"I'll make you rub your heels together!" All these figurative denunciations are used for the purpose of intimating the pain and agony he will compel his enemy to suffer.

We cannot omit a form of imprecation for good, which is also habitual among the peasantry of Ireland. It is certainly harmless, and argues benevolence of heart. We mean such expressions as the following: "Salvation to me!—May I never do harm!—May I never do an ill turn!—May I never sin!" These are generally used by men who are blameless and peaceable in their lives—simple and well-disposed in their intercourse with the world.

At the head of those Irish imprecations which are dreaded by the people, the Excommunication, of course, holds the first and most formidable place. In the eyes of men of sense it is as absurd as it is illiberal: but to the ignorant and superstitious, who look upon it as anything but a *brutum fulmen*, it is terrible indeed.

Next in order are the curses of priests in their private capacity, pilgrims, mendicants,

and idiots. Of those also Paddy entertains a wholesome dread; a circumstance which the pilgrim and mendicant turn with great judgment to their own account. Many a legend and anecdote do such chroniclers relate, when the family, with whom they rest for the night, are all seated around the winter hearth. These are often illustrative of the baneful effects of the poor man's curse. Of course they produce a proper impression; and, accordingly, Paddy avoids offending such persons in any way that might bring him under their displeasure.

A certain class of cursers much dreaded in Ireland are those of the widow and the orphan. There is, however, something touching and beautiful in this fear of injuring the sorrowful and unprotected. It is, we are happy to say, a becoming and prominent feature in Paddy's character; for, to do him justice in his virtues as well as in his vices, we repeat that he cannot be surpassed in his humanity to the lonely widow and her helpless orphans. He will collect a number of his friends, and proceed with them in a body to plant her bit of potato ground, to reap her oats, to draw home her turf, or secure her hay. Nay, he will beguile her of her sorrows with a natural sympathy and delicacy that do him honor; his heart is open to her complaints, and his hand ever extended to assist her.

There is a strange opinion to be found in Ireland upon the subject of curses. The peasantry think that a curse, no matter how uttered, will fall on *something;* but that it depends upon the person against whom it is directed, whether or not it will descend on him. A curse, we have heard them say, will rest for seven years in the air, ready to alight upon the head of the person who provoked the malediction. It hovers over him, like a kite over its prey, watching the moment when he may be abandoned by his guardian angel: if this occurs, it shoots with the rapidity of a meteor on his head, and clings to him in the shape of illness, temptation, or some other calamity.

They think, however, that the blessing of one person may cancel the curse of another; but this opinion does not affect the theory we have just mentioned. When a man experiences an unpleasant accident, they will say, "He has had some poor body's curse;" and, on the contrary, when he narrowly escapes it, they say, "He has had some poor body's blessing."

There is no country in which the phrases of good-will and affection are so strong as in Ireland. The Irish language actually flows with the milk and honey of love and friendship. Sweet and palatable is it to the other sex, and sweetly can Paddy, with his deluding ways, administer it to them from the top of his mellifluous tongue, as a dove feeds her young, or as a kind mother her babe, shaping with her own pretty mouth every morse of the delicate viands before it goes into that of the infant. In this manner does Paddy, seated behind a ditch, of a bright Sunday, when he ought to be at Mass, feed up some innocent girl, not with "false music," but with sweet words; for nothing more musical or melting than his brogue ever dissolved a female heart. Indeed, it is of the danger to be apprehended from the melody of his voice, that the admirable and appropriate proverb speaks; for when he addresses his sweetheart, under circumstances that justify suspicion, it is generally said—"Paddy's feedin' her up wid false music."

What language has a phrase equal in beauty and tenderness to *cushla machree—pulse of my heart?* Can it be paralleled in the whole range of all that are, ever were, or ever will be spoken, for music, sweetness, and a knowledge of anatomy? If Paddy is unrivalled at swearing, he fairly throws the world behind him at the blarney. In professing friendship, and making love, give him but a *taste of the native,* and he is a walking honey-comb, that every woman who sees him wishes to have a lick at; and Heaven knows, that frequently, at all times, and in all places, does he get himself *licked* on their account.

Another expression of peculiar force is *vick machree*—or, son of my heart. This is not only elegant, but affectionate, beyond almost any other phrase except the foregoing. It is, in a sense, somewhat different from that in which the philosophical poet has used it, a beautiful comment upon the sentiment of "the child's the father of the man," uttered by the great, we might almost say, the glorious, Wordsworth.

We have seen many a youth, on more occasions than one, standing in profound affliction over the dead body of his aged father, exclaiming, "*Ahir, vick machree—vick machree—wail thu marra wo'um? Wail thu marra wo'um?* Father, son of my heart, son of my heart, art thou dead from me—art thou dead from me?" An expression, we think, under any circumstances, not to be surpassed in the intensity of domestic affection which it expresses; but under those alluded to, we consider it altogether elevated in exquisite and poetic beauty above the most powerful symbols of Oriental imagery.

A third phrase peculiar to love and affection, is "*Manim asthee hu*—or, My soul's within you." Every person acquainted with languages knows how much an idiom suffers

by a literal translation. How beautiful, then, how tender and powerful, must those short expressions be, uttered, too, with a fervor of manner peculiar to a deeply feeling people, when, even after a literal translation, they carry so much of their tenderness and energy into a language whose genius is cold when compared to the glowing beauty of the Irish.

Mavourneen dheelish, too, is only a short phrase, but, coming warm and mellowed from Paddy's lips into the ear of his *colleen dhas*, it is a perfect spell—a sweet murmur, to which the *lenis susurrus* of the Hybla bees is, with all their honey, jarring discord. How tame is "My sweet darling," its literal translation, compared to its soft and lulling intonations. There is a dissolving, entrancing, beguiling, deluding, flattering, insinuating, coaxing, winning, inveigling, roguish, palavering, come-over-ing, comedhering, consenting, blarneying, killing, willing, charm in it, worth all the philters that ever the gross knavery of a withered alchemist imposed upon the credulity of those who inhabit the *other* nations of the earth—for we don't read that these shrivelled philter-mongers ever prospered in *Ireland*.

No, no—let Paddy alone. If he hates intensely and effectually, he loves intensely, comprehensively, and gallantly. To love with power is a proof of a large soul, and to hate well is, according to the great moralist, a thing in itself to be loved. Ireland is, therefore, through all its sects, parties, and religions, an amicable nation. Their affections are, indeed, so vivid, that they scruple not sometimes to kill each other with kindness: but we hope that the march of love and friendship will not only keep pace with, but outstrip, the march of intellect.

Peter Connell was for many years of his life a pattern and proverb for industry and sobriety. He first began the world as keeper of a shebeen-house at the cross-roads, about four miles from the town of Ballypoteen. He was decidedly an honest man to his neighbors, but a knave to excisemen, whom he hated by a kind of instinct that he had, which prompted him, in order to satisfy his conscience, to render them every practicable injury within the compass of his ingenuity. Shebeen-house keepers and excisemen have been, time out of mind, destructive of each other; the exciseman pouncing like a beast or bird of prey upon the shebeen man and his illicit spirits; the shebeen man staving in the exciseman, like a barrel of doublings, by a knock from behind a hedge, which sometimes sent him to that world which is emphatically called the world of spirits. For this, it sometimes happened that the shebeen man was hanged; but as his death only multiplied that of the excisemen in a geometrical ratio, the sharp-scented fraternity resolved, if possible, not to risk their lives, either by exposing themselves to the necessity of travelling by night, or prosecuting by day. In this they acted wisely and prudently: fewer of the unfortunate peasantry were shot in their rencounters with the yeomanry or military on such occasions, and the retaliations became by degrees less frequent, until, at length, the murder of a gauger became a rare occurrence in the country.

Peter, before his marriage, had wrought as laboring servant to a man who kept two or three private stills in those caverns among the remote mountains, to which the gauger never thought of penetrating, because he supposed that no human enterprise would have ever dreamt of advancing farther into them than appeared to *him* to be practicable. In this he was frequently mistaken: for though the still-house was in many cases inaccessible to horses, yet by the contrivance of *slipes*—a kind of sledge—a dozen men could draw a couple of sacks of barley with less trouble, and at a quicker pace, than if horses only had been employed. By this, and many other similar contrivances, the peasantry were often able to carry on the work of private distillation in places so distant, that few persons could suspect them as likely to be chosen for such purposes. The uncommon personal strength, the daring spirit, and great adroitness of Peter Connell, rendered him a very valuable acquisition to his master in the course of his illicit occupations. Peter was, in addition to his other qualities, sober and ready-witted, so that whenever the gauger made his appearance, his expedients to baffle him were often inimitable. Those expedients did not, however, always arise from the exigency of the moment; they were often deliberately, and with much exertion of ingenuity, planned by the proprietors and friends of such establishments, perhaps for weeks before the gauger's visit occurred. But, on the other hand, as the gauger's object was to take them, if possible, by surprise, it frequently happened that his appearance was as unexpected as it was unwelcome. It was *then* that the prompt ingenuity of the people was fully seen, felt, and understood by the baffled exciseman, who too often had just grounds for bitterly cursing their talent at outwitting him.

Peter served his master as a kind of superintendent in such places, until he gained the full knowledge of distilling, according to the processes used by the most popular adepts in the art. Having acquired this, he set up as a professor, and had excellent business. In the meantime, he had put together by de-

grees a small purse of money, to the amount of about twenty guineas—no inconsiderable sum for a young Irishman who intends to begin the world on his own account. He accordingly married, and, as the influence of a wife is usually not to be controlled during the honey-moon, Mrs. Connell prevailed on Peter to relinquish his trade of distiller, and to embrace some other mode of life that might not render their living so much asunder necessary. Peter suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and promised to have nothing more to do with private distillation, as a distiller. One of the greatest curses attending this lawless business, is the idle and irregular habit of life which it gradually induces. Peter could not now relish the labor of an agriculturist, to which he had been bred, and yet he was too prudent to sit down and draw his own and his wife's support from so exhaustible a source as twenty guineas. Two or three days passed, during which "he cudgelled his brains," to use his own expression, in plans for future subsistence; two or three consultations were held with Ellish, in which their heads were laid together, and, as it was still the honey-moon, the subject-matter of the consultation, of course, was completely forgotten. Before the expiration of a second month, however, they were able to think of many other things, in addition to the fondlings and endearments of a new-married couple. Peter was every day becoming more his own man, and Ellish by degrees more her own woman. "The purple light of love," which had changed Peter's red head into a rich auburn, and his swivel eye into a knowing wink, exceedingly irresistible in his bachelorship, as he made her believe, to the country girls, had passed away, taking the aforesaid auburn along with it and leaving nothing but the genuine carrot behind. Peter, too, on opening his eyes one morning about the beginning of the third month, perceived that his wife was, after all, nothing more than a thumping red-cheeked wench, with good eyes, a mouth rather large, and a nose very much resembling, in its curve, the seat of a saddle, allowing the top to correspond with the pummel.

"Pether," said she, "it's like a dhrame to me that you're neglectin' your business, alanna."

"Is it you, beauty? but, may be, you'd first point out to me what business, barrin' butherin' up yourself, I have to mind, you phanix bright?"

"Quit yourself, Pether! it's time for you to give up your ould ways; you caught one bird wid them, an' that's enough. What do you intind to do! It's full time for you to be lookin' about you."

"Lookin' about me! What do you mane, Ellish?"

"The dickens a bit o' me thought of it," replied the wife, laughing at the unintentional allusion to the circumspect character of Peter's eyes,—"upon my faix, I didn't—ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, thin, but you're full o' your fun, sure enough, if that's what you're at. Maybe, avourneen, if I had looked right afore me, as I ought to do, it's Katty Murray an' her snug farm I'd have, instead of"—

Peter hesitated. The rapid feelings of a woman, and an Irishwoman, quick and tender, had come forth and subdued him. She had *not* voluntarily alluded to his eyes; but on seeing Peter offended, she immediately expressed that sorrow and submission which are most powerful when accompanied by innocence, and when meekly assumed, to pacify rather than to convince. A tear started to her eye, and with a voice melted into unaffected tenderness, she addressed him, but he scarcely gave her time to speak.

"No, avourneen, no, I won't say what I was goin' to mintion. I won't indeed, Ellish, dear; an' forgive me for woundin' your feelin's *alanna dhas.** Hell resave her an' her farm! I dunna what put her into my head at all; but I thought you wor jokin' me about my eyes: an' sure if you war, acushla, that's no rason that I'd not allow you to do that an' more wid your own Pether. Give me a *slewsther*,† agrah—a sweet one, now!"

He then laid his mouth to hers, and immediately a sound, nearly resembling a pistol-shot, was heard through every part of the house. It was, in fact, a kiss upon a scale of such magnitude, that the Emperor of Morocco might not blush to be charged with it. A reconciliation took place, and in due time it was determined that Peter, as he understood poteen, should open a shebeen house.

The moment this resolution was made, the wife kept coaxing him, until he took a small house at the cross-roads before alluded to, where, in the course of a short time, he was established, if not in his own line, yet in a mode of life approximating to it as nearly as the inclination of Ellish would permit. The cabin which they occupied had a kitchen in the middle, and a room at each end of it, in one of which was their own humble chaff bed, with its blue quilted drugget cover; in the other stood a couple of small tables, some stools, a short form, and one chair, being a present from his father-in-law. These constituted Peter's whole establishment, so far

* *Alanna dhas*—my pretty child.
† A kiss of fondness.

as it defied the gauger. To this we must add a five-gallon keg of spirits hid in the garden, and a roll of smuggled tobacco. From the former he bottled, over night, as much as was usually drank the following day; and from the tobacco, which was also kept under ground, he cut, with the same caution, as much as to-morrow's exigencies might require. This he kept in his coat-pocket, a place where the gauger would never think of searching for it, divided into halfpenny and pennyworths, ounces or half-ounces, according as it might be required; and as he had it without duty, the liberal spirit in which he dealt it out to his neighbors soon brought him a large increase of custom.

Peter's wife was an excellent manager, and he himself a pleasant, good-humored man, full of whim and inoffensive mirth. His powers of amusement were of a high order, considering his station in life and his want of education. These qualities contributed, in a great degree, to bring both the young and old to his house during the long winter nights, in order to hear the fine racy humor with which he related his frequent adventures and battles with excisemen. In the summer evenings, he usually engaged a piper or a fiddler, and had a dance, a contrivance by which he not only rendered himself popular, but increased his business.

In this mode of life, the greatest source of anxiety to Peter and Ellish was the difficulty of not offending their friends by refusing to give them credit. Many plans, were, with great skill and forethought, devised to obviate this evil; but all failed. A short board was first procured, on which they got written with chalk—

"No credit giv'n—barrin' a thrifle to Pether's friends."

Before a week passed, after this intimation, the number of "Pether's friends" increased so rapidly, that neither he nor Ellish knew the half of them. Every scamp in the parish was hand and glove with him: the drinking tribe, particularly, became desperately attached to him and Ellish. Peter was naturally kind-hearted, and found that his firmest resolutions too often gave way before the open flattery with which he was assailed. He then changed his hand, and left Ellish to bear the brunt of their blarney. Whenever any person or persons were seen approaching the house, Peter, if he had reason to suspect an attack upon his indulgence, prepared himself for a retreat. He kept his eye to the window, and if they turned from the direct line of the road, he immediately slipped into bed, and lay close in order to escape them. In the meantime they enter.

"God save all here. Ellish, agra machree, how are you?"

"God save you kindly! Faix, I'm middlin', I thank you, Condy: how is yourself, an' all at home?"

"Devil a heartier, barrin' my father, that's touched wid a loss of appetite afther his meals—ha, ha, ha!"

"Musha, the dickens be an you, Condy, but you're your father's son, any way; the best company in Europe is the same man. Throth, whether you're jokin' or not, I'd be sarry to hear of anything to his disadvantage, dacent man. Boys, won't you go down to the other room?"

"Go way wid yez, boys, till I spake to Ellish here about the affairs o' the nation. Why, Ellish, you stand the cut all to pieces. By the contiuts o' the book, you do; Pether doesn't stand it half so well. How is he, the thief?"

"Throth, he's not well, to-day, in regard of a smotherin' about the heart he tuck this mornin' afther his breakfast. He jist laid himself on the bed a while, to see if it would go off of him—God be praised for all his marcies!"

"Thin, upon my *sole*vation, I'm sarry to hear it, and so will all at home, for there's not in the parish we're sittin' in a couple that our family has a greater regard an' friendship for, than him and yourself. Faix, my modher, no longer ago than Friday night last, argued down Bartle Meegan's throath, that you and Biddy Martin wor the two portliest weemen that comes into the chapel. God forgive myself, I was near quarrelin' wid Bartle on the head of it, bekase I tuck my modher's part, as I had a good right to do."

"Thrath, I'm thankful to you both, Condy, for your kindness."

"Oh, the sarra taste o' kindness was in it at all, Ellish, 'twas only the truth; an' as long as I live, I'll stand up for that."

"Arrah, how is your aunt down at Carntall?"

"Indeed, thin, but middlin', not gettin' her health: she'll soon give the crow a puddin', any way; thin, Ellish, you thief, I'm *in* for the yallow boys. Do you know thim that came in wid me?"

"Why, thin, I can't say I do. Who are they, Condy?"

"Why one o' them's a bachelor to my sisther Norah, a very dacent boy, indeed—him wid the frieze jock upon him, an' the buckskin breeches. The other three's from Teernabraighera beyant. They're related to my brother-in-law, Mick Dillon, by his first wife's brother-in-law's uncle. They're come to this neighborhood till the 'Sizes, bad luck

to them, goes over; for you see, they're in a little throuble."

"The Lord grant them safe out of it, poor boys!"

"I brought them up here to treat them, poor fellows; an', Ellish, avourneen, you must credit me for whatsomever we may have. The thruth is, you see, that when we left home, none of us had any notion of drinkin' or I'd a put somethin' in my pocket, so that I'm taken at an average.—Bud-an'-age! how is little Dan? Sowl, Ellish, that goorsoon, when he grows up, will be a credit to you. I don't think there's a finer child in Europe of his age, so there isn't."

"Indeed, he's a good child, Condy. But Condy, avick, about givin' credit:—by thim five crasses, if I could give score to any boy in the parish, it 'ud be to yourself. It was only last night that I made a promise against doin' such a thing for man or mortual. We're a'most broken an' harrish'd out o' house an' home by it; an' what's more, Condy, we intend to give up the business. The landlord's at us every day for his rint, an' we owe for the two last kegs we got, but hasn't a rap to meet aither o' thim; an' enough due to us if we could get it together: an' whisper, Condy, atween ourselves, that's what ails Pether, although he doesn't wish to let an to any one about it."

"Well, but you know I'm safe, Ellish?"

"I know you are, avourneen, as the bank itself; an' should have what you want wid a heart an' a half, only for the promise I made an my two knees last night, aginst givin' credit to man or woman. Why the dickens didn't you come yistherday?"

"Didn't I tell you, woman alive, that it was by accident, an' that I wished to sarve the house, that we came at all. Come, come, Ellish; don't disgrace me afore my sisther's bachelor an' the sthrange boys that's to the fore. By this staff in my hand, I wouldn't for the best cow in our byre be put to the blush afore thim; an' besides, there's a *cleveen* * atween your family an' ours."

"Condy, avourneen, say no more: if you were fed from the same breast wid me, I couldn't, nor wouldn't break my promise. I wouldn't have the sin of it an me for the wealth o' the three kingdoms."

"Bedad, you're a quare woman; an' only that my regard for you is great entirely, we would be two, Ellish; but I know you're dacent still."

He then left her and joined his friends in the little room that was appropriated for drinking, where, with a great deal of mirth, he related the failure of the plan they had formed for outwitting Peter and Ellish.

"Boys," said he, "she's too many for us! St. Pether himself wouldn't make a hand of her. Faix, she's a cute one. I palavered her at the rate of a hunt, an' she ped me back in my own coin, with dacent intherest—but no whiskey!—Now to take a rise out o' Pether. Jist sit where ye are, till I come back."

He left them enjoying the intended "spree," and went back to Ellish.

"Well, I'm sure, Ellish, if any one had tuck their book oath that you'd refuse my father's son such a thrifle, I wouldn't believe them. It's not wid Pether's knowledge you do it, I'll be bound. But bad as you thrated us, sure we must see how the poor fellow is, at an rate."

As he spoke, and before Ellish had time to prevent him, he pressed into the room where Peter lay.

"Why, tare alive, Pether, is it in bed you are at this hour of the day?"

"Eh? Who's that—who's that? oh!"

"Why thin, the sarra lie undher you, is that the way wid you?"

"Oh!—oh! Eh? Is that Condy?"

"All that's to the fore of him. What's asthray wid you man alive?"

"Throth, Condy, I don't know, rightly. I went out, wantin' my coat, about a week ago, an' got cowld in the small o' the back; I've a pain in it ever since. Be sittin'."

"Is your *heart* safe? You have no smotherin' or anything upon *it?*"

"Why thin, thank goodness, no; it's all about my back an' my inches."

"Divil a thing it is but a complaint they call an *allovcrness* ails you, you shkaimer o' the world wide. 'Tis the oil o' the hazel, or a rubbin' down wid an oak towel you want. Get up, I say, or, by this an' by that, I'll flail you widin an inch o' your life."

"Is it beside yourself you are, Condy?"

"No, no, faix; I've found you out: Ellish is afther tellin' me that it was a smotherin' on the heart; but it's a pain in the small o' the back wid *yourself*. Oh, you born desaver! Get up, I say agin, afore I take the stick to you!"

"Why, thin, all sorts o' fortune to you, Condy—ha, ha, ha!—but you're the sarra's pet, for there's no escapin' you. What was that I hard atween you an' Ellish?" said Peter, getting up.

"The sarra matther to you. If you behave yourself, we may let you into the wrong side o' the sacret afore you die. Go an' get us a pint of what you know," replied Condy, as he and Peter entered the kitchen.

"Ellish," said Peter, "I suppose we must

* A kind of indirect relationship.

give it to thim. Give it—give it, avourneen Now, Condy, whin 'ill you pay me for this?"

"Never fret yourself about that; you'll be ped. Honor *bright*, as the black said whin he stole the boots."

"Now Pether," said the wife, "sure it's no use axin' me to give it, afther the promise I made last night. Give it yourself; for me, I'll have no hand in such things good or bad. I hope we'll soon get out of it altogether, for myself's sick an' sore of it, dear knows!"

Pether accordingly furnished them with the liquor, and got a promise that Condy would certainly pay him at mass on the following Sunday, which was only three days distant. The fun of the boys was exuberant at Condy's success: they drank, and laughed, and sang, until pint after pint followed in rapid succession.

Every additional inroad upon the keg brought a fresh groan from Ellish; and even Peter himself began to look blank as their potations deepened. When the night was far advanced they departed, after having first overwhelmed Ellish with professions of the warmest friendship, promising that in future she exclusively should reap whatever benefit was to be derived from their patronage.

In the meantime, Condy forgot to perform his promise. The next Sunday passed, but Peter was not paid, nor was his clever debtor seen at mass, or in the vicinity of the shebeen-house, for many a month afterwards—an instance of ingratitude which mortified his creditor extremely. The latter, who felt that it was a *take in*, resolved to cut short all hopes of obtaining credit from them in future. In about a week after the foregoing hoax, he got up a board, presenting a more vigorous refusal of *score* than the former. His friends, who were more in number than he could have possibly imagined, on this occasion, were altogether wiped out of the exception. The notice ran to the following effect:—

"Notice to the Public, *and to Pether Connell's friends in particular.*—Divil resave the morsel of credit will be got or given in this house, while there is stick or stone of it together, barrin' them that axes it has the *ready money.*

"Pether X his mark Connell,
"Ellish X her mark Connell."

This regulation, considering everything, was a very proper one. It occasioned much mirth among Peter's customers; but Peter cared little about that, provided he made the money.

The progress of his prosperity, dating it from so small a beginning, was decidedly slow. He owed it principally to the careful habits of Ellish, and his own sobriety. He was prudent enough to avoid placing any sign in his window, by which his house could be known as a *shebeen*; for he was not ignorant that there is no class of men more learned in this species of hieroglyphics than excisemen. At all events, he was prepared for them, had they come to examine his premises. Nothing that could bring him within the law was ever kept visible. The cask that contained the poteen was seldom a week in the same place of concealment, which was mostly, as we have said, under ground. The tobacco was weighed and subdivided into small quantities, which, in addition to what he carried in his pocket, were distributed in various crevices and crannies of the house; sometimes under the thatch; sometimes under a dish on the dresser, but generally in a damp place.

When they had been about two or three years thus employed, Peter, at the solicitation of the wife, took a small farm.

"You're stout an' able," said she; "an' as I can manage the house widout you, wouldn't it be a good plan to take a bit o' ground—nine or ten acres, suppose—an' thry your hand at it? Sure you wor wanst the greatest man in the parish about a farm. Surely that 'ud be dacenter nor to be *slungeen'* about, invintin' truth and lies for other people, whin they're at their work, to make thim laugh, an' you doin' nothin' but standin' over thim, wid your hands down to the bottom o' your pockets? Do, Pether, thry it, avick, an' you'll see it 'ill prosper wid us, plase God."

"Faix I'm ladin' an asier life, Ellish."

"But are you ladin' a dacenter or a more becominer life?"

"Why, I think, widout doubt, that it's more becominer to walk about like a gintleman, nor to be workin' like a slave."

"Gintleman! Musha, is it to the fair you're bringin' yourself? Why, you great big bosthoon, isn't it both a sin an' a shame to see you sailin' about among the neighbors, like a sthray turkey, widout a hand's turn to do? But, any way, take my advice, avillish,—will you, aroon?—an' faix you'll see how rich we'll get, wid a blessin'?"

"Ellish, you're a deludher!"

"Well, an' what suppose? To be sure I am. Usen't you be followin' me like a calf afther the finger?—ha, ha, ha!—Will you do my biddin', Pether darlin'?"

Peter gave her a shrewd, significant wink, in contradiction to what he considered the degrading comparison she had just made.

"Ellish, you're beside the mark, you beauty; always put the saddle on the right horse, woman alive! Didn't you often an' often swear to me, upon two green ribbons,

across one another, that you liked a red head best, an' that the redder it was you liked it the betther?"

"An' it was thruth, too; an' sure, by the same a token, where could I get one half so red as your own? Faix, I knew what I was about! I wouldn't give you yet for e'er a young man in the parish, if I was a widow to-morrow. Will you take the land?"

"So thin, after all, if the head hadn't been an me, I wouldn't be a favorite wid you?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Get out wid you, and spake sinse. Throth, if you don't say aither ay or no, I'll give myself no more bother about it. There we are now wid some guineas together, an' —Faix, Pether, you're vexin' me!"

"Do you want an answer?"

"Why, if it's plasin' to *your honor*, I'd have no objection."

"Well, will you have my new big coat made agin *Shroft?*" *

"Ay, will I, in case you do what I say; but if you don't the sarra stitch of it 'll go to your back this twelvemonth, maybe, if you vex me. Now!"

"Well, I'll tell you what: my mind's made up—I *will* take the land; an' I'll show the neighbors what Pether Connell can do yit."

"Augh! augh! mavonneen, that you wor! Throth I'll fry a bit o' the bacon for our dinner to-day, on the head o' that, although I didn't intind to touch it till Sunday. Ay, faix, an' a pair o' stockins, too, along wid the coat; an' somethin' else, that you didn't hear of yit."

Ellish, in fact, was a perfect mistress of the science of wheedling; but as it appears instinctive in the sex, this is not to be wondered at. Peter himself was easy, or rather indolent, till properly excited by the influence of adequate motives; but no sooner were the energies that slumbered in him called into activity, than he displayed a firmness of purpose, and a perseverance in action, that amply repaid his exertions.

The first thing he did, after taking his little farm, was to prepare for its proper cultivation, and to stock it. His funds were not, however, sufficient for this at the time. A horse was to be bought, but the last guinea they could spare had been already expended, and this purchase was, therefore, out of the question. The usages of the small farmers, however, enabled him to remedy this inconvenience. Peter made a bargain with a neighbor, in which he undertook to repay him by an exchange of labor, for the use of his plough and horses in getting down his crop. He engaged to give him, for a stated period in the slack season, so many days' mowing as would cover the expenses of ploughing and harrowing his land. There was, however, a considerable portion of his holding potato-ground; this Peter himself dug with his spade, breaking it as he went along into fine mould. He then planted the seed—got a hatchet, and selecting the best thorn-bush he could find, cut it down, tied a rope to the trunk, seized the rope, and in this manner harrowed his potato-ground. Thus did he proceed, struggling to overcome difficulties by skill, and substituting for the more efficient modes of husbandry, such rude artificial resources as his want of capital compelled him to adopt.

In the meantime, Ellish, seeing Peter acquitting himself in his undertaking with such credit, determined not to be outdone in her own department. She accordingly conceived the design of extending her business, and widening the sphere of her exertions. This intention, however, she kept secret from Peter, until by putting penny to penny, and shilling to shilling, she was able to purchase a load of crockery. Here was a new source of profit opened exclusively by her own address. Peter was astonished when he saw the car unloaded, and the crockery piled in proud array by Ellish's own hands.

"I knew," said she, "I'd take a start out o' you. Faix, Pether, you'll see how I'll do, never fear, wid the help o' Heaven! I'll be off to the market in the mornin', plase God, where I'll sell rings around me * o' them crocks and pitchers. An' now, Pether, the sarra one o' me would do this, good or bad, only bekase your managin' the farm so cleverly. Tady Gormley's goin' to bring home his meal from the mill, and has promised to lave these in the market for me, an' never fear but I'll get some o' the neighbors to bring them home, so that there's car-hire saved. Faix, Pether, there's nothin' like givin' the people sweet words, any way; sure they come chape."

"Faith, an' I'll back you for the sweet words agin any woman in the three kingdoms, Ellish, you darlin'. But don't you know the proverb, 'sweet words butther no parsnips.'"

"In throth, the same proverb's a lyin' one, and ever was; but it's not parsnips I'll butther wid 'em, you gommoch."

"Sowl, you butthered me wid 'em long enough, you deludher—devil a lie in it; but thin, as you say, sure enough, I was no parsnip—not so soft as that either, you phanix."

* Shrovetide.

* This is a kind of hyperbole for selling a great quantity.

"No? Thin I seldom seen your beautiful head without thinkin' of a carrot, an' it's well known they're related—ha, ha, ha!—Behave, Pether—behave, I say—Pether, Pether—ha, ha, ha!—let me alone! Katty Hacket, take him away from me—ha, ha, ha!"

"Will ever you, you shaver wid the tongue that you are? Will ever you, I say? Will ever you make delusion to my head again—eh?"

"Oh, never, never—but let me go, an' me so full o' tickles! Oh, Pether, avourneen, don't, you'll hurt me, an' the way I'm in—quit, avillish!"

"Bedad, if you don't let my head alone, I'll—will ever you?"

"Never, never. There now—ha, ha, ha!—oh, but I'm as wake as wather wid what I laughed. Well now, Pether, didn't I manage bravely—didn't I?"

"Wait till we see the profits first, Ellish—crockery's very tiudher goods."

"Ay!—just wait, an' I'll engage I'll turn the penny. The family's risin' wid us"—

"Very thrue," replied Peter, giving a sly wink at the wife—"no doubt of it."

"—Risin' wid us—I tell you to have sinse, Pether; an' it's our duty to have something for the crathurs when they grow up."

"Well, that's a thruth—sure I'm not sayin' against it."

"I know that; but what I say is, if we hould an, we may make money. Everything, for so far, has thruv wid us, God be praised for it. There's another thing in my mind, that I'll be tellin' you some o' these days."

"I believe, Ellish, you dhrame about makin' money."

"Well, an' I might do worse; when I'm dhramin' about it, I'm doin' no sin to any one. But, listen, you must keep the house to-morrow while I'm at the market. Won't you, Pether?"

"An' who's to open the dhrain in the bottom below?"

"That can be done the day afther. Won't you, abouchal?"

"Ellish, you're a deindner, I tell you. Sweet words;—sowl, you'd smooth a furze bush wid sweet words. How-an-ever, I *will* keep the house to-morrow, till we see the great things you'll do wid your crockery."

Ellish's success was, to say the least of it, quite equal to her expectations. She was certainly an excellent wife, full of acuteness, industry, and enterprise. Had Peter been married to a woman of a disposition resembling his own, it is probable that he would have sunk into indolence, filth, and poverty. These miseries might have soured their tempers, and driven them into all the low excesses and crimes attendant upon pauperism. Ellish, however, had sufficient spirit to act upon Peter's natural indolence, so as to excite it to the proper pitch. Her mode of operation was judiciously suited to his temper. Playfulness and kindness were the instruments by which she managed him. She knew that violence, or the assumption of authority, would cause a man who, like him, was stern when provoked, to react, and meet her with an assertion of his rights and authority not to be trifled with. This she consequently avoided, not entirely from any train of reasoning on the subject; but from that intuitive penetration which taught her to know that the plan she had resorted to was best calculated to make him subservient to her own purposes, without causing him to feel that he was governed.

Indeed, every day brought out her natural cleverness more clearly. Her intercourse with the world afforded her that facility of understanding the tempers and dispositions of others, which can never be acquired when it has not been bestowed as a natural gift. In her hands it was a valuable one. By degrees her house improved in its appearance, both inside and outside. From crockery she proceeded to herrings, then to salt, in each of which she dealt with surprising success. There was, too, such an air of bustle, activity, and good-humor about her that people loved to deal with her. Her appearance was striking, if not grotesque. She was tall and strong, walked rapidly, and when engaged in fair or market disposing of her coarse merchandise, was dressed in a short red petticoat, blue stockings, strong brogues, wore a blue cloak, with the hood turned up over her head, on the top of which was a man's hat, fastened by a ribbon under her chin. As she thus stirred about, with a kind word and a joke for every one, her healthy cheek in full bloom, and her blue-gray eye beaming with an expression of fun and good-nature, it would be difficult to conceive a character more adapted for intercourse with a laughter-loving people. In fact, she soon became a favorite, and this not the less that she was as ready to meet her rivals in business with a blow as with a joke. Peter witnessed her success with unfeigned pleasure; and although every feasible speculation was proposed by her, yet he never felt that he was a mere nonentity when compared to his wife. 'Tis true, he was perfectly capable of executing her agricultural plans when she proposed them, but his own capacity for making a lucky hit was very limited. Of the two, she was certainly the better farmer; and scarcely an improvement took place in his little holding which might not be traced to Ellish.

In the course of a couple of years she bought him a horse, and Peter was enabled to join with a neighbor, who had another. Each had a plough and tackle, so that here was a little team made up, the half of which belonged to Peter. By this means they ploughed week about, until their crops were got down. Peter finding his farm doing well, began to feel a kind of rivalship with his wife—that is to say, she first suggested the principle, and afterwards contrived to make him imagine that it was originally his own.

"The sarra one o' you, Pether," she exclaimed to him one day, "but's batin' me out an' out. Why, you're the very dickins at the farmin', so you are. Faix, I suppose, if you go an this way much longer, that you'll be thinkin' of another farm, in regard that we have some guineas together. Pether, did you ever think of it, abouchal?"

"To be sure, I did, you beauty; an' amn't I in fifty notions to take Harry Neal's land, that jist lies alongside of our own."

"Faix, an' you're right, maybe; but if it's strivin' again me you are, you may give it over: I tell you, I'll have more money made afore this time twelvemonth than you will."

"Arrah, is it jokin' you are? More money? Would you advise me to take Harry's land? Tell me *that* first, you phanix, an' thin I'm your man!"

"Faix, take your own coorse, avourneen. If you get a lase of it at a fair rint, I'll buy another horse, any how. Isn't that doin' the thing dacent?"

"More power to you, Ellish! I'll hold you a crown, I pay you the price o' the horse afore this time twelvemonth."

"Done! The sarra be off me but done!—an' here's Barny Dillon an' Katty Hacket to bear witness."

"Sure enough we will," said Barny, the servant.

"I'll back the misthress any money," replied the maid.

"Two to one on the masther," said the man. "Whoo! our side o' the house for ever! Come, Pether, hould up your head, there's money bid for you!"

"Ellish, I'll fight for you ankle deep," said Katty—"depind your life an me."

"In the name o' goodness, thin, it's a bargain," said Ellish; "an' at the end o' the year, if we're spared, we'll see what we'll see. We'll have among ourselves a little sup o' tay, plase goodness, an' we'll be comfortable. Now, Barny, go an' draw home thim phaties from the pits while the day's fine; and Katty, a colleen, bring in some wather, till we get the pig killed and scalded—it'll hardly have time to be good bacon for the big markets at Christmas. I don't wish," she continued, "to keep it back from them that we have a thrifle o' money. One always does betther when it's known that they're not strugglin'. There's Nelly Cummins, an' her customers is lavin' her, an' dalin' wid me, bekase she's goin' down in business. Ay, an', Pether, ahagur, it's the way o' the world."

"Well but, Ellish, don't you be givin' Nelly Cummins the harsh word, or lanin' too heavily upon her, the crathur, merely in regard that she *is* goin' down. Do you hear, acolleen?"

"Indeed I don't do it, Pether; but you know she has a tongue like a razor at times, and whin it gets loose she'd provoke St. Pether himself. Thin she's takin' to the dhrink, too, the poor misfortunate vagabone!"

"Well, well, that's no affair o' yours, or mine aither—only don't be risin' ructions and norrations wid her. You *threwn* a jug at her the last day you war out, an' hot the poor ould Potticary as he was passin'. You see I hard that, though you kept it close from me!—ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!—why you'd split if you had seen the crathur whin he fell into Pether White's brogue-creels, wid his heels up. But what right had she to be shrivin' to bring away my customers afore my face? Ailey Dogherty was buying a crock wid me, and Nelly shouts over to her from where she sot like a queen on her stool, 'Ailey,' says she 'here's a betther one for three fardens less, an' another farden 'ill get you a pennorth o' salt.' An', indeed, Ailey walks over, manely enough, an' tuck her at her word. Why, flesh an' blood couldn't bear it."

"Indeed, an' you're raal flesh and blood, Ellish, if that's thrue."

"Well, but consarnin' what I mintioned awhile agone—hut! the poor mad crathur, let us have no more discoorse about her—I say, that no one ever thrives so well as when the world sees that they are gettin' an, an' prosperin'; but if there's not an appearance, how will any one know whether we are prosperin' or not, barrin' they see some sign of it about us; I mane, in a quiet rasonable way, widout show or extravagance. In the name o' goodness, thin, let us get the house brushed up, an' the outhouses dashed. A bushel or two of lime 'ill make this as white as an egg widin, an' a very small expinse will get it plastered and whitewashed widout. Wouldn't you like it, avourneen? Eh, Pether?"

"To be sure I'd like it. It'll give a respectful look to the house and place."

"Ay, an' it'll bring customers, that's the main thing. People always like to come to a snug, comfortable place. An', plase God,

I'm thinkin' of another plan that I'll soon mintion."

"An' what may that be, you skamer? Why, Ellish, you've ever and always some skame or other in that head o' yours. For my part, I don't know how you get at them."

"Well, no matter, acushla, do you only buck me; just show me how I ought to go on wid them, for nobody can outdo you at such things, an' I'll engage we'll thrive yit, always wid a blessin' an us."

"Why, to tell God's thruth, I'd bate the devil himself at plannin' out, an' bringin' a thing to a conclusion—eh, you deludher?"

"The sarra doubt of it; but takin' the other farm was the brightest thought I seen wid you yit. Will you do it, avillish?"

"To be sure. Don't I say it? An' it'll be up wid the lark wid me. Hut, woman, you don't see the half o' what's in me, yet."

"I'll buy you a hat and a pair o' stockins at Christmas."

"Will you, Ellish? Then, by the book, I'll work like a horse."

"I didn't intind to tell you, but I had it laid out for you."

"Faith, you're a beauty, Ellish. What'll we call this young chap that's comin', acushla?"

"Now, Pether, none o' your capers. It's time enough when the thing happens to be thinkin' o' that, Glory be to God!"

"Well, you may talk as you plase, but I'll call him Pether."

"An' how do you know but he'll be a girl, you omadhawn?"

"Murdher alive, ay, sure enough! Faith, I didn't think o' that!"

"Well, go up now an' spake to Misther Eccles about the land; maybe somebody else 'ud slip in afore us, an' that wouldn't be pleasant. Here's your brave big coat, put it an; faix, it makes a man of you—gives you a *bodagh* * look entirely; but that's little to what you'll be yet, wid a blessin'—a Half-Sir, any way."

In fact, Ellish's industry had already gained a character for both herself and her husband. He got credit for the assiduity and activity to which she trained him: and both were respected for their cleverness in advancing themselves from so poor a beginning to the humble state of independence they had then reached. The farm which Ellish was so anxious to secure was the property of the gentleman from whom they held the other. Being a man of sense and penetration, he fortunately saw—what, indeed, was generally well known—that Peter and Ellish were rising in the world, and that their elevation was the consequence of their own unceasing efforts to become independent, so that industry is in every possible point of view its own reward. So long as the farm was open to competition the offers for it multiplied prodigiously, and rose in equal proportion. Persons not worth twenty shillings in the world offered double the rent which the utmost stretch of ingenuity, even with suitable capital, could pay. New-married couples, with nothing but the strong imaginative hopes peculiar to their country, proposed for it in a most liberal spirit. Men who had been ejected out of their late farms for non-payment of rent, were ready to cultivate this at a rent much above that which, on better land, they were unable to pay. Others, who had been ejected from farm after farm—each of which they undertook as a mere speculation, to furnish them with present subsistence, but without any ultimate expectation of being able to meet their engagements—came forward with the most laudable efforts. This gentleman, however, was none of those landlords who are so besotted and ignorant of their own interests, as to let their lands simply to the highest bidders, without taking into consideration their capital, moral character, and habits of industry. He resided at home, knew his tenants personally, took an interest in their successes and difficulties, and instructed them in the best modes of improving their farms.

Peter's first interview with him was not quite satisfactory on either side. The honest man was like a ship without her rudder, when transacting business in the absence of his wife. The fact was, that on seeing the high proposals which were sent in, he became alarmed lest, as he flattered himself, that the credit of the transaction should be all his own, the farm might go into the hands of another, and his character for cleverness suffer with Ellish. The landlord was somewhat astounded at the rent which a man who bore so high a name for prudence offered him. He knew it was considerably beyond what the land was worth, and he did not wish that any tenant coming upon his estate should have no other prospect than that of gradually receding into insolvency.

"I cannot give you any answer now," said he to Peter; "but if you will call in a day or two I shall let you know my final determination."

* This word is used in Ireland sometimes in a good and sometimes in a bad sense. For instance, the peasantry will often say in allusion to some individual who may happen to be talked of, "Hut! he's a dirty *bodagh*;" but again, you may hear them use it in a sense directly the reverse of this; for instance, "He's a very dacent man, and looks the *bodagh* entirely." As to the "Half sir," he stands about half-way between the *bodagh* and the gentleman. *Bodagh*—signifying churl—was applied originally as a term of reproach to the English settlers.

Peter, on coming home, rendered an account of his interview with the landlord to his wife, who no sooner heard of the extravagant proposal he made, than she raised her hands and eyes, exclaiming—

"Why, thin, Pether, alanna, was it beside yourself you wor, to go for to offer a rint that no one could honestly pay! Why, man alive, it 'ud lave us widout house or home in no time, all out! Sure Pether, acushla, where 'ud be the use of us or any one takin' land, barrin' they could make somethin' by it? Faix, if the gintleman had sinse, he wouldn't give the same farm to anybody at sich a rint; an' for good rasons too—bekase they could never pay it, an' himself 'ud be the sufferer in the long run."

"Daug me, but you're the long-headedest woman alive this day, Ellish. Why, I never wanst wint into the rason o' the thing, at all. But you don't know the offers he got."

"Don't I? Why do you think he'd let the Mullins, or the Conlans, or the O'Donoghoes, or the Duffys, upon his land, widout a shillin' in one o' their pockets to stock it, or to begin workin' it properly wid. Hand me my cloak from the pin there, an' get your hat. Katty, avourneen, have an eye to the house till we come back; an' if Dick Murphy comes here to get tobaccy on score, tell him I can't afford it, till he pays up what he got. Come, Pether, in the name o' goodness—come, abouchal."

Ellish, during their short journey to the landlord's, commenced, in her own way, a lecture upon agricultural economy, which, though plain and unvarnished, contained excellent and practical sense. She also pointed out to him when to speak and when to be silent; told him what rent to offer, and in what manner he should offer it; but she did all this so dexterously and sweetly, that honest Peter thought the new and corrected views which she furnished him with, were altogether the result of his own penetration.

The landlord was at home when they arrived, and ordered them into the parlor, where he soon made his appearance.

"Well, Connell," said he, smiling, "are you come to make me a *higher* offer?"

"Why thin no, plase your honor," replied Peter, looking for confidence to Ellish: "instead o' that, sir, Ellish here"——

"Never heed me, alanna; tell his honor what you've to say, out o' the face. Go an, acushla."

"Why, your honor, to tell the blessed thruth, the dickens a bit o' myself but had a sup in my head when I was wid your honor to-day before."

Ellish was thunderstruck at this most unexpected apology from Peter; but the fact was, that the instructions which she had given him on their way had completely evaporated from his brain, and he felt himself thrown altogether upon his own powers of invention. Here, however, he was at home; for it was well known among all his acquaintances, that, however he might be deficient in the management of a family when compared to his wife, he was capable, notwithstanding, of exerting a certain imaginative faculty in a very high degree. Ellish felt that to contradict him on the spot must lessen both him and herself in the opinion of the landlord, a circumstance that would have given her much pain.

"I'm sorry to hear that, Connell," said Mr. Eccles; "you bear the character of being strictly sober in your habits. You must have been early at the bottle, too, which makes your apology rather unhappy. Of all tipplers, he who drinks early is the worst and most incurable."

"Thrue for you, sir, but this only happens me wanst a year, your honor."

"Once a year! But, by the by, you had no appearance of being tipsy, Peter."

"Tipsy! Bud-a'-age, your honor, I was never seen tipsy in all my life," said Peter.—"That's a horse of another color, sir, plase your honor."

The reader must at once perceive that Peter here was only recovering himself from the effects of the injurious impression which his first admission was calculated to produce against him in the mind of his landlord.

"Tipsy! No, no, sir; but the rason of it, sir, was this: it beiu' my birthday, sir, I merely tuck a sup in the mornin', in honor o' the day. It's altogether a lucky day to me, sir!"

"Why, to be sure, every man's birthday may, probably, be called such—the gift of existence being, I fear, too much undervalued."

"Bedad, your honor, I don't mane that, at all."

"Then what *do* you mean, Peter?"

"Why, sir, you see, it's not that I was *entirely* born on this day, but *partly*, sir; I was marrid to Ellish here into the bargain,—one o' the best wives, sir—however, I'll say no more, as she's to the fore herself. But, death alive, sir, sure when we put both conclusions together—myself bein' sich a worthy man, and Ellish such a tip-top wife, who could blame me for smellin' the bottle?—for divil a much more I did—about two glasses, sir—an' so it got up into my head a little when I was wid your honor to-day before."

"But what is the amount of all this, Peter?"

"Why, sir, you see only I was as I said,

sir—not tipsy, your honor, any way, but seein' things double or so; an' that was, I suppose, what made me offer for the farm double what I intinded. Every body knows, sir, that the 'crathur' gives the big heart to us, any how, your honor."

"But you know, Peter, we entered into no terms about it. I, therefore, have neither power nor inclination to hold you to the offer you made."

"Faith, sir, you're not the gintleman to do a shabby turn, nor ever was, nor one o' your family. There's not in all Europe"—

Ellish, who was a point blank dealer, could endure Peter's mode of transacting business no longer. She knew that if he once got into the true spirit of applying the oil of flattery to the landlord, he would have rubbed him into a perfect froth ere he quitted him. She, therefore, took up the thread of the discourse, and finished the compliment with much more delicacy than honest Peter could have displayed.

"Thrue for you, Pether," she added; "there is not a kinder family to the poor, nor betther landlords in the country they live in. Pether an' myself, your honor, on layin' both our heads together, found that he offered more rint for the land nor any tenant could honestly pay. So, sir, where's the use of keepin' back God's truth—Pether, sir"—

Peter here trembled from an apprehension that the wife, in accomplishing some object of her own in reference to the land, was about to undeceive the landlord, touching the lie which he had so barefacedly palmed upon that worthy gentleman for truth. In fact, his anxiety overcame his prudence, and he resolved to anticipate her.

"I'd advise you, sir," said he, with a smile of significant good-humor, "to be a little suspicious of her, for, to tell the truth, she draws the"—here he illustrated the simile with his staff—"the long bow of an odd time; faith she does. I'd kiss the book on the head of what I tould you, sir, plase your honor. For the sacret of it is, that I tuck the moisture afore she left her bed."

"Why, Peter, alanna," said Ellish, soothingly, "what's comin' over you, at all, an' me goin' to explain to his honor the outs and ins of our opinion about the land? Faix, man, we're not thinkin' about you, good or bad."

"I believe the drop has scarcely left your head yet, Peter," said the landlord.

"Bud-an'-age, your honor, sure we must have our joke, any how—doesn't she deserve it for takin' the word out o' my mouth?"

"Whisht, avillish; you're too cute for us all, Pether. There's no use, sir, as I was sayin', for any one to deny that when they take a farm they do it to make by it, or at the laste to live comfortably an it. That's the thruth, your honor, an' it's no use to keep it back from you, sir."

"I perfectly agree with you," said the landlord. "It is with these motives that a tenant should wish to occupy land; and it is the duty of every landlord who has his own interest truly at heart, to see that his land be not let at such a rent as will preclude the possibility of comfort or independence on the part of his tenantry. He who lets his land *above* its value, merely because people are foolish enough to offer more for it than it is worth, is as great an enemy to himself as he is to the tenant."

"It's God's thruth, sir, an' it's nothin' else but a comfort to hear sich words comin' from the lips of a gintleman that's a landlord himself."

"Ay, an' a good one, too," said Peter; "an' kind father for his honor to be what he is. Divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Thrue for you, avourneen, an' every one knows that. We wor talkin' it over, sir, betuxt ourselves, Pether an' me, an' he says very cutely, that, upon second thoughts, he offered more nor we could honestly pay out o' the land; so"—

"Faith, it's a thrue as gospel, your honor. Says I, 'Ellish, you beauty'"—

"I thought," observed Mr. Eccles, "that she sometimes drew the long bow, Peter."

"Oh, murdher alive, sir, it was only in regard of her crassin' in an' whippin' the word out o' my mouth, that I wanted to take a rise out of her. Oh, bedad, sir, no; the crathur's thruth to the backbone, an' farther if I'd say it."

"So, your honor, considherin' everything, we're willin' to offer thirty shillin's an acre for the farm. That rint, sir, we'll be able to pay, wid the help o' God, for sure we can do nothin' widout his assistance, glory be to his name! You'll get many that'll offer you more, your honor; but if it 'ud be plasin' to you to considher what manes they have to pay it, I think, sir, you'd see, out o' your own sinse, that it's not likely people who is gone to the bad, an' has nothin' could stand it out long."

"I wish to heaven," replied Mr. Eccles, "that every tenant in Ireland possessed your prudence and good sense. Will you permit me to ask, Mrs. Connell, what capital you and your husband can command provided I should let you have it."

"Wid every pleasure in life, sir, for it's but a fair question to put. An' sure, it is to God we owe it, whatever it is, plase your honor. But, sir, if we get the land, we're able to stock it, an' to crop it well an' da-

cently; an' if your honor would allow us for sartin improvements, sir, we'd run it into snug fields, by plantin' good hedges, an' gettin' up shelther for the outlyin' cattle in the hard seasons, plase your honor, and you know the farm is very naked and bare of shelter at present."

"Sowl, will we, sir, an' far more nor that if we get it. I'll undhertake, sir, to level"—

"No, Pether, we'll promise no more nor we'll do; but anything that his honor will be plased to point out to us, if we get fair support, an' that it remains on the farm afther us, we'll be willin' to do it."

"Willin'!" exclaimed Peter!—"faith, whether we're willin' or not, if his honor but says the word"——

"Mrs. Connell," said their landlord, "say no more. The farm is yours, and you may consider yourselves as my tenants."

"Many thanks to you, sir, for the prifer-ence. I hope, sir, you'll not rue what you did in givin' it to us before them that offered a higher rint. You'll find, sir, wid the help o' the Almighty, that we'll pay you your rint rigular an' punctual."

"Why, thin, long life, an' glory, an' benedication to your honor! Faith, it's only kind father for you, sir, to be what you are. The divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Peter, that will do," replied the landlord, "it would be rather hazardous for our family to compete with all Europe. Go home, Peter, and be guided by your wife, who has more sense in her little finger than ever your family had either in Europe or out of it, although I mean you no offense by going *beyond* Europe."

"By all the books that *never* wor opened an' shut," replied Peter, with the intuitive quickness of perception peculiar to Irishmen, "an innocenter boy than Andy Connell never was sent acrass the water. I proved as clear an *alibi* for him as the sun in the firmanent; an' yit, bad luck to the big-wig O'Grady, he should be puttin' in his leek an me afore the jury, jist whin I had the poor boy cleared out dacently, an' wid all honor. An' bedad, now, that we're spakin about it, I'll tell your honor the whole conclusions of it. You see, sir, the Agint was shot one night; an' above all nights in the year, your honor, a thief of a toothache that I had kep me"——

"Pether, come away, abouchal: his honor knows as much about it as you do, Come, aroon; you know we must help to scald an' scrape the pig afore night, an' it's late now."

"Bedad, sir, she's a sweet one, this."

"Be guided by her, Peter, if you're wise, she's a wife you ought to be proud of."

"Thruc for you, sir; divil resave the word o' lie in that, any how. Come, Ellish; come, you deludher, I'm wid you."

"God bless your honor, sir, an' we're oblaged to you for you kindness an' patience wid the likes o' us."

"I say ditto, your honor. Long life an' glory to you every day your honor rises!"

Peter, on his way home, entered into a defence of his apology for offering so high a rent to the landlord; but although it possessed both ingenuity and originality, it was, we must confess, grossly defective in those principles usually inculcated by our best Ethic writers.

"Couldn't you have tould him what we agreed upon goin' up," observed Ellish: "but instead o' that, to begin an' tell the gintlemen so many lies about your bein' dhrunk, an' this b in' your birth-day, an' the day we wor marrid, an',—— Musha, sich quare stories to come into your head?"

"Why," said Peter, "what harm's in all that, whin he didn't *find me out?*"

"But why the sarra did you go to say that *I* was in the custom o' tellin' lies?"

"Faix, bekase I thought you wor goin' to let out all, an' I thought it best to have the first word o' you. What else?—but sure I brought myself off bravely."

"Well, well, a hudh; don't be invintin' sich things another time, or you'll bring yourself into a scrape, some way or other."

"Faix, an' *you* needn't spake, Ellish; you can let out a nate bounce yourself, whin it's to sarve you. Come now, don't run away wid the story!"

"Well, if I do, it's in the way o' my business; whin I'm batin' them down in the price o' what I'm buyin', or gettin' thim to bid up for any thing I'm sellin': besides, it's to advance ourselves in the world that I do it, abouchal."

"Go an, go an; faix, you're like the new moon, sharp at both corners: but what matther, you beauty, we've secured the farm, at any rate, an', by this an' by that, I'll show you tip-top farmin' an it."

A struggle now commenced between the husband and wife, as to which of them should, in their respective departments, advance themselves with greater rapidity in life. This friendly contest was kept up principally by the address of Ellish, who, as she knew those points in her husband's character most easily wrought upon, felt little difficulty in shaping him to her own purposes. Her great object was to acquire wealth; and it mostly happens, that when this is the ruling principle in life, there is usually to be found, in association with it, all those qualities which are best adapted to secure it. Peter, on finding that every succeeding day brought something

to their gains, began to imbibe a portion of that spirit which wholly absorbed Ellish. He became worldly; but it was rather the worldliness of habit than of principle. In the case of Ellish, it proceeded from both; her mind was apt, vigorous, and conceptive; her body active, her manners bland and insinuating, and her penetration almost intuitive. About the time of their entering upon the second farm, four children had been the fruit of their marriage—two sons and two daughters. These were now new sources of anxiety to their mother, and fresh impulses to her industry. Her ignorance, and that of her husband, of any kind of education, she had often, in the course of their business, bitter cause to regret. She now resolved that their children should be well instructed; and no time was lost in sending them to school, the moment she thought them capable of imbibing the simplest elements of instruction.

"It's hard to say," she observed to her husband, "how soon they may be useful to us. Who knows, Pether, but we may have a full shop yit, an' they may be able to make up bits of accounts for us, poor things? Throth, I'd be happy if I wanst seen it."

"Faix, Ellish," replied Peter, "if we can get an as we're doin', it *is* hard to say. For my own part, if I had got the larnin' in time, I might be a bright boy to-day, no doubt of it—could spake up to the best o' thim. I never wint to school but wanst, an' I remimber I threw the masther into a kiln-pot, an' broke the poor craythur's arm; an' from that day to this, I never could be brought a single day to school."

Peter and Ellish now began to be pointed out as a couple worthy of imitation by those who knew that perseverance and industry never fail of securing their own reward. Others, however,—that is to say, the lazy, the profligate, and the ignorant,—had a ready solution of the secret of their success.

"Oh, my dear, she's a *lucky* woman, an' anything she puts her hand to prospers. Sure she was born wid a *lucky caul* * an her head; an', be sure, ahagur, the world will flow in upon thim. There's many a neighbor about thim works their fingers to the stumps, an' yit you see they can't get an: for Ellish, if she'd throw the sweepins of her hearth to the wind, it 'ud come back to her in money. *She was born to it, an' nothin' can keep her from her luck!"* *

Such are many of the senseless theories that militate against exertion and industry in Ireland, and occasion many to shrink back from the laudible race of honest enterprise, into filth, penury, and crime. It is this idle and envious crew, who, with a natural aversion to domestic industry, become adepts in politics, and active in those illegal combinations and outrages which retard the prosperity of the country, and bring disgrace upon the great body of its peaceable inhabitants.

In the meantime Ellish was rapidly advancing in life, while such persons were absurdly speculating upon the cause of her success. Her business was not only increased, but extended. From crockery, herrings, and salt, she advanced gradually to deal in other branches adapted to her station, and the wants of the people. She bought stockings, and retailed them every market-day. By and by a few pieces of soap might be seen in her windows; starch, blue, potash, and candles, were equally profitable. Pipes were seen stuck across each other, flanked by tape, cakes, children's books, thimbles, and bread. In fact, she was equally clever and expert in whatever she undertook. The consciousness of this, and the reputation of being "a hard honest woman," encouraged her to get a cask or two of beer, and a few rolls of tobacco. Peter, when she proposed the two last, consented only to sell them still as smuggled goods—*sub silentio.* With her usual prudence, however, she declined this.

"We have gone on that way purty far," she

* The caul is a thin membrane, about the consistence of very fine silk, which sometimes covers the head of a new-born infant like a cap. It is always the omen of great good fortune to the infant and parents; and in Ireland, when any one has unexpectedly fallen into the receipt of property, or any other temporal good, it is customary to say, "such a person was born with a 'lucky caul' on his head."

Why these are considered lucky, it would be a very difficult matter to ascertain. Several instances of good fortune, happening to such as were born with them, might, by their coincidences, form a basis for the superstition; just as the fact of three men during one severe winter having been found drowned, each with two shirts on, generated an opinion which has now become fixed and general in that parish, that it is unlucky to wear two shirts at once. We are not certain whether the caul is in general the perquisite of the midwife—sometimes we believe it is; at all events, her integrity occasionally yields to the desire of possessing it. In many cases she conceals its existence, in order that she may secretly dispose of it to good advantage, which she frequently does; for it is considered to be the herald of good fortune to those who can get it into their possession. Now, let not our English neighbors smile at us for those things until they wash their own hands clear of such practices. At this day a caul will bring a good price in the most civilized city in the world—to wit, the good city of London—the British metropolis. Nay, to such lengths has the mania for cauls been carried there, that they have been actually advertised for in the *Times* newspaper.

* This doctrine of fatalism is very prevalent among the lower orders in Ireland.

replied, "an' never *got a touch*,* thanks to the kindness o' the neighbors that never informed an us: but now, Pether, that we're *able* we had betther do everything above boord. You know the ould say, 'long runs the fox, but he's catched at last:' so let us give up in time, an' get out a little bit o' license."

"I don't like that at all," replied Peter: "I can't warm my heart to the license. I'll back you in anything but that. The gauger won't come next or near us: he has thried it often, an' never made anything of it. Dang me, but I'd like to have a bit o' fun with the gauger to see if my hand's still ready for practice."

"Oh, thin, Pether, how can you talk that way, asthore? Now if what I'm sayin' was left to yourself wouldn't you be apt to plan it as I'm doin'?—wouldn't you, acushla? Throth, I know you're to cute an' sinsible not to do it."

"Why thin, do you know what, Ellish—although I didn't spake it out, upon my faix I was thinkin' of it. Divil a word o' lie in it."

"Oh, you thief o' the world, an' never to tell it to me. Faix, Pether, you're a cunnin' shaver, an' as deep as a draw well."

"Let me alone. Why I tell you if I study an' lay myself down to it, I can contrive anything. When I was young, many a time my poor father, God be good to him! said that if there was any possibility of gettin' me to take to larnin', I'd be risin' out o' the ashes every mornin' like a phanix."

"But won't you hould to your plan about the license?"

"Hould! To be sure I will. What was I but takin' a rise out o' you. I intinded it this good while, you phanix—faix, I did."

In this manner did Ellish dupe her own husband into increasing wealth. Their business soon became so extensive, that a larger house was absolutely necessary. To leave that, beneath whose roof she succeeded so well in all her speculations, was a point—be it of prudence or of prejudice—which Ellish could not overcome. Her maxim was, wherever you find yourself doing well, stay there. She contrived, however, to remedy this. To the old house additional apartments were, from time to time, added, into which their business soon extended. When these again became too small, others were also built; so that in the course of about twenty years, their premises were so extensive, that the original shebeen-house constituted a very small portion of Peter's residence. Peter, during Ellish's progress within doors, had not been idle without. For every new room added to the house, he was able to hook in a fresh farm in addition to those he had already occupied. Unexpected success had fixed his heart so strongly upon the accumulation of money, and the pride of rising in the world, as it was possible for a man, to whom they were only adventitious feelings, to experience. The points of view in which he and his wife were contemplated by the little public about them were peculiar, but clearly distinct. The wife was generally esteemed for her talents and incessant application to business; but she was not so cordially liked as Peter. He, on the other hand, though less esteemed, was more beloved by all their acquaintances than Ellish. This might probably originate from the more obvious congeniality which existed between Peter's natural disposition, and the national character; for with the latter, Ellish, except good humor, had little in common.

The usual remarks upon both were—"she would buy an' sell him"—"twas she that made a man of him; but for all that, Pether's worth a ship-load of her, if she'd give him his own way." That is, if she would permit him to drink with the neighbors, to be idle and extravagant.

Every year, now that their capital was extending, added more perceptibly to their independence. Ellish's experience in the humbler kinds of business, trained her for a higher line; just as boys at school rise from one form to another. She made no plunges, nor permitted Peter, who was often inclined to jump at conclusions, to make any. Her elevation was gradual and cautious; for her plans were always so seasonable and simple that every new description of business, and every new success, seemed to arise naturally from that which went before it.

Having once taken out a license, their house soon became a decent country spirit establishment; from soap, and candles, and tobacco, she rose into the full sweep of groceries; and from dealing in Connemara stockings and tape, she proceeded in due time to sell woollen and linen drapery. Her crockery was now metamorphosed into delf, pottery, and hardware; her gingerbread into stout loaves, for as Peter himself grew wheat largely, she seized the opportunity presented by the death of the only good baker in the neighborhood, of opening an extensive bakery.

It may be asked, how two illiterate persons, like Peter and Ellish, could conduct business in which so much calculation was necessary, without suffering severely by their liability to make mistakes. To this we reply—first, that we should have liked to see any person attempting to pass a bad note or a light guinea upon Ellish after nine or ten years' experience; we should like to have

* Never suff red by the exciseman.

seen a smug clerk taking his pen from behind his ear, and after making his calculation, on inquiring from Ellish if she had reckoned up the amount, compelled to ascertain the error which she pointed out to him. The most remarkable point in her whole character, was the rapid accuracy she displayed in mental calculation, and her uncommon sagacity in detecting bad money.

There is, however, a still more satisfactory explanation of this circumstance to be given. She had not neglected the education of her children. The eldest was now an intelligent boy, and a smart accountant, who, thanks to his master, had been taught to keep their books by Double Entry. The second was little inferior to him as a clerk, though as a general dealer he was far his superior. The eldest had been principally behind the counter; whilst the younger, in accompanying his mother in all her transactions and bargain-making, had in a great measure imbibed her address and tact.

It is certainly a pleasing, and, we think, an interesting thing, to contemplate the enterprise of an humble, but active, shrewd woman, enabling her to rise, step by step, from the lowest state of poverty to a small sense of independence; from this, by calling fresh powers into action, taking wider views, and following them up by increased efforts, until her shebeen becomes a small country public-house; until her roll of tobacco, and her few pounds of soap and starch, are lost in the well-filled drawers of a grocery shop; and her gray Connemara stockings transformed by the golden wand of industry into a country cloth warehouse. To see Peter—from the time when he first harrowed part of his farm with a thorn-bush, and ploughed it by joining his horse to that of a neighbor—adding farm to farm, horse to horse, and cart to cart, until we find him a wealthy and extensive agriculturist.

The progress of Peter and Ellish was in another point of view a good study for him who wishes to look into human nature, whilst adapting itself to the circumstances through which it passes. When this couple began life, their friends and acquaintancess were as poor as themselves; as they advanced from one gradation to another, and rose up from a lower to a higher state, their former friends, who remained in their original poverty, found themselves left behind in cordiality and intimacy, as well as in circumstances; whilst the subjects of our sketch continued to make new friendships of a more respectable stamp, to fill up, as it were, the places held in their good will by their humble, but neglected, intimates. Let not our readers, however, condemn them for this. It was the act of society, and not of Peter and Ellish. On their parts, it was involuntary; their circumstances raised them, and they were compelled, of course, to rise with their circumstances. They were passing through the journey of life, as it were, and those with whom they set out, not having been able to keep up with them, soon lost their companionship, which was given to those with whom they travelled for the time being. Society is always ready to reward the enterprising and industrious by its just honors, whether they are sought or not; it is so disposed, that every man falls or rises into his proper place in it, and that by the wisdom and harmony of its structure. The rake, who dissipates by profligacy and extravagance that which might have secured him an honorable place in life, is eventually brought to the work-house; whilst the active citizen, who realizes an honest independence, is viewed with honor and esteem.

Peter and Ellish were now people of consequence in the parish; the former had ceased to do anything more than superintend the cultivation of his farms; the latter still took an active part in her own business, or rather in the various departments of business which she carried on. Peter might be seen the first man abroad in the morning proceeding to some of his farms mounted upon a good horse, comfortably dressed in top boots, stout corduroy breeches, buff cashmere waistcoat, and blue broad-cloth coat, to which in winter was added a strong frieze great-coat, with a drab velvet collar, and a glazed hat. Ellish was also respectably dressed, but still considerably under her circumstances. Her mode of travelling to fairs or markets was either upon a common car, covered with a feather-bed and quilt, or behind Peter upon a pillion. This last method flattered Peter's vanity very much; no man could ride on these occasions with a statelier air. He kept himself as erect and stiff as a poker, and brandished the thong of his loaded whip with the pride of a gentleman farmer.

'Tis true, he did not always hear the sarcastic remarks which were passed upon him by those who witnessed his good-natured vanity:

"There he goes," some laboring man on the wayside would exclaim, "a purse-proud *bodagh* upon our hands. Why, thin, does he forget that we remimber when he kept the shebeen-house, an' sould his smuggled tobacey in *gits* * out of his pocket, for fraid o' the gauger! Sowl, he'd show a blue nose, any way, only for the wife—'Twas she made a man of him."

* Gits—the smallest possible quantities.

"Faith, an' I for one, won't hear Pether Connell run down," his companion would reply; "he's a good-hearted, honest man, an' obligin' enough; an' for that matter so is the wife, a hard honest woman, that made what they have, an' brought herself an' her husband from nothin' to somethin'."

"Thrue for you, Tim; in throth, they *do* deserve credit. Still, you see, here's you an' me, an' we've both been slavin' ourselves as much as they have, an' yet you see how we are! However, *it's their luck*, and there's no use in begrudgin' it to them."

When their children were full-grown, the mother did not, as might have been supposed, prevent them from making a respectable appearance. With excellent judgment, she tempered their dress, circumstances, and prospects so well together, that the family presented an admirable display of economy, and a decent sense of independence. From the moment they were able to furnish solid proofs of their ability to give a comfortable dinner occasionally, the priest of the parish began to notice them; and this new intimacy, warmed by the honor conferred on one side, and by the good dinners on the other, ripened into a strong friendship. For many a long year, neither Peter nor Ellish, God forgive them, ever troubled themselves about going to their duty. They soon became, however, persons of too much importance to be damned without an effort made for their salvation. The worthy gentleman accordingly addressed them on the subject, and as the matter was one of perfect indifference to both, they had not the slightest hesitation to go to confession—in compliment to the priest. We do not blame the priest for this; God forbid that we should quarrel with a man for loving a good dinner. If we ourselves were a priest, it is very probable, —nay, from the zest with which we approach a good dinner, it is quite certain—that we would have cultivated honest Peter's acquaintance, and drawn him out to the practice of that most social of virtues—hospitality. The salvation of such a man's soul was worth looking after; and, indeed, we find a much warmer interest felt, in all churches, for those who are able to *give* good dinners, than for those poor miserable sinners who can scarcely *get* even a bad one.

But besides this, there was another reason for the Rev. Mr. Mulcahy's anxiety to cultivate a friendship with Peter and his wife—which reason consisted in a very laudable determination to bring about a match between his own niece, Miss Granua Mulcahy, and Peter's eldest son, Dan. This speculation he had not yet broached to the family, except by broken hints, and jocular allusions to the very flattering proposals that had been made by many substantial young men for Miss Granua.

In the mean time the wealth of the Connells had accumulated to thousands; their business in the linen and woollen drapery line was incredible. There was scarcely a gentleman within many miles of them, who did not find it his interest to give them his custom. In the hardware, flour, and baking concerns they were equally fortunate. The report of their wealth had gone far and near, exaggerated, however, as everything of the kind is certain to be; but still there were ample grounds for estimating it at a very high amount.

Their stores were large, and well filled with many a valuable bale; their cellars well stocked with every description of spirits; and their shop, though not large in proportion to their transactions, was well filled, neat, and tastefully fitted up. There was no show, however—no empty glare to catch the eye; on the contrary, the whole concern was marked by an air of solid, warm comfort, that was much more indicative of wealth and independence than tawdry embellishment would have been.

"Avourneen," said Ellish, "the way to deck out your shop is to keep the best of goods. Wanst the people knows that they'll get betther money-worth here than they'll get anywhere else, they'll come here, whether the shop looks well or ill. Not sayin' but every shop ought to be clane an' dacent, for there's rason in all things."

This, indeed, was another secret of their success. Every article in their shop was of the best description, having been selected by Ellish's own eye and hand in the metropolis, or imported directly from the place of its manufacture. Her periodical visits to Dublin gave her great satisfaction; for it appears that those with whom she dealt, having had sufficient discrimination to appreciate her talents and integrity, treated her with marked respect.

Peter's farm-yard bore much greater evidence of his wealth than did Ellish's shop. It was certainly surprising to reflect, that by the capacity of two illiterate persons, who began the world with nothing, all the best and latest improvements in farming were either adopted or anticipated. The farm-yard was upon a great scale; for Peter cultivated no less than four hundred acres of land—to such lengths had his enterprise carried him. Threshing machines, large barns, corn kilns, large stacks, extensive stables, and immense cow-houses, together with the incessant din of active employment perpetually going on—all gave a very high

opinion of their great prosperity, and certainly reflected honor upon those whose exertions had created such a scene about them. One would naturally suppose, when the family of the Connells had arrived to such unexpected riches, and found it necessary to conduct a system whose machinery was so complicated and extensive that Ellish would have fallen back to the simple details of business, from a deficiency of that comprehensive intelligence which is requisite to conduct the higher order of mercantile transactions; especially as her sons were admirably qualified by practice, example, and education, to ease her of a task which would appear one of too much difficulty for an unlettered farmer's wife. Such a supposition would be injurious to this excellent woman. So far from this being the case, she was still the moving spirit, the chief conductor of the establishment. Whenever any difficulty arose that required an effort of ingenuity and sagacity, she was able in the homeliest words to disentangle it so happily, that those who heard her wondered that it should at all have appeared to them as a difficulty. She was everywhere. In Peter's farm-yard her advice was as excellent and as useful as in her own shop. On his farms she was the better agriculturist, and she frequently set him right in his plans and speculations for the ensuing year.

She herself was not ignorant of her skill. Many a time has she surveyed the scene about her with an eye in which something like conscious pride might be seen to kindle. On those occasions she usually shook her head, and exclaimed, either in soliloquy, or by way of dialogue, to some person near her:—

"Well, avourneen, all's very right, an' goin' an bravely; but I only hope that when *I'm gone* I won't be missed!"

"Missed," Peter would reply, if he happened to hear her; "oh, upon my credit"—he was a man of too much consequence to swear "by this and by that" now—"upon my credit, Ellish, if you die soon, you'll see the genteel wife I'll have in your place."

"Whisht, avourneen! Although you're but jokin', I don't like to hear it, avillish! No, indeed; we wor too long together, Pether, and lived too happily wid one another, for you to have the heart to think of sich a thing!"

"No, in troth, Ellish, I would be long sarry to do it. It's displasin' to you, achree, an' I won't say it. God spare you to us! It was you put the bone in us, an' that's what all the country says, big an' little, young and ould; an' God He knows it's truth, and nothin' else."

"Indeed, no, thin, Pether, it's not altogether thruth, you desarve your full share of it. You backed me well, acushla, in everything, an' if you had been a dhrinkin', idle, rollikin' vagabone, what 'ud signify all, that me or the likes o' me could do."

"Faith, an' it was you made me what I am, Ellish; you tuck the soft side o' me, you beauty; an' it's well you did, for by this—hem, upon my reputation, if you had gone to cross purposes with me you'd find yourself in the wrong box. An', you phanix o' beauty, you managed the childhre, the crathurs, the same way—an' a good way it is, in throth."

"Pether, wor you ever thinkin' o' Father Mulcahy's *sweetness* to us of late?"

"No, thin, the sorra one o' me thought of it. Why, Ellish?"

"Didn't you observe that for the last three or four months he's full of attintions to us? Every Sunday he brings *you* up, an' *me, if I'd go*, to the althar, an' keeps you there by way of showin' you respect. Pether, it's not you, but your money he respects; an' I think there ought to be no respect o' persons in the chapel, any how. You're not a bit nearer God by bein' near the althar; for how do we know but the poorest crathur there is nearer to heaven than we are!"

"Faith, sure enough, Ellish; but what deep skame are you penethratin' now, you desaver?"

"I'd lay my life, you'll have a proposial o' marriage from Father Mulcahy, atween our Dan an' Miss Granua. For many a day he's hintin' to us, from time to time, about the great offers she had; now what's the rason, if *she* had these great offers, that *he* didn't take them?"

"Bedad, Ellish, you're the greatest headpiece in all Europe. Murdher alive, woman, what a fine counsellor you'd make. An' suppose he did offer, Ellish, what 'ud you be sayin' to him?"

"Why, that 'ud depind entirely upon what he's able to give her—they say he has money. It 'ud depind, too, upon whether Dan has any likin' for her or not."

"He's often wid her, I know; an' I needn't tell you, Ellish, that afore we wor spliced together, I was often wid somebody that I won't mintion. At all evints, he has made Dan put the big O afore the Connell, so that he has him now full namesake to the Counsellor; an', faith, *that itself 'ud get him a wife.*"

"Well, the best way is to say nothin', an' to hear nothin', till his Reverence spakes out an' thin we'll see what can be done."

Ellish's sagacity had not misled her. In a few months afterwards Father Mulcahy was

asked by young Dan Connell to dine; and as he and honest Ellish were sitting together, in the course of the evening, the priest broached the topic as follows:—

"Mrs. Connell, I think this whiskey is better than my four-year old, that I bought at the auction the other day, although Dan says mine's better. Between ourselves, that Dan is a clever, talented young fellow; and if he happens upon a steady, sensible wife, there is no doubt but he will die a respectable man. But, by the by, Mrs. Connell, you've never tried *my* whiskey; and upon my credit, you must soon, for I know your opinion would decide the question."

"Is it worth while to decide it, your Reverence? I suppose the thruth is, sir, that both is good enough for any one; an' I think that's as much as we want."

Thus far she went, but never alluded to Dan, judiciously throwing the *onus* of introducing *that* subject upon the priest.

"Dan says mine's better," observed Father Mulcahy; "and I would certainly give a great deal for his opinion upon that or any other subject, except theology."

"You ought," replied Ellish, "to be a betther judge of whiskey nor either Dan nor me; an' I'll tell you why—you dhrink it in more places, and can make comparishment one wid another; but Dan an' me is confined mostly to our own, an' of that same we take very little, an' the less the betther for people in business, or indeed for anybody."

"Very true, Mrs. Connell! But for all that, I won't give up Dan's judgment in anything within his own line of business, still excepting theology, for which he hasn't the learning."

"He's a good son, without *tay*-ology—as good as ever broke the world's bread," said Peter, "glory be to God! Although, for that matther, he ought to be as well acquainted wid *tay*-ology as your Reverence, in regard that he *sells* more of it nor you do."

"A good son, they say, Mrs. Connell, will make a good husband. I wonder you don't think of settling him in life. It's full time."

"Father, avourneen, we must lave that wid himself. I needn't be tellin' you, that it 'ud be hard to find a girl able to bring what the girl that 'ud expect Dan *ought* to bring."

This was a staggerer to the priest, who recruited his ingenuity by drinking Peter's health, and Ellish's.

"Have you *nobody* in your eye for him, Mrs. Connell?"

"Faith, I'll engage she has," replied Peter, with a ludicrous grin—"I'll venture for to say she has *that*."

"Very right, Mrs. Connell; it's all fair. Might one ask who she is; for, to tell you the truth, Dan is a favorite of mine, and I must make it a point to see him well settled."

"Why, your Reverence," replied Peter again, "jist the one you mintioned."

"Who? I? Why I mentioned *nobody*."

"An' *that's* the very one she has in her eye for him, plase your Reverence—ha, ha, ha! What's the world widout a joke, Docthor? beggin' your pardon for makin' so free wid you."

"Peter, you're still a wag," replied the priest; "but, seriously, Mrs. Connell, have you selected any female, *of respectable connections*, as a likely person to be a wife for Dan?"

"Indeed no, your Reverence, I have not. Where could I pitch upon a girl—barrin' a Protestant, an' that 'ud never do—who has a fortune to meet what Dan's to get?"

The priest moved his chair a little, and drank their healths a second time.

"But you know, Mrs. Connell, that Dan needn't care so much about fortune, if he got a girl *of respectable connections*. He has an independence himself."

"Thrue for you, father; but what right would any girl have to expect to be supported by the hard armin' of me an' my husband, widout bringin' somethin' forrid herself? You know, sir, that the fortune always goes wid the wife; but am I to fortune off my son to a girl that has nothin'? If my son, plase your Reverence, hadn't a coat to his back, or a guinea in his pocket—as, God be praised, he has both—but, supposin' he hadn't, what right would he have to expect a girl wid a handsome fortune to marry him? There's Paddy Neill, your sarvint-boy; now, if Paddy, who's an honest man's son, axed your niece, wouldn't you be apt to lose your timper?"

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Connell, I think your fire's rather hot—allow me to draw back a little. Mrs. Connell, your health again!—Mr. Connell, your fireside!"

"Thank you, Docthor; but faith I think you ought hardly to dhrink the same fireside, becase it appears to be rather *hot* for your Reverence, at the present time—ha, ha, ha! Jokin' still, Docthor, we must be. Well, what harm! I wish we may never do worse!"

"And what fortune would you expect with a girl of *genteel connexion*—a girl that's accomplished, we'll say in music, plain work, and Irish, vernacularly?—hem! What fortune would you be expecting with such a girl?"

"Why, Docthor, ahagur, the only music I'd wish for my son's wife is a good timper: an' that's what their music-masthers can't tache thim. The plain work, although I don't know what you mane by it, sounds

well enough; an' as to *Irish, whick-whackularly,* if you mane our own ould tongue, he may get thousands that can spake it *whackularly,* an' nothin' else."

"You're a wealthy woman, certainly, Mrs. Connell, and what's more, I'm not at all surprised at it. Your health, once more, and long life to you! Suppose, however, that Dan got a fitting wife, what would you expect as a proper portion? I have a reason for asking."

"Dan, phase your Reverence, will get four thousand to begin the world wid; an', as he's to expect none but a Catholic, I suppose if he gets the fourth part of that, it's as much as he ought to look for."

"A thousand pounds!—hut tut! The woman's beside herself. Why look about you and try where you can find a Catholic girl with a thousand pounds fortune, except in a gentleman's family, where Dan could never think of going."

"That's thrue, any how, your Reverence," observed Peter.—"A thousand pounds! Ellish! you needn't look for it. Where is it to be had out of a gintleman's family, as his Reverence says thrue enough."

"An' now, Docthor," said Ellish, "what 'ud *you* think a girl ought to bring a young man like Dan, that's to have four thousand pounds?"

"I don't think any Catholic girl of his own rank in the county, could get more than a couple of hundred."

"That's one shillin' to every pound he has," replied Ellish, almost instantaneously. "But, Father, you may as well spake out at wanst," she continued, for she was too quick and direct in all her dealings to be annoyed by circumlocution; "you're desairous of a match between Dan an' Miss Granua?"

"Exactly," said the priest; "and what is more, I believe they are fond of each other. I know Dan is attached to her, for he told me so. But, now that we have mentioned her, I say that there is not a more accomplished girl of her persuasion in the parish we sit in. She can play on the bagpipes better than any other piper in the province, for I taught her myself; and I tell you that in a respectable man's wife a knowledge of music is a desirable thing. It's hard to tell, Mrs. Connell, how they may rise in the world, and get into fashionable company, so that accomplishments, you persave, are good. She can make a shirt and wash it, and she can write Irish. As for dancing, I only wish you'd see her at a hornpipe. All these things put together, along with her genteel connections, and the prospect of what I may be able to lave her—I say your son may do worse."

"It's not what you'd lave her, sir, but what you'd give her in the first place, that I'd like to hear. Spake up, your Reverence, an' let us know how far you *will* go."

"I'm afeard, sir," said Peter, "if it goes to a clane bargain atween yez, that Ellish will make you bid up for Dan. Be sharp, sir, or you'll have no chance; faix, you won't."

"But, Mrs. Connell," replied the priest, "before I spake up, consider her accomplishments. I'll undertake to say, that the best bred girl in Dublin cannot perform music in such style, or on such an instrument as the one she uses. Let us contemplate Dan and her after marriage, in an elegant house, and full business, the dinner over, and they gone up to the drawing-room. Think how agreeable and graceful it would be for Mrs. Daniel O'Connell to repair to the sofa, among a few respectable friends, and, taking up her bagpipes, set her elbow a-going, until the drone gives two or three broken groans, and the chanter a squeak or two, like a child in the cholic, or a cat that you had trampled on by accident. Then comes the real ould Irish music, that warms the heart. Dan looks upon her graceful position, until the tears of love, taste, and admiration are coming down his cheeks. By and by, the toe of him moves: here another foot is going; and, in no time, there is a hearty dance, with a light heart and a good conscience. You or I, perhaps, drop in to see them, and, of course, we partake of the enjoyment."

"Divil a pleasanter," said Peter: "I tell you, I'd like it well; an', for my own part, if the deludher here has no objection, *I'm* not goin' to spoil sport."

Ellish looked hard at the priest; her keen blue eye glittered with a sparkling light, that gave decided proofs of her sagacity being intensely excited.

"All that you've said," she replied, "is very fine; but in regard o' the bag-pipes, an' Miss Granua Mulcahy's squeezin' the music out o' thim—why, if it plased God to bring my son to the staff an' bag—a common beggar—indeed, in that case, Miss Granua's bagpipes might sarve both o' thim, an' help, maybe, to get them a night's lodgin' or so; but until that time comes, if you respect your niece, you'll burn her bagpipes, dhrone, chanther, an' all. If you *are* for a match, which I doubt, spake out, as I said, and say what fortune you'll pay down on the nail wid her, otherwise we're losin' our time, an' that's a loss one can't make up."

The priest, who thought he could have bantered Ellish into an alliance, without pledging himself to pay any specific fortune, found that it was necessary for him to treat the matter seriously, if he expected to suc-

ceed. He was certainly anxious for the match; and as he really wished to see his niece—who, in truth, was an excellent girl, and handsome—well settled, he resolved to make a stretch and secure Dan if possible.

"Mrs. Connell," said he, "I will be brief with you. The most I can give her is three hundred pounds, and even that by struggling and borrowing. I will undertake to pay it as you say—on the nail! for I am really anxious that my niece should be connected with so worthy and industrious a family. What do you say?"

"I'm willin' enough," replied Peter. It's not asy to get that wid a Catholic girl."

"There's some thruth in what you say, aroon, sure enough," observed Ellish; "an' if his Reverence puts another hundhre to it, why, in the name of goodness, let them go together. If you don't choose that, Docthor, never breathe the subject to me agin. Dan's not an ould man yit, an' has time enough to get wives in plenty."

"Come," replied the priest, "there's my hand, it's a bargain; although I must say there's no removing you from your point. I *will* give four hundred, hook or crook; but I'll have sad scrambling to get it together. Still I'll make it good."

"Down on the nail?" inquired Ellish.

"Ay! ay! Down on the nail," replied the priest.

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, a bargain be it," said Peter; "but, upon my credit, Ellish, I won't have the bag-pipes burnt, anyhow. Faith, I must hear an odd tune, now an' thin, when I call to see the childhre."

"Pether, acushla, have sinse. Would you wish to see your daughter-in-law playin' upon the bag-pipes, when she ought to be mindin' her business, or attendin' her childhre? No, your Reverence, the pipes must be laid aside. I'll have no piperly connection for a son of mine."

The priest consented to this, although Peter conceded it with great reluctance. Further preliminaries were agreed upon, and the evening passed pleasantly, until it became necessary for Mr. Mulcahy to bid them good-night.

When they were gone, Peter and Ellish talked over the matter between themselves in the following dialogue:

"The fortune's a small one," said Ellish to her husband; "an' I suppose you wondher that I consinted to take so little."

"Sure enough, I wondhered at it," replied Peter, "but, for my own part, I'd give my son to her widout a penny o' fortune, in ordher to be connected wid the priest; an' besides, she's a fine, handsome, good girl—ay, an' his fill of a wife, if she had but the shift to her back."

"Four hundhre wid a priest's niece, Pether, is before double the money wid any other. Don't you know, that when they set up for themselves, he can bring the custom of the whole parish to them? It's unknown the number o' ways he can sarve them in. Sure, at stations an' weddins, wakes, marriages, and funerals, they'll all be proud to let the priest know that they purchased whatever they wanted from his niece an' her husband. Betther!—faix, four hundhre from *him* is worth three times as much from another."

"Glory to you, Ellish!—brigh+ an' cute for ever! Why, I'd back you for a woman that could buy an' sell Europe, aginst the world. Now, isn't it odd that I never think of these long-headed skames?"

"Ay do you, often enough, Pether; but you keep them to yourself, abouchal."

"Faith, I'm close, no doubt of it; an'—but there's no use in sayin' any more about it—you said whatsomever came into my own head consarnin' it. Faith, you did, you phanix."

In a short time the marriage took place.

Dan, under the advice of his mother, purchased a piece of ground most advantageously located, as the site of a mill, whereon an excellent one was built; and as a good mill had been long a desideratum in the country, his success was far beyond his expectations. Every speculation, in fact, which Ellish touched, prospered. Fortune seemed to take delight, either in accomplishing or anticipating her wishes. At least, such was the general opinion, although nothing could possibly be more erroneous than to attribute her success to mere chance. The secret of all might be ascribed to her good sense, and her exact knowledge of the precise moment when to take the tide of fortune at its flow. Her son, in addition to the mill, opened an extensive mercantile establishment in the next town, where he had ample cause to bless the instructions of his mother, and her foresight in calculating upon the advantage of being married to the priest's niece.

Soon after his marriage, the person who had for many years kept the head inn of the next town died, and the establishment was advertised for sale. Ellish was immediately in action. Here was an opportunity of establishing the second son in a situation which had enabled the late proprietor of it to die nearly the richest man in the parish. A few days, therefore, before that specified for the sale, she took her featherbed car, and had an interview with the executors of the late proprietor. Her character was known, her

judgment and integrity duly estimated, and, perhaps, what was the weightiest argument in her favor, her purse was forthcoming to complete the offer she had made. After some private conversation between the executors, her proposal was accepted, and before she returned home, the head inn, together with its fixtures and furniture, was her property.

The second son, who was called after his father, received the intelligence with delight. One of his sisters was, at his mother's suggestion, appointed to conduct the housekeeping department, and keep the bar, a duty for which she was pretty well qualified by her experience at home.

"I will paint it in great style," said Peter the Younger. "It must be a head Inn no longer; I'll call it a Hotel, for that's the whole fashion."

"It wants little, avourneen," said his mother; "it was well kep: some paintin' an other improvements it does want, but don't be extravagant. Have it clane an' dacent, but, above all things, comfortable, an' the attindance good. That's what'll carry you an—not a flourish o' paintin' outside, an' dirt, an' confusion, an' bad attindance widin. Considher, Pether darlin', that the man who owned it last, feathered his nest well in it, but never called it a Hotill. Let it appear on the outside jist as your old customers used to see it; but improve it widin as much as you can, widout bein' lavish an it, or takin' up the place wid nonsense."

"At all evints, I'll have a picture of the Liberator over the door, an' 'O'Connell' written under it. It's both our names, and besides it will be 'killin' two birds with one stone.'"

"No, avourneen. Let me advise you, if you wish to prosper in life, to keep yourself out of party-work. It only stands betune you an' your business; an' it's surely wiser for you to mind your own affairs than the affairs of the nation. There's rason in everything. No man in trade has a right, widout committin' a sin, to neglect his family for politics or parties. There's Jack Cummins that was doin' well in his groceries till he began to make speeches, an' get up public meetins, an' write petitions, an' now he has nothin' to throuble him *but* politics, for his business is gone. Every one has liberty to think as they plase. We can't expect Protestants to think as we do, nor Protestants can't suppose that we ought to think as they'd wish; an' for that same rason, we should make allowance on both sides, an' not be like many we know, that have their minds up, expectin' they don't know what, instead of workin' for themselves and their families as they ought to do. Pether, won't you give that up, avillish?"

"I believe you're right, mother. I didn't see it before in the light you've placed it in."

"Then, Pether darlin', lose no time in gettin' into your place—you an' Alley; an' faix, if you don't both manage it cleverly, I'll never spake to yez."

Here was a second son settled, and nothing remained but to dispose of their two daughters in marriage to the best and most advantageous offers. This, in consequence of their large fortunes, was not a matter of much difficulty. The eldest, Alley, who assisted her brother to conduct the Inn, became the wife of an extensive grazier, who lived in an adjoining county. The younger, Mary, was joined to Father Mulcahy's nephew, not altogether to the satisfaction of the mother, who feared that two establishments of the same kind, in the same parish, supported by the same patronage, must thrive at the expense of each other. As it was something of a love-match, however, she ultimately consented.

"Avourneen," said she, "the parish is big enough, an' has customers enough to support two o' them; an' I'll engage his Reverence will do what he can for them both."

In the meantime, neither she nor her husband was dependent upon their children. Peter still kept the agricultural department in operation; and although the shop and warehouse were transferred to Mr. Mulcahy, in right of his wife, yet it was under the condition of paying a yearly sum to Mrs. Connell and her husband, ostensibly as a provision, but really as a spur to their exertions. A provision they could not want, for their wealth still amounted to thousands, independently of the large annual profits arising out of their farms.

For some time after the marriage of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Connell took a very active part in her son-in-law's affairs. He possessed neither experience, nor any knowledge of business whatsoever, though he was not deficient in education, nor in capacity to acquire both. This pleased Mrs. Connell very much, who set herself to the task of instructing him in the principles of commercial life, and in the best methods of transacting business.

"The first rules," said she to him, "for you to obsarve is these: tell truth; be sober; be punctual; rise early; persavere; avoid extravagance; keep your word; an' watch your health. Next: don't be proud; give no offince; talk sweetly; be ready to oblage, when you can do it widout inconvanience, but don't put yourself or your business out o' your ways to sarve anybody.

"Thirdly: keep an appearance of substance an' comfort about your place, but don't go beyant your manes in doin' it; when you make a bargain, think what a correcther them you dale wid bears, an' whether or not you found them honest before, if you ever had business wid them.

"When you buy a thing, appear to know your own mind, an' don't be hummin' an' hawin', an' higglin', an' longin' as if your teeth wor wathierin' afther it; but be manly, downright, an' quick; they'll then see that you know your business, an' they won't be keepin' off an' an, but will close wid you at wanst.

"Never drink at bargain makin'; an' never pay money in a public-house if you can help it; if you must do it, go into an inn, or a house that you know to be dacent.

"Never stay out late in a fair or market; don't make a poor mouth; on the other hand, don't boast of your wealth; keep no low company; don't be rubbin' yourself against your betthers, but keep wid your aquils. File your loose papers an' accounts, an' keep your books up to the day. Never put off anything that can be done, when it ought to be done. Go early to bed; but be the last up at night, and the first in the mornin', and there's no fear o' you."

Having now settled all her children in comfort and independence, with each a prospect of rising still higher in the world, Mrs. Connell felt that the principal duties devolving upon her had been discharged. It was but reasonable, she thought, that, after the toil of a busy life, her husband and herself should relax a little, and enjoy with lighter minds the ease for which they had labored so long and unremittingly.

"Do you know what I'm thinkin' of, Pether?" said she, one summer evening in their farm-yard.

"Know, is it?" replied Peter—"some long-headed plan that none of us 'ud ever think of, but that will stare us in the face the moment you mintion it. What is it, you ould sprig o' beauty?"

"Why, to get a snug jauntin'-car, for you an' me. I'd like to see you comfortable in your old days, Peter. You're gettin' stiff, ahagur, an' will be good for nothin' by an' by."

"Stiff! Arrah, by this an' by—my reputation, I'm younger nor e'er a one o' my sons yet, you——eh?" said Peter, pausing—"Faith, then I dunna that. Upon my credit, I think, on second thoughts, that a car 'ud be a mighty comfortable thing for me. Faith, I do, an' for you, too, Ellish."

"The common car," she continued, "is slow and throublesome, an' joults the life out o' me."

"By my reputation, you're not the same woman since you began to use it, that you wor before at all. Why, it'll shorten your life. The pillion's dacent enough; but the jauntin'-car!—faix, it's what 'ud make a fresh woman o' you—divil a lie in it."

"You're not puttin' in a word for *yourself* now, Pether?"

"To be sure I am, an' for both of us. I'd surely be proud to see yourself an' myself sittin' in our glory upon our own jauntin'-car. Sure we can afford it, an' ought to have it, too. Bud-an'-ager! what's the rason I didn't think of it long ago?"

"Maybe you did, acushla; but you forgot it. Wasn't that the way wid you, Pether? Tell the thruth."

"Why, thin, bad luck to the lie in it, since you must know. About this time twelve months—no, faix, I'm wrong, it was afore Dan's marriage—I had thoughts o' spakin' to you about it, but somehow it left my head. Upon my word, I'm in airnest, Ellish."

"Well, avick, make your mind asy; I'll have one from Dublin in less nor a fortnight. I can thin go about of an odd time, an' see how Dan an' Pether's comin' an. It'll be a pleasure to me to advise an' direct them, sure, as far an' as well as I can. I only hope God will enable thim to do as much for their childher, as he enabled us to do for them, glory be to his name!"

Peter's eye rested upon her as she spoke: a slight shade passed over his face, but it was the symptom of deep feeling and affection, whose current had run smooth and unbroken during the whole life they had spent together.

"Ellish," said he, in a tone of voice that strongly expressed what he felt, "you wor one o' the best wives that ever the Almighty gev to mortual man. You wor, avourneen—you wor, you wor!"

"I intind, too, to begin an' make my sowl a little," she continued; "we had so much to do, Pether, aroon, that, indeed, we hadn't time to think of it all along; but now, that everything *else* is settled, we ought to think about *that*, an' make the most of our time while we can."

"Upon my conscience, I've strong notions myself o' the same thing," replied Peter: "An' I'll back you in that, as well as in everything else. Never fear, if we pull together, but we'll bring up the lost time. Faith, we will! Sowl, if *you* set about it, let me see them that 'ud prevint you goin' to heaven!"

"Did Paddy Donovan get the bay filly's foot aised, Pether?"

"He's gone down wid her to the forge: the poor crathur was very lame to-day."

"That's right; an' let Andy Murtagh bring down the sacks from Drumdough early to-morrow. That whate ought to go to the market on Thursday, an' the other stacks ought to be thrashed out of hand."

"Well, well; so it will be all done. Tare alive! if myself knows how you're able to keep an eye on everything. Come in, an' let us have our *tay*."

For a few months after this, Ellish was perfectly in her element. The jaunting-car was procured; and her spirits seemed to be quite elevated. She paid regular visits to both her sons, looked closely into their manner of conducting business, examined their premises, and subjected every fixture and improvement made or introduced without her sanction, to the most rigorous scrutiny. In fact, what, between Peter's farm, her daughter's shop, and the establishments of her sons, she never found herself more completely encumbered with business. She had intended "to make her soul," but her time was so fully absorbed by the affairs of those in whom she felt so strong an interest, that she really forgot the spiritual resolution in the warmth of her secular pursuits.

One evening, about this time, a horse belonging to Peter happened to fall into a ditch, from which he was extricated with much difficulty by the laborers. Ellish, who thought it necessary to attend, had been standing for some time directing them how to proceed; her dress was rather thin, and the hour, which was about twilight, chilly, for it was the middle of autumn. Upon returning home she found herself cold, and inclined to shiver. At first she thought but little of these symptoms; for having never had a single day's sickness, she was scarcely competent to know that they were frequently the forerunners of very dangerous and fatal maladies. She complained, however, of slight illness, and went to bed without taking anything calculated to check what she felt. Her sufferings during the night were dreadful: high fever had set in with a fury that threatened to sweep the powers of life like a wreck before it. The next morning the family, on looking into her state more closely, found it necessary to send instantly for a physician.

On arriving, he pronounced her to be in a dangerous pleurisy, from which, in consequence of her plethoric habit, he expressed but faint hopes of her recovery. This was melancholy intelligence to her sons and daughters: but to Peter, whose faithful wife she had been for thirty years, it was a dreadful communication indeed.

"No hopes, Docthor!" he exclaimed, with a bewildered air: "did you say no hopes, sir?—Oh! no, you didn't—you couldn't say that there's no hopes!"

"The hopes of her recovery, Mr. Connell, are but slender,—if any."

"Docthor, I'm a rich man, thanks be to God an' to——" he hesitated, cast back a rapid and troubled look towards the bed whereon she lay, then proceeded—"no matther, I'm a rich man: but if you can spare her to me, I'll divide what I'm worth in the world wid you: I will, sir; an' if that won't do, I'll give up my last shillin' to save her, an' thin I'd beg my bit an' sup through the counthry, only let me have *her* wid me."

"As far as my skill goes," said the doctor, "I shall, of course, exert it to save her; but there are some diseases which we are almost always able to pronounce fatal at first sight. This, I fear, is one of them. Still I do not bid you despair—there is, I trust, a shadow of hope."

"The blessin' o' the Almighty be upon you, sir, for that word! The best blessing of the heavenly Father rest upon you an' yours for it!"

"I shall return in the course of the day," continued the physician; "and as you feel the dread of her loss so powerfully, I will bring two other medical gentlemen of skill with me."

"Heavens reward you for that, sir! The heavens above reward you an' them for it! Payment!—och, that signifies but little: but you and them 'll be well paid. Oh, Docthor, achora, thry an' save her!—Och, thry an' save her!"

"Keep her easy," replied the doctor, "and let my directions be faithfully followed. In the meantime, Mr. Connell, be a man, and display proper fortitude under a dispensation which is common to all men in your state."

To talk of resignation to Peter was an abuse of words. The poor man had no more perception of the consolation arising from a knowledge of religion than a child. His heart sank within him, for the prop on which his affections had rested was suddenly struck down from under them.

Poor Ellish was in a dreadful state. Her malady seized her in the very midst of her worldly-mindedness; and the current of her usual thoughts, when stopped by the aberrations of intellect peculiar to her illness, bubbled up, during the temporary returns of reason, with a stronger relish of the world. It was utterly impossible for a woman like her, whose habits of thought and the tendency of whose affections had been all directed towards the acquisition of wealth, to wrench them for ever and at once from the objects on which they were fixed. This, at any time,

would have been to her a difficult victory to achieve; but now, when stunned by the stroke of disease, and confused by the pangs of severe suffering, tortured by a feverish pulse and a burning brain, to expect that she could experience the calm hopes of religion, or feel the soothing power of Christian sorrow, was utter folly. 'Tis true, her life had been a harmless one: her example, as an industrious and enterprising member of society, was worthy of imitation. She was an excellent mother, a good neighbor, and an admirable wife; but the duties arising out of these different relations of life, were all made subservient to, and mixed up with, her great principle of advancing herself in the world, whilst that which is to come never engaged one moment's serious consideration.

When Father Mulcahy came to administer the rites of the church to Ellish, he found her in a state of incoherency. Occasional gleams of reason broke out through the cloud that obscured her intellect, but they carried with them the marks of a mind knit indissolubly to wealth and aggrandizement. The same tenor of thought, and the same broken fragments of ambitious speculation, floated in rapid confusion through the tempests of delirium which swept with awful darkness over her spirit.

"Mrs. Connell," said he, "can you collect yourself? Strive to compose your mind, so far as to be able to receive the aids of religion."

"Oh, oh!—my blood's boilin'! Is that—is that Father Mulcahy?"

"It is, dear: strive now to keep your mind calm, till you prepare yourself for judgment."

"Keep up his head, Paddy—keep up his head, or he'll be smothered under the wather an' the sludge. Here, Mike, take this rope: pull, man,—pull, or the horse will be lost! Oh, my head!—I'm boilin'—I'm burnin'!"

"Mrs. Connell, let me entreat you to remember that you are on the point of death, and should raise your heart to God, for the pardon and remission of your sins."

"Oh! Father dear, I neglected that, but I intinded—I intinded—Where's Pether!—bring, bring—Pether to me!"

"Turn your thoughts to God, now, my dear. Are you clear enough in your mind for confession?"

"I am, Father! I am, avourneen. Come, come here, Pether! Pether, I'm goin' to have you, asthore machree! I could part wid them all but—but *you*."

"Mrs. Connell, for Heaven's sake"——

"Is this—is this—Father Mulcahy? Oh! I'm ill!"—

"It is, dear; it is. Compose yourself and confess your sins."

"Where's Mary? She'll neglect—neglect to lay in a stock o' linen, although I—I——Oh, Father, avourneen! won't you pity me? I'm sick—oh, I'm very sick!"

"You are, dear—you are, God help you, very sick, but you'll be better soon. Could you confess, dear?—do you think you could?"

"Oh, this pain—this pain!—it's killin' me!—Pether—Pether, *a suillish machree*,* have, have you des—have you desarted me."

The priest, conjecturing that if Peter made his appearance she might feel soothed, and perhaps sufficiently composed to confess, called him in from the next room.

"Here's Peter," said the priest, presenting him to her view—"Here's Peter, dear."

"Oh! what a load is on me! this pain—this pain is killin' me—won't you bring me. Pether? Oh, what will I do? Who's there?"

The mental pangs of poor Peter were, perhaps, equal in intensity to those which she suffered physically.

"Ellish," said he, in smothered sobs—"Ellish, acushla machree, sure I'm wid you here; here I'm sittin' on the bed wid you, achora machree."

"Catch my hand, thin. Ah, Pether! won't you pity your Ellish?—Won't you pity me—won't you pity me? Oh! this pain—this pain—is killin' me!"

"It is, it is, my heart's delight—it's killin' us both. Oh, Ellish, Ellish! I wish I was dead sooner nor see you in this agony. I ever loved you!—I ever an' always loved you, avourneen dheelish; but now I would give my heart's best blood, if it 'ud save you. Here's Father Mulcahy come."

"About the mon—about the money—Pether—what do you intind——Oh! my blood—my blood's a-fire!—Mother o' Heaven!—Oh! this pain is—is takin' me from all—ALL!—Rise me up!"

"Here, my darlin'—treasure o' my heart—here—I'm puttin' your head upon my breast—upon *my* breast, Ellish, ahagur. Merciful Virgin—Father dear," said Peter, bursting into bitter tears—"her head's like fire! O! Ellish, Ellish, Ellish!—but my heart's brakin' to feel this! Have marcy on her, sweet God—have marcy on her! Bear witness, Father of heaven—bear witness, an' hear the vow of a brakin' heart. I here solemnly promise before God, to make, if I'm spared life an' health to do it, a Station on my bare feet to Lough Derg, if it plases you, sweet Father o' pity, to spare her to me this

* The light of my heart.

day! Oh! but the hand o' God, Father dear, is terrible!—feel her brow!—Oh! but it's terrible!"

"It *is* terrible," said the priest; "and terribly is it laid upon her, poor woman! Peter, do not let this scene be lost. Remember it."

"Oh, Father dear, can I ever forget it?—can I ever forget seein' my darlin' in sich agony?"

"Pether," said the sick woman, "will you get the car ready for to-mor—to-morrow—till I look at that piece o' land that Dan bought, before he—he eloses the bargain?"

"Father, jewel!" said Pether, "can't you get the world banished out of her heart? Oh, I'd give all I'm worth to see that heart fixed upon God! I could bear to part wid her, for she must die some time; but to go wid this world's thoughts an' temptations ragin' strong in her heart—mockin' God, an' hope, an' religion, an' everything:—oh!—that I can't bear! Sweet Jasus, change her heart!—Queen o' Heaven, have pity on her, an' save her!"

The husband wept with great sorrow as he uttered these words.

"Neither reasoning nor admonition can avail her," replied the priest; "she is so incoherent that no train of thought is continued for a single minute in her mind. I will, however, address her again. Mrs. Connell, will you make a struggle to pay attention to me for a few minutes? Are you not afraid to meet God? You are about to die!—prepare yourself for judgment."

"Oh, Father dear! I can't—I can't—I *am* af—afraid—Hooh!—hooh!—*God!* You *must* do somethin' for—for me! I ne-ver done anything for myself."

"Glory be to God! that she has that much sinse, any way," exclaimed her husband. "Father, ahagur, I trust my vow was heard."

"Well, my dear—listen to me," continued the priest—"can you not make the best confession possible? Could you calm yourself for it?"

"Pether, avick machree—Pether,"—

"Ellish, avourneen, I'm here!—my darlin', I *am* your vick machree, an' ever was. Oh, Father! my heart's brakin'! I can't bear to part wid her. Father of heaven, pity us this day of throuble?"

"Be near me, Pether; stay wid me—I'm very lonely. Is this you keepin' my head up?"

"It is, it is! I'll never lave you till—till"—

"Is the carman come from Dublin wid—wid the broadcloth?"

"Father of heaven! she's gone back again!" exclaimed the husband. "Father, jewel! have you no prayers that you'd read for her? You wor ordained for these things, an' comin' from *you*, they'll have more stringth. Can you do nothin' to save my darlin'?"

"My prayers will not be wanting," said the priest: "but I am watching for an interval of sufficient calmness to hear her confession; and I very much fear that she will pass in darkness. At all events, I will anoint her by and by. In the meantime, we must persevere a little longer; she may become easier, for it often happens that reason gets clear immediately before death."

Peter sobbed aloud, and wiped away the tears that streamed from his cheeks. At this moment her daughter and son-in-law stole in, to ascertain how she was, and whether the rites of the church had in any degree soothed or composed her.

"Come in, Denis," said the priest to his nephew, "you may both come in. Mrs. Mulcahy, speak to your mother: let us try every remedy that might possibly bring her to a sense of her awful state."

"Is she raving still?" inquired the daughter, whose eyes were red with weeping.

The priest shook his head; "Ah, she is—she is! and I fear she will scarcely recover her reason before the judgment of heaven opens upon her!"

"Oh thin may the Mother of Glory forbid that!" exclaimed her daughter—"anything at all but that! Can you do nothin' for her, uncle?"

"I'm doing all I can for her, Mary," replied the priest; "I'm watching a calm moment to get her confession, if possible."

The sick woman had fallen into a momentary silence, during which she caught the bed-clothes like a child, and felt them, and seemed to handle their texture, but with such an air of vacancy as clearly manifested that no corresponding association existed in her mind.

The action was immediately understood by all present. Her daughter again burst into tears; and Peter, now almost choked with grief, pressing the sick woman to his heart, kissed her burning lips.

"Father, jewel," said the daughter, "there it is, and I feard it—*the sign*, uncle—the sign!—don't you see her gropin' the clothes? Oh, mother, darlin', darlin'!—are we going to lose you for ever?"

"Oh! Ellish, Ellish—won't you spake one word to me afore you go? Won't you take one farewell of *me*—of ME, aroon asthore, before you depart from us for ever!" exclaimed her husband.

"Feeling the bed-clothes," said the priest, "is not *always* a sign of death; I have known many to recover after it.

"Hush," said Peter—"hush!—Mary—Mary! Come hear—hould your tongues!

Oh, *it's past*—it's past!—it's all past, an' gone—all hope's over! Heavenly father!"

The daughter, after listening for a moment, in a paroxysm of wild grief, clasped her mother's recumbent body in her arms, and kissed her lips with a vehemence almost frantic. "You won't go, my darlin'—is it from your own Mary that you'd go? Mary, that you loved best of all your childhre!—Mary that you always said, an' every body said, was your own image! Oh, you won't go without one word, to say you know her!"

"For Heaven's sake," said Father Mulcahy, "what do you mean?—are you mad?"

"Oh! uncle dear! don't you hear?—don't you hear?—listen an' sure you will—all hope's *gone* now—gone—gone! *The dead rattle!*—listen!—the dead rattle's in her throat!"—

The priest bent his ear a moment, and distinctly heard the gurgling noise produced by the phlegm, which is termed with wild poetical accuracy, by the peasantry—the "dead rattle," or "death rattle," because it is the immediate and certain forerunner of death.

"True," said the priest—"too true; the last shadow of hope is gone. We must now make as much of the time as possible. Leave the room for a few minutes till I anoint her, I will then call you in."

They accordingly withdrew, but in about fifteen or twenty minutes he once more summoned them to the bed of the dying woman.

"Come in," said he, "I have anointed her—come in, and kneel down till we offer up a Rosary to the Blessed Virgin, under the hope that she may intercede with God for her, and cause her to pass out of life happily. She was calling for you, Peter, in your absence; you had better stay with her."

"I will," said Peter, in a broken voice; "I'll stay nowhere else."

"An' I'll kneel at the bed-side," said the daughter. "She was the kind mother to me, and to us all; but to me in particular. 'Twas with me she took her choice to live, when they war all striving for her. Oh," said she, taking her mother's hand between hers, and kneeling down to kiss it, "a Vahr dheelish!* did we ever think to see you departing from us this way! snapped away without a minute's warning! If it was a long sickness, that you'd be calm and sinsible in; but to be hurried away into eternity, and your mind dark! Oh, Vhar dheelish, my heart is broke to see you this way!"

"Be calm," said the priest; "be quiet till I open the Rosary."

He then offered up the usual prayers which precede its repetition, and after having concluded them, commenced what is properly called the Rosary itself, which consists of fifteen Decades, each Decade containing the Hail Mary repeated ten times, and the Lord's Prayer once. In this manner the Decade goes round from one to another, until, as we have said above, it is repeated fifteen times; or, in all, the *Ave Maria's* one hundred and sixty-five times, without variation. From the indistinct utterance, elevated voice, and rapid manner in which it is pronounced, it certainly has a wild effect, and is more strongly impressed with the character of a mystic rite, or incantation, than with any other religious ceremony with which we could compare it.

When the priest had repeated the first part, he paused for the response: neither the husband nor daughter, however, could find utterance.

"Denis," said he, to his nephew, "do you take up the next."

His nephew complied; and with much difficulty Peter and his daughter were able to join in it, repeating here and there a word or two, as well as their grief and sobbings would permit them.

The heart must indeed have been an unfeeling one, to which a scene like this would not have been deeply touching and impressive. The poor dying woman reclined with her head upon her husband's bosom; the daughter knelt at the bed-side, with her mother's hand pressed against her lips, she herself convulsed with sorrow—the priest was in the attitude of earnest supplication, having the stole about his neck, his face and arms raised towards heaven—the son-in-law was bent over a chair, with his face buried in his hands. Nothing could exceed the deep, the powerful expression of entreaty, which marked every tone and motion of the parties, especially those of the husband and daughter. They poured an energy into the few words which they found voice to utter, and displayed such a concentration of the faculties of the soul in their wild unregulated attitudes, and streaming, upturned eyes, as would seem to imply that their own salvation depended upon that of the beloved object before them. Their words, too, were accompanied by such expressive tokens of their attachment to her, that the character of prayer was heightened by the force of the affection which they bore her. When Peter, for instance, could command himself to utter a word, he pressed his dying wife to his bosom, and raised his eyes to heaven in a manner that would have melted any human heart; and the daughter, on joining occasionally in the response, pressed her mother's hand to her heart, and kissed it with her

* Sweet mother.

lips, conscious that the awful state of her parent had rendered more necessary the performance of the two tenderest duties connected with a child's obedience—prayer and affection.

When the son-in-law had finished his Decade, a pause followed, for there was none now to proceed but her husband or her daughter.

"Mary, dear," said the priest, "be a woman; don't let your love for your mother prevent you from performing a higher duty. Go on with the prayer—you see she is passing fast."

"I'll try, uncle," she replied—"I'll try; but—but—it's hard, hard, upon me."

She commenced, and by an uncommon effort so far subdued her grief, as to render her words intelligible. Her eyes, streaming with tears, were fixed with a mixture of wildness, sorrow, and devotedness, upon the countenance of her mother, until she had completed her Decade.

Another pause ensued. It was now necessary, according to the order and form of the Prayer, that Peter should commence and offer up his supplications for the happy passage from life to eternity of her who had been his inward idol during a long period. Peter knew nothing about sentiment, or the philosophy of sorrow; but he loved his wife with the undivided power of a heart in which nature had implanted her strongest affections. He knew, too, that his wife had loved him with a strength of heart equal to his own. He loved her, and she deserved his love.

The pause, when the prayer had gone round to him, was long; those who were present at length turned their eyes towards him, and the priest, now deeply affected, cleared his voice, and simply said, "Peter," to remind him that it was his duty to proceed with the Rosary.

Peter, however, instead of uttering the prayer, burst out into a tide of irrepressible sorrow.—"Oh!" said he, enfolding her in his arms, and pressing his lips to hers: "Ellish, ahagur machree! sure when I think of all the goodness, an' kindness, an' tenderness that you showed me—whin I think of your smiles upon me, whin you wanted me to do the right, an' the innocent plans you made out, to benefit me an' mine!—Oh! where was your harsh word, avillish?—where was your could brow, or your bad tongue? Nothin' but goodness—nothin' but kindness, an' love, an' wisdom, ever flowed from these lips! An' now, darlin', pulse o' my broken heart! these same lips can't spake to me—these eyes don't know me—these hands don't feel me—nor your ears doesn't hear me!"

"Is—is—it *you?*" replied his wife feebly—"is it—you?—come—come near me—my heart—my heart says it misses *you*—come near me!"

Peter again pressed her in an embrace, and, in doing so, unconsciously received the parting breath of a wife whose prudence and affection had saved him from poverty, and, probably, from folly or crime.

The priest, on turning round to rebuke Peter for not proceeding with the prayer, was the first who discovered that she had died; for the grief of her husband was too violent to permit him to notice anything with much accuracy.

"Peter," said he, "I beg your pardon; let me take the trouble of supporting her for a few minutes, after which I must talk to you seriously—very seriously."

The firm, authoritative tone in which the priest spoke, together with Peter's consciousness that he had acted wrongly by neglecting to join in the Rosary, induced him to retire from the bed with a rebuked air. The priest immediately laid back the head of Mrs. Connell on the pillow, and composed the features of her lifeless face with his own hands. Until this moment none of them, except himself, knew that she was dead.

"Now," continued he, "all her cares, and hopes, and speculations, touching this world, are over—so is her pain; her blood will soon be cold enough, and her head will ache no more. She is dead. Grief is therefore natural; but let it be the grief of a man, Peter. Indeed, it is less painful to look upon her now, than when she suffered such excessive agony. Mrs. Mulcahy, hear me! Oh, it's in vain! Well, well, it *is* natural; for it was an unexpected and a painful death!"

The cries of her husband and daughter soon gave intimation to her servants that her pangs were over. From the servants it immediately went to the neighbors, and thus did the circle widen until it reached the furthest ends of the parish. In a short time, also, the mournful sounds of the church-bell, in slow and measured strokes, gave additional notice that a Christian soul had passed into eternity.

It is in such scenes as these that the Roman Catholic clergy knit themselves so strongly into the affections of the people. All men are naturally disposed to feel the offices of kindness and friendship more deeply, when tendered at the bed of death or of sickness, than under any other circumstances. Both the sick-bed and the house of death are necessarily the sphere of a priest's duty, and to render them that justice which we will ever render, when and wheresoever it

may be due, we freely grant that many shining, nay, noble instances of Christian virtue are displayed by them on such occasions.

When the violence of grief produced by Ellish's death had subsided, the priest, after giving them suitable exhortations to bear the affliction which had just befallen them with patience, told Peter, that as God, through the great industry and persevering exertions of her who had then departed to another world, had blessed him abundantly with wealth and substance, it was, considering the little time which had been allowed her to repent in a satisfactory manner for her transgressions, his bounden and solemn duty to set aside a suitable portion of that wealth for the delivery of her soul from purgatory, where, he trusted, in the mercy of God, it was permitted to remain.

"Indeed, your Reverence," replied Peter, "it wasn't necessary to mintion it, considerin' the way she was cut off from among us, widout even time to confess."

"But blessed be God," said the daughter, "she received the ointment at any rate, and that of itself would get her to purgatory."

"And I can answer for her," said Peter, "that she *intended*, as soon as she'd get everything properly settled for the childhre, to make her sowl."

"Ah! good intentions," said the priest, "won't do. I, however, have forewarned you of your duty, and must now leave the guilt or the merit of relieving her departed spirit, upon you and the other members of her family, who are all bound to leave nothing undone that may bring her from pain and fire, to peace and happiness."

"Och! och! asthore, asthore! you're lyin' there—an', oh, Ellish, avourneen, could you think that I—*I*—would spare money—trash—to bring you to glory wid the angels o' heaven! No, no, Father dear. It's good, an' kind, an' thoughtful of you to put it into my head; but I didn't intind to neglect or forget it. Oh, how will I live wantin' her, Father? When I rise in the mornin', avillish, where'll be your smile and your voice? We won't hear your step, nor see you as we used to do, movin' pleasantly about the place. No—you're gone, avourneen—gone—an' we'll see you and hear you no more!"

His grief was once more about to burst forth, but the priest led him out of the room, kindly chid him for the weakness of his immoderate sorrow, and after making arrangements about the celebration of mass for the dead, pressed his hand, and bade the family farewell.

The death of Ellish excited considerable surprise, and much conversation in the neighborhood. Every point of her character was discussed freely, and the comparisons instituted between her and Peter were anything but flattering to the intellect of her husband.

"An' so Ellish is whipped off, Larry," said a neighbor to one of Peter's laboring men "Faix, an' the best feather in their wing is gone."

"Ay, sure enough, Risthard, you may say that. It was her cleverness made them what they are. She was the best manager in the three kingdoms."

"Ah, she was the woman could make a bargain. I only hope she hasn't brought the luck o' the family away wid her!"

"Why, man alive, she made the sons and daughters as clever as herself—put them up to everything. Indeed, it's quare to think of how that one woman brought them an, an' ris them to what they are!"

"They shouldn't forget themselves as they're doin', thin; for betune you an' me, they're as proud as Turks, an' God he sees it ill becomes them—sits very badly on them itself, when everything knows that their father an' mother begun the world wid a bottle of private whiskey an' half a pound of smuggled tobaccy."

"Poor Pether will break his heart, any way. Oh, man, but she was the good wife. I'm livin' wid them going an seven year, an' never hard a cross word from the one to the other. It's she that had the sweet tongue all out, an' *did* manage him; but, afther all, he was worth the full o' the Royal George of her. Many a time, when some poor craythur 'ud come to ax whiskey on score *to put over* * some o' their friends, or for a weddin', or a christenin', maybe, an' when the wife 'ud refuse it, Pether 'ud send what whiskey they wanted afther them, widout lettin' her know anything about it. An', indeed, he never lost anything by that; for if they wor to sell their cow, he should be ped, in regard of the kindly way he gave it to them."

"Well, we'll see how they'll manage now that she's gone; but Pether an' the youngest daughter, Mary, is to be pitied."

"The sarra much; barrin' that they'll miss her at first from about the place. You see she has left them above the world, an' full of it. Wealth and substance enough may they thank her for; and that's very good comfort for sorrow, Risthard."

"Faith, sure enough, Larry. There's no lie in that, any way!"

"Awonh! Lie! I have you about it."

Such was the view which had been taken of their respective characters through life. Yet, notwithstanding that the hearts of their

* To put over—the *corpse* of a friend. That is, to be drunk at the wake and funeral.

acquaintances never *warmed to her*—to use a significant expression current among the peasantry—as they did to Peter, still she was respected almost involuntarily for the indefatigable perseverance with which she pushed forward her own interests through life. Her funeral was accordingly a large one; and the conversation which took place at it, turning, as it necessarily did, upon her extraordinary talents and industry, was highly to the credit of her memory and virtues. Indeed, the attendance of many respectable persons of all creeds and opinions, gave ample proof that the qualities she possessed had secured for her general respect and admiration.

Poor Peter, who was an object of great compassion, felt himself completely crushed by the death of his faithful partner. The reader knows that he had hitherto been a sober, and, owing to Ellish's prudent control, an industrious man. To thought or reflection he was not, however, accustomed; he had, besides, never received any education; if his morals were correct, it was because a life of active employment had kept him engaged in pursuits which repressed immorality, and separated him from those whose society and influence might have been prejudicial to him. He had scarcely known calamity, and when it occurred he was prepared for it neither by experience nor a correct view of moral duty. On the morning of his wife's funeral, such was his utter prostration both of mind and body, that even his own sons, in order to resist the singular state of collapse into which he had sunk, urged him to take some spirits. He was completely passive in their hands, and complied. This had the desired effect, and he found himself able to attend the funeral. When the friends of Ellish assembled, after the interment, as is usual, to drink and talk together, Peter, who could scarcely join in the conversation, swallowed glass after glass of punch with great rapidity. In the mean time, the talk became louder and more animated; the punch, of course, began to work, and as they sat long, it was curious to observe the singular blending of mirth and sorrow, singing and weeping, laughter and tears, which characterized this remarkable scene. Peter, after about two hours' hard drinking, was not an exception to the influence of this trait of national manners. His heart having been deeply agitated, was the more easily brought under the effects of contending emotions. He was naturally mirthful, and when intoxication had stimulated the current of his wonted humor, the influence of this and his recent sorrow produced such an anomalous commixture of fun and grief as could seldom, out of Ireland, be found checkering the mind of one individual.

It was in the midst of this extraordinary din that his voice was heard commanding silence in its loudest and best-humored key:

"Hould yer tongues," said he; "bad win to yees, don't you hear me wantin' to sing! Whist wid yees. Hem—och—'Rise up'—Why, thin, Phil Callaghan, you might thrate me wid more daceney, if you had gumption in you; I'm sure no one has a betther right to sing first in this company nor myself; an' what's more, I *will* sing first. Hould your tongues! Hem!"

He accordingly commenced a popular song, the air of which, though simple, was touchingly mournful.

"Och, rise up, Willy Reilly, an' come alongst wid me,
I'm goin' for to go wid you, and lave this counter-ee;
I'm goin' to lave my father, his castles and free lands—
An' away wint Willy Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn.

"Och, they wint o'er hills an' mountains, and valleys that was fair,
An' fled before her father as you may shortly hear;
Her father followed afther wid a well-chosen armed band,
Och, an' taken was poor Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn."

The simple pathos of the tune, the affection implied by the words, and probably the misfortune of Willy Reilly, all overcame him, He finished the second verse with difficulty, and on attempting to commence a third he burst into tears.

"Colleen bawn! (fair, or fair-haired girl)—Colleen bawn!" he exclaimed; "she's lyin' low that was *my* colleen bawn! Oh, will ye hould your tongues, an' let me think of what has happened me? She's gone: Mary, avourneen, isn't she gone from us? I'm alone, an' I'll be always lonely. Who have I now to comfort me? I know I have good childhre, neighbors; but none o' them, all of them, if they wor ten times as many, isn't aqual to her that's in the grave. Her hands won't be about me—there was tindherness in their very touch. An', of a Sunday mornin', how she'd tie an my handkerchy, for I never could rightly tie it an myself, the knot was ever an' always too many for me; but, och, och, she'd tie it an so snug an' purty wid her own hands, that I didn't look the same man! The same song was *her* favorite, Here's your healths; an' sure it's the first time ever we wor together that she wasn't wid us: but now, avillish, your voice is gone—you're silent and lonely in the grave; an' why shouldn't I be sarry for the wife o' my

heart that never angered me? Why shouldn't I? Ay, Mary, asthore, machree, good right you have to cry afther her; she was the kind mother to you; her heart was fixed in you; there's her fatures on your face; her very eyes, an' fair hair, too, an' I'll love you, achora, ten times more nor ever, for her sake. Another favorite song of hers, God rest her, was 'Brian O'Lynn.' Troth an' I'll sing it, so I will, for if she was livin' she'd like it.

'Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail.'

Oh, my head's through other! The sarra one o' me I bleeve, but's out o' the words, or, as they say, there's a hole in the ballad. Send round the punch will ye? By the hole o' my coat, Parra Gastha, I'll whale you widin an inch of your life, if you don't dhrink. Send round the punch, Dan; an' give us a song, Parra Gastha. Arrah, Paddy, do you remmber—ha, ha, ha—upon my credit, I'll never forget it, the fun we had catchin' Father Soolaghan's horse, the day he gave his shirt to the sick man in the ditch. The Lord rest his sowl in glory—ha, ha, ha—I'll never forget it. Paddy, the song, you thief?"

"No, but tell them about that, Misther Connell."

"Throth, an' I will; but don't be *Misthering* me. Faith, this is the height o' good punch. You see—ha, ha, ha! You see, it was one hard summer afore I was married to Ellish—mavourneen, that you wor, asthore! Och, och, are we parted at last? Upon my sowl, my heart's breakin'—breakin', (*weeps*) an' no wonder! But as I was sayin'—all your healths! faith, it *is* tip-top punch that—the poor man fell sick of a faver, an' sure enough, when it was known what ailed him, the neighbors built a little shed on the roadside for him, in regard that every one was afeard to let him into their place. Howsomever—ha, ha, ha—Father Soolaghan was one day ridin' past upon his horse, an' seein' the crathur lyin' undher the shed, on a whisp o' straw, he pulls bridle, an' puts the spake on the poor sthranger. So, begad, it came out, that the neighbors were very kind to him, an' used to hand over whatsomever they thought best for him from the back o' the ditch, as well as they could.

"'My poor fellow,' said the priest, 'you're badly off for linen.'

"'Thrue for you, sir,' said the sick man, 'I never longed for anything so much in my life, as I do for a clane shirt an' a glass o' whiskey.'

"'The devil a glass o' whiskey I have about me, but you shall have the clane shirt, you poor compassionate crathur,' said the priest, stretchin' his neck up an' down to make sure there was no one comin' on the road—ha, ha, ha!

"Well an' good—'I have *three* shirts,' says his Reverence, 'but I have only one o' them an me, an' that you shall have.'

"So the priest peels himself on the spot, an' lays his black coat and waistcoat afore him acrass the saddle, thin takin' off his shirt, he *threwn* it acrass the ditch to the sick man. Whether it was the white shirt, or the black coat danglin' about the horse's neck, the divil a one o' myself can say, but any way, the baste tuck fright, an' made off wid Father Soolaghan, in the state I'm tellin' yez, upon his back—ha, ha, ha!

"Parra Gastha, here, an' I war goin' up at the time to do a little in the distillin' way for Tom Duggan of Aidinasamlagh, an' seen what was goin' an. So off we set, an we splittin' our sides laughin'—ha, ha, ha—at the figure the priest cut. However, we could do no good, an' he never could pull up the horse, till he came full flight to his own house, opposite the pound there below, and the whole town in convulsions when they seen him. We *gother* up his clothes, an' brought them home to him, an' a good piece o' fun we had wid him, for he loved the joke as well as any man. Well, he was the good an' charitable man, the same Father Soolaghan; but so simple that he got himself into fifty scrapes, God rest him! Och, och, she's lyin' low that often laughed at that, an' I'm here—ay, I have no one, no one that 'ud show me sich a warm heart as she would. (*Weeps.*) However, God's will be done. I'll sing yez a song she liked:—

'Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail.'

Musha, I'm out agin—ha, ha, ha! Why, I b'lieve there's pishthrogues an me, or I'd remember it. Bud-an-age, dhrink of all ye. Lie in to the liquor, I say; don't spare it. Here, Mike, send us up another gallon. Faith, we'll make a night of it.

'Och, three maidens a milkin' did go
An' three maidens a milkin' did go;
An' the winds they blew high
An' the winds they blew low,
An' they dashed their milkin' pails to an' fro.'

All your healths, childhre! Neighbors, all your healths! don't spare what's before ye. It's long since I tuck a jorum myself an—come, I say, plase God, we'll often meet this way, so we will. Faith, I'll take a sup from this forrid, with a blessin'. Dhrink, I say, dhrink!"

By the time he had arrived at this patch, he was able to engross no great portion either of the conversation or attention. Almost every one present had his songs, his

sorrows, his laughter, or his anecdotes, as well as himself. Every voice was loud; and every tongue busy. Intricate and entangled was the talk, which, on the present occasion, presented a union of all the extremes which the lights and shadows of the Irish character alone could exhibit under such a calamity as that which brought the friends of the deceased together.

Peter literally fulfilled his promise of taking a jorum in future. He was now his own master; and as he felt the loss of his wife deeply, he unhappily had recourse to the bottle, to bury the recollection of a woman, whose death left a chasm in his heart, which he thought nothing but the whiskey could fill up.

His transition from a life of perfect sobriety to one of habitual, nay, of daily intoxication, was immediate. He could not bear to be sober; and his extraordinary bursts of affliction, even in his cups, were often calculated to draw tears from the eyes of those who witnessed them. He usually went out in the morning with a flask of whiskey in his pocket, and sat down to weep behind a ditch—where, however, after having emptied his flask, he might be heard at a great distance, singing the songs which Ellish in her life-time was accustomed to love. In fact, he was generally pitied; his simplicity of character, and his benevolence of heart, which was now exercised without fear of responsibility, made him more a favorite than he ever had been. His former habits of industry were thrown aside; as he said himself, he hadn't heart to work; his farms were neglected, and but for his son-in-law, would have gone to ruin. Peter himself was sensible of this.

"Take them," said he, "into your own hands, Denis; for me, I'm not able to do anything more at them; she that kep me up is gone, an' I'm broken down. Take them—take them into your own hands. Give me my bed, bit, an' sup, an' that's all I want."

Six months produced an incredible change in his appearance. Intemperance, whilst it shattered his strong frame, kept him in frequent exuberance of spirits; but the secret grief preyed on him within. Artificial excitement kills, but it never cures; and Peter, in the midst of his mirth and jollity, was wasting away into a shadow. His children, seeing him go down the hill of life so rapidly, consulted among each other on the best means of winning him back to sobriety. This was a difficult task, for his powers of bearing liquor were prodigious. He has often been known to drink so many as twenty-five, and sometimes thirty tumblers of punch, without being taken off his legs, or rendered incapable of walking about. His friends, on considering who was most likely to recall him to a more becoming life, resolved to apply to his landlord—the gentleman whom we have already introduced to our readers. He entered warmly into their plan, and it was settled, that Peter should be sent for, and induced, if possible, to take an oath against liquor. Early the following day a liveried servant came down to inform him that his master wished to speak with him.

"To be sure," said Peter; "divil resave the man in all Europe I'd do more for than the same gintleman, if it was only on account of the regard he had for her that's gone. Come, I'll go wid you in a minute."

He accordingly returned with the flask in his hand, saying, "I never travel widout a pocket-pistol, John. The times, you see, is not overly safe, an' the best way is to be prepared!—ha, ha, ha! Och, och! It houlds three half-pints."

"I think," observed the servant, "you had better not taste that till after your return."

"Come away, man," said Peter; "we'll talk upon it as we go along: I couldn't do readily widout it. You hard that I lost Ellish?"

"Yes," replied the servant, "and I was very sorry to hear it."

"Did you attind the berrin?"

"No, but my master did," replied the man; "for, indeed, his respect for your wife was very great, Mr. Connell."

This was before ten o'clock in the forenoon, and about one in the afternoon a stout countryman was seen approaching the gentleman's house, with another man bent round his neck, where he hung precisely as a calf hangs round the shoulders of a butcher, when he is carrying it to his stall.

"Good Heavens!" said the owner of the mansion to his lady, "what has happened to John Smith, my dear? Is he dead?"

"Dead!" said his lady, going in much alarm to the drawing-room window: "I protest I fear so, Frank. He is evidently dead! For God's sake go down and see what has befallen him."

Her husband went hastily to the hall-door, where he met Peter with his burden.

"In the name of Heaven, what has happened, Connell?—what is the matter with John? Is he living or dead?"

"First, plase your honor, as I have him on my shouldhers, will you tell me where his bed is?" replied Peter. "I may as well lave him snug, as my hand's in, poor fellow. The devil's bad head he has, your honor. Faith, it's a burnin' shame, so it is, an' nothin' else—to be able to bear so little!"

The lady, children, and servants, were now all assembled about the dead footman, who hung, in the mean time, very quietly round Peter's neck.

"Gracious Heaven! Connell, is the man dead?" she inquired.

"Faith, thin, he is, ma'am,—for a while, any how; but, upon my credit, it's a burnin' shame, so it is,"——

"The man is drunk, my dear," said her husband—"he's only drunk."

"——a burnin' shame, so it is—to be able to bear no more nor about six glasses, an' the whiskey good, too. Will you order one o' thim to show me his bed, ma'am, if you plase," continued Peter, "while he's an me? It'll save throuble."

"Connell is right," observed his landlord. —"Gallagher, show him John's bed-room."

Peter accordingly followed another servant, who pointed out his bed, and assisted to place the vanquished footman in a somewhat easier position than that in which Peter had carried him.

"Connell," said his landlord, when he returned, "how did this happen?"

"Faith, thin, it's a burnin' shame," said Connell, "to be able only to bear"——

"But *how* did it happen? for he has been hitherto a perfectly sober man."

"Faix, plase your honor, asy enough," replied Peter; "he began to lecthur me about dhrinkin' so, says I, 'Come an' sit down behind the hedge here, an' we'll talk it over between us;' so we went in, the two of us, a-back o' the ditch—an' he began to advise me agin dhrink, an' I began to tell him about her that's gone, sir. Well, well! och, och! no matther!—So, sir, one story an' one pull from the bottle, brought on another, for divil a glass we had at all, sir. Faix, he's a tindher-hearted boy, anyhow; for as myself begun to let the tears down, whin the bottle was near out, divil resave the morsel of him but cried afther poor Ellish, as if she had been his mother. Faix, he did! An' it won't be the last sup we'll have together, plase goodness! But the best of it was, sir, that the dhrunker he got, he abused me the more for dhrinkin'. Oh, thin, but he's the pious boy whin he gets a sup in his head! Faix, it's a pity ever he'd be sober, he talks so much scripthur an' devotion in his liquor!"

"Connell," said the landlord, "I am exceedingly sorry to hear that you have taken so openly and inveterately to drink as you have done, ever since the death of your admirable wife. This, in fact, was what occasioned me to send for you. Come into the parlor. Don't go, my dear; perhaps *your* influence may also be necessary. Gallagher, look to Smith, and see that every attention is paid him, until he recovers the effects of his intoxication."

He then entered the parlor, where the following dialogue took place between him and Peter:—

"Connell, I am really grieved to hear that you have become latterly so incorrigible a drinker; I sent for you to-day, with the hope of being able to induce you to give it up."

"Faix, your honor, it's jist what I'd expect from your father's son—kindness, an' dacency, an' devotion, wor always among yez. Divil resave the family in all Europe I'd do so much for as the same family."

The gentleman and lady looked at each other, and smiled. They knew that Peter's blarney was no omen of their success in the laudable design they contemplated.

"I thank you, Peter, for your good opinion; but in the meantime allow me to ask, what can you propose to yourself by drinking so incessantly as you do?"

"What do I propose to myself by dhrinkin', is it? Why thin to banish grief, your honor. Surely you'll allow that no man has reason to complain who's able to banish the thief for two shillins a-day. I reckon the whiskey at first cost, so that it doesn't come to more nor that at the very outside."

"That is taking a commercial view of affliction, Connell; but you must promise me to give up drinking."

"Why thin upon my credit, your honor astonishes me. Is it to give up banishin' grief? I have a regard for you, sir, for many a dalin we had together; but for all that, faix, I'd be miserable for no man, barrin' for her that's gone. If I'd be so to oblage any one, I'd do it for your family; for divil the family in all Europe"——

"Easy, Connell.—I am not to be palmed off in that manner; I really have a respect for the character which you bore, and wish you to recover it once more. Consider that you are disgracing yourself and your children by drinking so excessively from day to day—indeed, I am told, almost from hour to hour."

"Augh! don't believe the half o' what you hear, sir. Faith, somebody has been dhrawin' your honor out! Why I'm never dhrunk, sir; faith, I'm not."

"You will destroy your health, Connell, as well as your character; besides, you are not to be told that it is a sin, a crime against God, and an evil example to society."

"Show me the man, plase your honor, that ever seen me *incapable*. That's the proof o' the thing."

"But why do you drink at all? It is not necessary."

"An' do *you* never taste a dhrop yourself,

sir, plase your honor? I'll be bound you do, sir, raise your little finger of an odd time, as well as another. Eh, Ma'am? That's comin' close to his honor! An' faix, small blame to him, an' a weeshy sup o' the wine to the misthress herself, to correct the tindherness of her dilicate appetite."

"Peter, this bantering must not pass: I think I have a claim upon your respect and deference. I have uniformly been *your* friend and the friend of your children and family, but more especially of your late excellent and exemplary wife."

"Before God an' man I acknowledge that, sir—I do—I do. But, sir, to spake sarious—it's thruth, Ma'am, downright—to spake sarious, my heart's broke, an' every day it's brakin' more an' more. She's gone, sir, that used to manage me; an' now I can't turn myself to anything, barrin' the dhrink—God help me!"

"I honor you, Connell, for the attachment which you bear towards the memory of your wife, but I utterly condemn the manner in which you display it. To become a drunkard is to disgrace her memory. You know it was a character she detested."

"I know it all, sir, an' that you have thruth an rason on your side; but, sir, you never lost a wife that you loved; an' long may you be so, I pray the heavenly Father this day! Maybe if you did, sir, plase your honor, that, wid your heart sinkin' like a stone widin you, you'd thry whether or not *something* couldn't rise it. Sir, only for the dhrink I'd be dead."

"There I totally differ from you, Connell. The drink only prolongs your grief, by adding to it the depression of spirits which it always produces. Had you not become a drinker, you would long before this have been once more a cheerful, active, and industrious man. Your sorrow would have worn away gradually, and nothing but an agreeable melancholy—an affectionate remembrance of your excellent wife—would have remained. Look at other men."

"But where's the man, sir, had *sich* a wife to grieve for as she was? Don't be hard on me, sir. I'm not a dhrunkard. It's thrue I dhrink a great dale; but thin I can bear a great dale, so that I'm never incapable."

"Connell," said the lady, "you will break down your constitution, and bring yourself to an earlier death than you would otherwise meet."

"I care very little, indeed, how soon I was dead, not makin' you, Ma'am, an ill answer."

"Oh fie, Connell, for you, a sensible man and a Christian, to talk in such a manner!"

"Throth, thin, I don't, Ma'am. *She's* gone, an' I'd be glad to folly her as soon as I could. Yes, asthore, you're departed from me! an' now I'm gone asthray—out o' the right an' out o' the good! Oh, Ma'am," he proceeded, whilst the tears rolled fast down his cheeks, "if you knew her—her last words, too—Oh, she was—she was—but where's the use o' sayin' what she was?—I beg your pardon, Ma'am,—your honor, sir, 'ill forgive my want o' manners, sure I know it's bad breedin', but I can't help it."

"Well, promise," said his landlord, "to give up drink. Indeed, I wish you would take an oath against it: you are a conscientious man, and I know would keep it, otherwise I should not propose it, for I discountenance such oaths generally. Will you promise me this, Connell?"

"I'll promise to think of it, your honor,—aginst takin' a sartin quantity, at any rate."

"If you refuse it, I'll think you are unmindful of the good feeling which we have ever shown your family."

"What?—do you think, sir, I'm ungrateful to you? That's a sore cut, sir, to make a villain o' me. Where's the book?—I'll swear this minute. Have you a Bible, Ma'am?—I'll show you that I'm not mane, any way."

"No, Connell, you shall not do it rashly; you must be cool and composed: but go home, and turn it in your mind," she replied; "and remember, that it is the request of me and my husband, for your own good."

"Neither must you swear before me," said his landlord, "but before Mr. Mulcahy, who, as it is an oath connected with your moral conduct, is the best person to be present. It must be voluntary, however. Now, good-bye, Connell, and think of what we said; but take care never to carry home any of my servants in the same plight in which you put John Smith to-day."

"Faix thin, sir, *he* had no business, wid your honor's livery upon his back, to begin lecthurin' me again dhrinkin', as he did. We may all do very well, sir, till the timptation crasses us—but that's what thries us. It thried him, but he didn't *stand* it—faix he didn't!—ha, ha, ha! Good-mornin', sir—God bless you, Ma'am! Divil resave the family in all Europe"——

"Good-morning, Connell—good-morning!—Pray remember what we said."

Peter, however, could not relinquish the whiskey. His sons, daughters, friends, and neighbors, all assailed him, but with no success. He either bantered them in his usual way, or reverted to his loss, and sank into sorrow. This last was the condition in which they found him most intractable; for a man is never considered to be in a state that admits of reasoning or argument, when he is known to be pressed by strong gushes of personal feeling. A plan at length struck

Father Mulcahy, which he resolved to put into immediate execution.

"Peter," said he, "if you don't abandon drink, I shall stop the masses which I'm offering up for the repose of your wife's soul, and I will also return you the money I received for saying them."

This was, perhaps, the only point on which Peter was accessible. He felt staggered at such an unexpected intimation, and was for some time silent.

"You will then feel," added the priest, "that your drunkenness is prolonging the sufferings of your wife, and that *she* is as much concerned in your being sober as you are yourself."

"I *will* give in," replied Peter; "I didn't see the thing in *that* light. No—I will give it up; but if I swear against it, you must allow me a rasonable share every day, an' I'll not go beyant it, of coorse. The truth is, I'd die soon if I gev it up altogether."

"We have certainly no objection against that," said the priest, "provided you keep within what would injure your health, or make you tipsy. Your drunkenness is not only sinful but disreputable; besides, you must not throw a slur upon the character of your children, who hold respectable and rising situations in the world."

"No," said Peter, in a kind of soliloquy, "I'd lay down my life, avourneen, sooner nor I'd cause you a minute's sufferin'. Father Mulcahy, go an wid the masses. I'll get an oath drawn up, an' whin it's done, I'll swear to it. I know a man that'll do it for me."

The priest then departed, quite satisfied with having accomplished his object; and Peter, in the course of that evening, directed his steps to the house of the village schoolmaster, for the purpose of getting him to "draw up" the intended oath.

"Misther O'Flaherty," said he, "I'm comin' to ax a requist of you an' I hope you'll grant it to me. I brought down a sup in this flask, an' while we're takin' it, we can talk over what I want."

"If it be anything widin the circumference of my power, set it down, Misther Connell, as already operated upon. I'd drop a pen to no man at keepin' books by double enthry, which is the Italian method invinted by Pope Gregory the Great. The Three sets bear a theological ratio to the three states of a thrue Christian. 'The Waste-book,' says Pope Gregory, 'is this world, the Journal is purgatory, an' the Ledger is heaven. Or it may be compared,' he says, in the priface of the work, 'to the three states of the Catholic church—the church Militant, the church Suffering, and the church Triumphant.' The larnin' of that man was beyant the reach of credibility."

"Arra, have you a small glass, Masther? You see, Misther O'Flaherty, it's consarnin' purgatory, this that I want to talk about."

"Nancy, get us a glass—oh, here it is! Thin if it be, it's a wrong enthry in the Journal."

"Here's your health, Masther!—Not forgetting you, Mrs. O'Flaherty. No, indeed, thin it's not in the Journal, but an oath I'm goin' to take against liquor."

"Nothin' is asier to post than it is. We must enter it it undher the head of—let me see!—it must go in the *spirit* account, undher the head of Profit an' Loss, Your good health, Mr. Connell!—Nancy, I dhrink to your improvement in imperturbability! Yes, it must be enthered undher the "———

"Faix, undher *the rose*, I think," observed Pether; "don't you know the smack of it? You see since I took to it, I like the smell o' what I used to squeeze out o' the barley myself, long ago. Mr. O'Flaherty, I only want you to dhraw up an oath against liquor for me; but it's not for the books, good or bad. I promised to Father Mulcahy, that I'd do it. It's regardin' my poor Ellish's sowl in purgatory."

"Nancy, hand me a slate an' cutter. Faith, the same's a provident resolution; but how is it an' purgatory concatenated?"

"The priest, you see, won't go an wid the masses for her till I take the oath."

"That's but wake logic, if you ped him for thim."

"Faix, an' I did—an' well, too;—but about the oath? Have you the pencil?"

"I have; jist lave the thing to me."

"Asy, Masther—you don't undherstand it yit. Put down two tumblers for me at home."

"How is that, Misther Connell?—It's mysterious, if you're about to swear *against* liquor!"

"I am. Put down, as I said, two tumblers for me at home—Are they down?"

"They are down—but "———

"Asy!—very good!—Put down two more for me at Dan's. Let me see!—two more behind the garden. Well!—put down one at Father Mulcahy's;—two more at Frank M'Carrol's of Kilclay. How many's that?"

"Nine!!!"

"Very good. Now put down one wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Cargah; an' two over wid honest Roger M'Gaugy, of Nurchasey. How many have you now?"

"Twelve in all!!!! But, Misther Connell, there's a demonstration badly wanted here: I must confis I was always bright, but at

present I'm as dark as Nox. I'd thank you for a taste of explanation."

"Asy, man alive! Is there twelve in all?"

"Twelve in all: I've calculated them."

"Well, we'll hould to that. Och, och!—I'm sure, avourneen, afore I'd let you suffer one minute's pain, I'd not scruple to take an oath against liquor, any way. He may go an wid the masses now for you, as soon as he likes! Mr. O'Flaherty, will you put that down on paper, an' I'll swear to it, wid a blessin', to-morrow."

"But what object do you wish to effectuate by this?"

"You see, Masther, I dhrink one day wid another from a score to two dozen tumblers, an' I want to swear to no more nor twelve in the twenty-four hours."

"Why, there's intelligibility in *that!*—Wid great pleasure, Mr. Connell, I'll indite it. Katty, tare me a lafe out o' Brian Murphy's copy there."

"You see, Masther, it's for Ellish's sake I'm doin' this. State that in the oath."

"I know it; an' well she desarved that specimen of abstinence from you, Misther Connell. Thank you!—Your health agin! an' God grant you grace an' fortitude to go through wid the same oath!—An' so he will, or I'm greviously mistaken in you."

"OATH AGAINST LIQUOR,

made by me, Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath, on behalf of Mr. Peter Connell, of the cross-roads, Merchant, on one part—and of the soul of Mrs. Ellish Connell, now in purgatory, Merchantess, on the other.

"I solemnly and meritoriously, and soberly swear, that a single tumbler of whiskey punch shall not cross my lips during the twenty-four hours of the day, barring *twelve*, the locality of which is as followeth:

"Imprimis—Two tumblers at home, . . .	2
Secundo—Two more ditto at my son Dan's,	2
Tertio—Two more ditto behind my own garden, ...	2
Quarto—One ditto at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's, ...	1
Quinto—Two more ditto at Frank M'Carroll's, of Kilclay, ...	2
Sexto—One ditto wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Cargah, ...	1
Septimo—Two more ditto wid honest Roger M'Gaugy, of Nurchasey, . . .	2
	12

N.B.—I except in case any Docthor of Physic might think it right and medical to ordher me *more* for my health; or in case I could get Father Mulcahy to take the oath off of me for a start, at a wedding, or a christening, or at any other meeting of friends where there's drink.

his
PETER X CONNELL.
mark.

Witness present,
CORNELIUS O'FLAHERTY, Philomath.

June the 4th, 18—

"☞ I certify that I have made and calculated this oath for Misther Pether Connell, Merchant, and that it is strictly and arithmetically proper and correct.

"CORNELIUS O'FLAHERTY, Philomath.

"*Dated this 4th day of June*, 18—."

"I think, Misther O'Flaherty, it's a dacent oath as it stands. Plase God, I'll swear to it some time to-morrow *evenin'*."

"Dacent! Why I don't wish to become eulogistically addicted; but I'd back the same oath, for both grammar and arithmetic, aginst any that ever was drawn up by a lawyer—ay, by the great Counsellor himself!—but faith, I'd not face him at a Vow, for all that; he's the greatest man at a Vow in the three kingdoms."

"I'll tell you what I'm thinkin', Masther—as my hand's in, mightn't I as well take another wid an ould friend of mine, Owen Smith, of Lisbuy? He's a dacent ould residenther, an' likes it. It'll make the baker's or the long dozen."

"Why, it's not a bad thought; but won't thirteen get into your head?"

"No, nor three more to the back o' that. I only begin to get hearty about seventeen, so that the long dozen, afther all, is best; for God he knows, I've a regard for Owen Smith this many a year, an' I wouldn't wish to lave him out."

"Very well,—I'll add it up to the other part of the oath.

'Octavo—One ditto out of respect for dacent Owen Smith, of Lisbuy, . . . 1'

Now I must make the total amount thirteen, an' all will be right."

"Masther, have you a prayer-book widin?—bekase if you have, I may as well swear here, and you can witness it."

"Katty, hand over the *Spiritual* Exercises—a book aquil to the Bible itself for piety an' devotion."

"Sure they say, Masther, any book that the name o' God's in, is good for an oath. Now, wid the help o' goodness, repate the words afore me, an' I'll sware thim."

O'Flaherty hemmed two or three times, and complied with Peter's wishes, who followed him in the words until the oath was

concluded. He then kissed the book, and expressed himself much at ease, as well, he said, upon the account of Ellish's soul, as for the sake of his children.

For some time after this, his oath was the standing jest of the neighborhood: even to this day, Peter Connell's oath against liquor is a proverb in that part of the country. Immediately after he had sworn, no one could ever perceive that he violated it in the slightest degree; indeed there could be no doubt as to literally fulfilling it. A day never passed in which he did not punctually pay a visit to those whose names were dotted down, with whom he sat, pulled out his flask, and drank his quantum. In the meantime the poor man was breaking down rapidly; so much so, that his appearance generally excited pity, if not sorrow, among his neighbors. His character became simpler every day, and his intellect evidently more exhausted. The inoffensive humor, for which he had been noted, was also completely on the wane; his eye waxed dim, his step feeble, but the benevolence of his heart never failed him. Many acts of his private generosity are well known, and still remembered with gratitude.

In proportion as the strength of his mind and constitution diminished, so did his capacity for bearing liquor. When he first bound himself by the oath not to exceed the long dozen, such was his vigor, that the effects of thirteen tumblers could scarcely be perceived on him. This state of health, however, did not last. As he wore away, the influence of so much liquor was becoming stronger, until at length he found that it was more than he could bear, that he frequently confounded the names of the men, and the number of tumblers mentioned in the oath, and sometimes took in, in his route, persons and places not to be found in it at all. This grieved him, and he resolved to wait upon O'Flaherty for the purpose of having some means devised of guiding him during his potations.

"Masther," said he, "we must thry an' make this oath somethin' plainer. You see when I get confused, I'm not able to remimber things as I ought. Sometimes, instid o' one tumbler, I take two at the wrong place; an' sarra bit o' me but called in an' had three wid ould Jack Rogers, that isn't in it at all. On another day I had a couple wid honest Barney Casey, an my way across to Bartle Gorman's. I'm not what I was, Masther, ahagur; so I'd thank you to dhraw it out more clearer, if you can, nor it was."

"I see, Mr. Connell; I comprehend wid the greatest ase in life, the very plan for it. We must reduce the oath to Geography, for I'm at home there, bein' a Surveyor * myself. I'll lay down a map o' the parish, an' draw the houses of your friends at their proper places, so that you'll never be out o' your latitude at all."

"Faix, I doubt *that*, Masther—ha, ha, ha!" replied Peter; "I'm afeard I will, of an odd time, for I'm not able to carry what I used to do; but no matther: thry what you can do for me this time, any how. I think I could bear the long dozen still if I didn't make mistakes."

O'Flaherty accordingly set himself to work; and as his knowledge, not only of the parish, but of every person and house in it, was accurate, he soon had a tolerably correct skeleton map of it drawn for Peter's use.

"Now," said he, "lend me your ears."

"Faix, I'll do no sich thing," replied Peter—"I know a thrick worth two of it. Lend you my ears, inagh! †—catch me at it! You have a bigger pair of your own nor I have—ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, in other words, pay attintion. Now, see this dot—that's your own house."

"Put a crass there," said Peter, "an' thin I'll know it's the Crass-roads."

"Upon my reputation, you're right; an' that's what I call a good specimen of ingenuity. I'll take the hint from that, an' we'll make it a Hieroglyphical as well as a Geographical oath. Well, there's a crass, wid two tumblers. Is that clear?"

"It is, it is! Go an."

"Now here we draw a line to your son Dan's. Let me see; he keeps a mill, an' sells cloth. Very good. I'll dhraw a mill-wheel an' a yard-wand. There's two tumblers. Will you know that?"

"I see it: go an, nothin' can be clearer. So far, I can't go asthray."

"Well, what next? Two behind your own garden. What metaphor for the garden? Let me see!—let me cogitate! A dragon—the Hesperides! That's beyant *you*. A bit of a hedge will do, an' a gate."

"Don't put a gate in, it's not lucky. You know, when a man takes to dhrink, they say he's goin' a gray gate, or a black gate, or a bad gate. Put that out, an' make the hedge longer, an' it 'll do—wid the two tumblers, though."

"They're down. One at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's. How will we thranslate the priest?"

"Faix, I doubt that will be a difficquilt business."

* If the reader remembers the advertisement in the Hedge School, he may also recollect that the Hedge Masters were often employed as land-surveyors.

† Forsooth.

"Upon my reputation, I agree wid you in that, especially whin he repates Latin. However, we'll see. He writes P. P. afther his name;—pee pee is what we call the turkeys wid. What 'nd you think o' two turkeys?"

"The priest would like them roasted, but I couldn't undherstand that. No; put down the sign o' the horsewhip, or the cudgel; for he's handy, an' argues well wid both?"

"Good! I'll put down the horsewhip first, an' the cudgel alongside of it; then the tumbler, an' there'll be the sign o' the priest."

"Ay, do, Masther, an' faix the priest 'll be complate—there can be no mistakin' him thin. Divil a one but that's a good thought!"

"There it is in black an' white. Who comes next? Frank M'Carroll. He's a farmer. I'll put down a spade an' a harrow. Well, that's done—two tumblers."

"I won't mistake that, aither. It's clear enough."

"Bartle Gorman's of Cargah. Bartle's a little lame, an' uses a staff wid a cross on the end that he houlds in his hand. I'll put down a staff wid a cross on it."

"Would there be no danger of me mistakin' that for the priest's cudgel?"

"Divil the slightest. I'll pledge my knowledge of geography, they're two very different weapons."

"Well, put it down—I'll know it."

"Roger M'Gaugy of Nurchasy. What for him? Roger's a pig-driver. I'll put down pig. You'll comprehend that?"

"I ought; for many a pig I sould in my day. Put down the pig; an' if you could put two black spots upon his back, I'd know it to be one I sould him about four years agone—the fattest ever was in the country—it had to be brought home on a car, for it wasn't able to walk wid fat."

"Very good; the spots are on it. The last is Owen Smith of Lisbuy. Now, do you see that I've drawn a line from place to place, so that you have nothing to do only to keep to it as you go. What for Owen?"

"Owen! Let me see—Owen! Pooh! What's come over me, that I've nothin' for Owen? Ah! I have it. He's a horse-jockey: put down a gray mare I sould him about five years agone."

"I'll put down a horse; but I can't make a gray mare wid black ink."

"Well, make a mare of her, any way."

"Faith, an' that same puzzles me. Stop, I have it; I'll put a foal along wid her."

"As good as the bank. God bless you, Misther O'Flaherty. I think this 'll keep me from mistakes. An' now, if you'll slip up to me afther dusk, I'll send you down a couple o' bottles and a flitch. Sure you desarve more for the throuble you tuck."

Many of our readers, particularly of our English readers, will be somewhat startled to hear that, except the change of names and places, there is actually little exaggeration in the form of this oath; so just is the observation, that the romance of truth frequently exceeds that of fiction.

Peter had, however, over-rated his own strength in supposing that he could bear the long dozen in future; ere many months passed he was scarcely able to reach the half of that number without sinking into intoxication. Whilst in this state, he was in the habit of going to the graveyard in which his wife lay buried, where he sat, and wept like a child, sang her favorite songs, or knelt and offered up his prayers for the repose of her soul. None ever mocked him for this; on the contrary, there was always some kind person to assist him home. And as he staggered on, instead of sneers and ridicule, one might hear such expressions as these:—

"Poor Pether! he's nearly off; an' a dacent, kind neighbor he ever was. The death of the wife broke his heart—he never ris his head since."

"Ay, poor man! God pity him! He'll soon be sleepin' beside her, beyant there, where she's lyin'. It was never known of Peter Connell that he offinded man, woman, or child since he was born, barrin' the gaugers, bad luck to thim, afore he was marrid—but *that* was no offince. Sowl, he was *their* match, any how. When he an' the wife's gone, they won't lave their likes behind them. The sons are *bodaghs*—gintlemen, now; an' it's nothin' but dinners an' company. Ahagur, that wasn't the way their hardworkin' father an' mother made the money that they're houldin' their heads up wid such consequence upon."

The children, however, did not give Peter up as hopeless. Father Mulcahy, too, once more assailed him on his weak side. One morning, when he was sober, nervous, and depressed, the priest arrived, and finding him at home, addressed him as follows:—

"Peter, I'm sorry, and vexed, and angry this morning; and you are the cause of it."

"How is that, your Reverence?" said Peter. "God help me," he added, "don't be hard an me, sir, for I'm to be pitied. Don't be hard on me, for the short time I'll be here. I know it won't be long—I'll be wid *her* soon. Asthore machree, we'll be together, I hope, afore long—an', oh! if it was the will o' God, I would be glad if it was afore night!"

The poor, shattered, heart-broken creature wept bitterly, for he felt somewhat sensible of the justice of the reproof which he expected from the priest, as well as undiminished sorrow for his wife.

"I'm not going to be hard on you," said the good-natured priest; "I only called to tell you a dream that your son Dan had last night about you and his mother."

"About Ellish! Oh, for heaven's sake what about her, Father, avourneen?"

"She appeared to him, last night," replied Father Mulcahy, "and told him that your drinking kept her out of happiness."

"Queen of heaven!" exclaimed Peter, deeply affected, "is that true? Oh," said he, dropping on his knees, "Father, ahagur machree, pardon me—oh, forgive me! I now promise, solemnly and seriously, to drink neither *in* the house nor *out* of it, for the time to come, not one drop at all, good, bad, or indifferent, of either whiskey, wine, or punch—*barrin' one glass.* Are you now satisfied? an' do you think she'll get to happiness?"

"All will be well, I trust," said the priest. "I shall mention this to Dan and the rest, and depend upon it, they, too, will be happy to hear it."

"Here's what Mr. O'Flaherty an' myself made up," said Peter: "burn it, Father; take it out of my sight, for it's now no use to me."

"What is this at all?" said Mr. Mulcahy, looking into it. "Is it an oath?"

"It's the Joggraphy of one I swore some time ago; but it's now out of date—I'm done wid it."

The priest could not avoid smiling when he perused it, and on getting from Peter's lips an explanation of the hieroglyphics, he laughed heartily at the ingenious shifts they had made to guide his memory.

Peter, for some time after this, confined himself to one glass, as he had promised; but he felt such depression and feebleness, that he ventured slowly, and by degrees, to *enlarge* the "glass" from which he drank. His impression touching the happiness of his wife was, that as he had for several months strictly observed his promise, she had probably during that period gone to heaven. He then began to exercise his ingenuity gradually, as we have said, by using, from time to time, a glass larger than the preceding one; thus receding from the spirit of his vow to the letter, and increasing the quantity of his drink from a small glass to the most capacious tumbler he could find. The manner in which he drank this was highly illustrative of the customs which prevail on this subject in Ireland. He remembered, that in making the vow, he used the words, "neither *in* the house nor *out* of it;" but in order to get over this dilemma, he usually stood with one foot outside the threshold, and the other in the house, keeping himself in that position which would render it difficult to determine whether he was either out or in. At other times, when he happened to be upstairs, he usually thrust one-half of his person out of the window, with the same ludicrous intention of keeping the letter of his vow.

Many a smile this adroitness of his occasioned to the lookers-on: but further ridicule was checked by his wo-begone and afflicted look. He was now a mere skeleton, feeble and tottering.

One night, in the depth of winter, he went into the town where his two sons resided; he had been ill in mind and body during the day, and he fancied that change of scene and society might benefit him. His daughter and son-in-law, in consequence of his illness, watched him so closely, that he could not succeed in getting his usual "glass." This offended him, and he escaped without their knowledge to the son who kept the inn. On arriving there, he went upstairs, and by a *douceur* to the waiter, got a large tumbler filled with spirits. The lingering influences of a conscience that generally felt strongly on the side of a moral duty, though poorly instructed, prompted him to drink it in the usual manner, by keeping one-half of his body, as nearly as he could guess, out of the window, that it might be said he drank it neither in nor out of the house. He had scarcely finished his draught, however, when he lost his balance, and was precipitated upon the pavement. The crash of his fall was heard in the bar, and his son, who had just come in, ran, along with several others, to ascertain what had happened. They found him, however, only severely stunned. He was immediately brought in, and medical aid sent for; but, though he recovered from the immediate effects of the fall, the shock it gave to his broken constitution, and his excessive grief, carried him off in a few months afterwards. He expired in the arms of his son and daughter, and amidst the tears of those who knew his simplicity of character, his goodness of heart, and his attachment to the wife by whose death that heart had been broken.

Such was the melancholy end of the honest and warm-hearted Peter Connell, who, unhappily, was not a solitary instance of a man driven to habits of intoxication and neglect of business by the force of sorrow, which time and a well-regulated mind might otherwise have overcome. We have held him up on the one hand, as an example worthy of imitation in that industry and steadiness

which, under the direction of his wife, raised him from poverty to independence and wealth; and, on the other, as a man resorting to the use of spirituous liquors that he might be enabled to support affliction—a course which, so far from having sustained him under it, shattered his constitution, shortened his life, and destroyed his happiness. In conclusion, we wish our countrymen of Peter's class would imitate him in his better qualities, and try to avoid his failings.

THE LIANHAN SHEE.

One summer evening Mary Sullivan was sitting at her own well-swept hearthstone, knitting feet to a pair of sheep's gray stockings for Bartley, her husband. It was one of those serene evenings in the month of June, when the decline of day assumes a calmness and repose, resembling what we might suppose to have irradiated Eden, when our first parents sat in it before their fall. The beams of the sun shone through the windows in clear shafts of amber light, exhibiting millions of those atoms which float to the naked eye within its mild radiance. The dog lay barking in his dreams at her feet, and the gray cat sat purring placidly upon his back, from which even his occasional agitation did not dislodge her.

Mrs. Sullivan was the wife of a wealthy farmer, and niece to the Rev. Felix O'Rourke; her kitchen was consequently large, comfortable, and warm. Over where she sat, jutted out the "brace" well lined with bacon; to the right hung a well-scoured salt-box, and to the left was the jamb, with its little gothic paneless window to admit the light. Within it hung several ash rungs, seasoning for flail-sooples, or boulteens, a dozen of eel-skins, and several stripes of horse-skin, as hangings for them. The dresser was a "parfit white," and well furnished with the usual appurtenances. Over the door and on the "threshel," were nailed, "for luck," two horse-shoes, that had been found by accident. In a little "hole" in the wall, beneath the salt-box, lay a bottle of holy water to keep the place purified; and against the copestone of the gable, on the outside, grew a large lump of house-leek, as a specific for sore eyes and other maladies.

In the corner of the garden were a few stalks of tansy "to kill the thievin' worms in the childhre, the crathurs," together with a little Rose-noble, Solomon's Seal, and Bugloss, each for some medicinal purpose. The "lime wather" Mrs. Sullivan could make herself, and the "bog bane" for the *linh roe*,* or heart-burn, grew in their own meadow drain; so that, in fact, she had within her reach a very decent pharmacopœia, perhaps as harmless as that of the profession itself. Lying on the top of the salt-box was a bunch of fairy flax, and sewed in the folds of her own scapular was the dust of what had once been a four-leaved shamrock, an invaluable specific "for seein' the good people," if they happened to come within the bounds of vision. Over the door in the inside, over the beds, and over the cattle in the outhouses, were placed branches of withered palm, that had been consecrated by the priest on Palm Sunday; and when the cows happened to calve, this good woman tied, with her own hands, a woollen thread about their tails, to prevent them from being overlooked by evil eyes, or *elf-shot* * by the fairies, who seem to possess a peculiar power over females of every species during the period of parturition. It is unnecessary to mention the variety of charms which she possessed for that obsolete malady the colic, the toothache, headache, or for removing warts, and taking motes out of the eyes; let it suffice to inform our readers that she was well stocked with them; and that, in addition to this, she, together with her husband, drank a potion

* Literally, red water.

* This was, and in remote parts of the country still is, one of the strongest instances of belief in the power of the Fairies. The injury, which, if not counteracted by a charm from the lips of a "Fairyman," or "Fairy-woman," was uniformly inflicted on the animal by what was termed an elf-stone—which was nothing more nor less than a piece of sharp flint, from three to four or five ounces in weight. The cow was supposed to be struck upon the loin with it by these mischievous little beings, and the nature of the wound was indeed said to be very peculiar—that is, it cut the midriff without making any visible or palpable wound on the outward skin. All animals dying of this complaint, were supposed to be carried to the good people, and there are many in the country who would not believe that the dead carcass of the cow was that of the real one at all, but an old leg or block of wood, made to resemble it. All such frauds, however, and deceptions were inexplicable to every one, but such as happened to possess a four-leaved shamrock, and this enabled its possessor to see the block or log in its real shape, although to others it appeared to be the real carcass.

made up and administered by an herb-doctor, for preventing forever the slightest misunderstanding or quarrel between man and wife. Whether it produced this desirable object or not our readers may conjecture, when we add, that the herb-doctor, after having taken a very liberal advantage of their generosity, was immediately compelled to disappear from the neighborhood, in order to avoid meeting with Bartley, who had a sharp look-out for him, not exactly on his own account, but "in regard," he said, "that it had no effect upon *Mary*, at all, at all;" whilst Mary, on the other hand, admitted its efficacy upon herself, but maintained, "that *Bartley* was worse nor ever afther it."

Such was Mary Sullivan, as she sat at her own hearth, quite alone, engaged as we have meditating on we cannot pretend to ascertain; but after some time, she looked sharply into the "backstone," or hob, with an air of anxiety and alarm. By and by she suspended her knitting, and listened with much earnestness, leaning her right ear over to the hob, from whence the sounds to which she paid such deep attention proceeded. At length she crossed herself devoutly, and exclaimed, "Queen of saints about us!—is it back ye are? Well sure there's no use in talkin', bekase they say you know what's said of you, or to you—an' we may as well spake yez fair.—Hem—musha, yez are welcome back, crickets, avourneenee! I hope that, not like the last visit ye ped us, yez are comin' for luck now! Moolyeen * died, any way, soon afther your other *kailyee*, † ye crathurs ye. Here's the bread, an' the salt, an' the male for yez, an' we wish ye well. Eh?—saints above, if it isn't listenin' they are jist like a Christhien! Wurrah, but ye are the wise an' the quare crathurs all out!"

She then shook a little holy water over the hob, and muttered to herself an Irish charm or prayer against the evils which crickets are often supposed by the peasantry to bring with them, and requested, still in the words of the charm, that their presence might, on that occasion, rather be a presage of good fortune to man and beast belonging to her.

"There now, ye *dhonans* ‡ ye, sure ye can't say that ye're ill-thrated here, anyhow, or ever was mocked or made game of in the same family. You have got your hansel, an' full an' plenty of it; hopin' at the same time that you'll have no rason in life to cut our best clothes from revinge. Sure an' I didn't desarve to have my brave stuff *long body* § riddled the way it was, the last time ye wor here, an' only bekase little Barny, that has but the sinse of a *gorsoon*, tould yez in a joke to pack off wid yourself somewhere else. Musha, never heed what the likes of him says; sure he's but a *caudy*, * that doesn't mane ill, only the bit o' diversion wid yez."

She then resumed her knitting, occasionally stopping, as she changed her needles, to listen, with her ear set, as if she wished to augur from the nature of their chirping, whether they came for good or for evil. This, however, seemed to be beyond her faculty of translating their language; for after sagely shaking her head two or three times, she knit more busily than before. †

At this moment, the shadow of a person passing the house darkened the window opposite which she sat, and immediately a tall female, of a wild dress and aspect, entered the kitchen.

"*Gho manhy dhea ghud, a ban chohr!* the blessin' o' goodness upon you, dacent woman," said Mrs. Sullivan, addressing her in those kindly phrases so peculiar to the Irish language.

Instead of making her any reply, however, the woman, whose eye glistened with a wild depth of meaning, exclaimed in low tones, apparently of much anguish, "*Husht, husht, dherum!* husht, husht, I say—let me alone—I will do it—will you husht? I will, I say—I will—there now—that's it—be quiet, an'

* A cow without horns. † Short visit.
‡ *Dhonan*, a diminutive, delicate little thing.
§ An old-fashioned Irish gown.

* A little boy.
† Of the origin of this singular superstition I can find no account whatsoever; it is conceived, however, in a mild, sweet, and hospitable spirit. The visits of these migratory little creatures, which may be termed domestic grasshoppers, are very capricious and uncertain, as are their departures; and it is, I should think, for this reason, that they are believed to be cognizant of the ongoings of human life. We can easily suppose, for instance, that the coincidence of their disappearance from a family, and the occurrence of a death in that family, frequently multiplied as such coincidences must be in the country at large, might occasion the people, who are naturally credulous, to associate the one event with the other; and on that slight basis erect the general superstition. Crickets, too, when chirrupping, have a habit of suddenly ceasing, so that when any particularly interesting conversation happens to go on about the rustic hearth, this stopping of their little chaunt looks so like listening, that it is scarcely to be wondered at that the country folks think they understand every word that is spoken. They are thought, also, to foresee both good and evil, and are considered vindictive, but yet capable of being conciliated by fair words and kindness. They are also very destructive among wearing-apparel, which they frequently nibble into holes; and this is always looked upon as a piece of revenge, occasioned by some disrespectful language used towards them, or some neglect of their little wants. This note was necessary in order to render the conduct and language of Mary Sullivan perfectly intelligible.

I will do it—be quiet!" and as she thus spoke, she turned her face back over her left shoulder, as if some invisible being dogged her steps, and stood bending over her.

"*Gho manhy dhea ghud, a ban chohr, dherhum areeshi!* the blessin' o' God on you, honest woman, I say again," said Mrs. Sullivan, repeating that *sacred* form of salutation with which the peasantry address each other. "'Tis a fine evenin', honest woman, glory be to him that sent the same, and amin! If it was cowld, I'd be axin' you to draw your chair in to the fire: but, any way, won't you sit down?"

As she ceased speaking, the piercing eye of the strange woman became riveted on her with a glare, which, whilst it startled Mrs. Sullivan, seemed full of an agony that almost abstracted her from external life. It was not, however, so wholly absorbing as to prevent it from expressing a marked interest, whether for good or evil, in the woman who addressed her so hospitably.

"Hush, now—hush," she said, as if aside—"hush, won't you—sure I may speak *the thing* to her—you said it—there now, hush!" And then fastening her dark eyes on Mrs. Sullivan, she smiled bitterly and mysteriously.

"I know you well," she said, without, however, returning the *blessing* contained in the usual reply to Mrs. Sullivan's salutation—"I know you well, Mary Sullivan—hush, now, hush—yes, I know you well, and the power of all that you carry about you; but you'd be better than you are—and that's well enough *now*—if you had sense to know—ah, ah, ah!—what's this!" she exclaimed abruptly, with three distinct shrieks, that seemed to be produced by sensations of sharp and piercing agony.

"In the name of goodness, what's over you, honest woman?" inquired Mrs. Sullivan, as she started from her chair, and ran to her in a state of alarm, bordering on terror—"Is it sick you are?"

The woman's face had got haggard, and its features distorted; but in a few minutes they resumed their peculiar expression of settled wildness and mystery. "Sick!" she replied, licking her parched lips, "*awirck, awirck!* look! look!" and she pointed with a shudder that almost convulsed her whole frame, to a lump that rose on her shoulders; this, be it what it might, was covered with a red cloak, closely pinned and tied with great caution about her body—"'tis here! I have it!"

"Blessed mother!" exclaimed Mrs. Sullivan, tottering over to her chair, as finished a picture of horror as the eye could witness, "this day's Friday: the saints stand betwixt me an' all harm! Oh, holy Mary protect me! *Nhanim an airh*," in the name of the Father, etc., and she forthwith proceeded to bless herself, which she did thirteen times in honor of the blessed virgin and the twelve apostles.

"Ay, it's as you see!" replied the stranger, bitterly. "It is here—hush, now—hush, I say—I will say *the thing* to her, mayn't I? Ay, indeed, Mary Sullivan, 'tis with me always—always. Well, well, no, I won't. I won't—easy. Oh, blessed saints, easy, and I won't."

In the meantime Mrs. Sullivan had uncorked a bottle of holy water, and plentifully bedewed herself with it, as a preservative against this mysterious woman and her dreadful secret.

"Blessed mother above!" she ejaculated, "the *Lianhan Shee!*" And as she spoke, with the holy water in the palm of her hand, she advanced cautiously, and with great terror, to throw it upon the stranger and the unearthly thing she bore.

"Don't attempt it!" shouted the other, in tones of mingled fierceness and terror, "do you want to give *me* pain without keeping *yourself* anything at all safer? Don't you know *it* doesn't care about your holy water? But I'd suffer for it, an' perhaps so would you."

Mrs. Sullivan, terrified by the agitated looks of the woman, drew back with affright, and threw the holy water with which she intended to purify the other on her own person.

"Why thin, you lost crathur, who or what are you at all?—don't, don't—for the sake of all the saints and angels of heaven, don't come next or near me—keep your distance—but what are you, or how did you come to get that 'good thing' you carry about wid you?"

"Ay, indeed!" replied the woman bitterly, "as if I would or could tell you that! I say, you woman, you're doing what's not right in asking me a question you ought not let to cross your lips—look to yourself, and what's over you."

The simple woman, thinking her meaning literal, almost leaped off her seat with terror, and turned up her eyes to ascertain whether or not any dreadful appearance had approached her, or hung over her where she sat.

"Woman," said she, "I spoke you kind an' fair, an' I wish you well—but——"

"But what?" replied the other—and her eyes kindled into deep and profound excitement, apparently upon very slight grounds.

"Why—hem—nothin' at all sure, only"—

"Only what?" asked the stranger, with a face of anguish that seemed to torture every feature out of its proper lineaments.

"Dacent woman," said Mrs. Sullivan, whilst the hair began to stand with terror up-

on her head, "sure it's no wondher in life that I'm in a perplexity, whin a *Lianhan Shee* is undher the one roof wid me. 'Tisn't that I want to know anything at all about it—the dear forbid I should; but I never hard of a person bein' tormented wid it as you are. I always used to hear the people say that it thrated its friends well."

"Husht!" said the woman, looking wildly over her shoulder, "I'll not tell: it's on myself I'll leave the blame! Why, will you never pity me? Am I to be night and day tormented? Oh, you're wicked an' cruel for no reason!"

"Thry," said Mrs. Sullivan, "an' bless yourself; call on God."

"Ah!" shouted the other, "are you going to get me killed?" and as she uttered the words, a spasmodic working which must have occasioned great pain, even to torture, became audible in her throat: her bosom heaved up and down, and her head was bent repeatedly on her breast, as if by force.

"Don't mention that name," said she, "in my presence, except you mean to drive me to utter distraction. I mean," she continued, after a considerable effort to recover her former tone and manner—"hear me with attention—I mean, woman—you, Mary Sullivan—that if you mention that holy name, you might as well keep plunging sharp knives into my heart! Husht! peace to me for one minute, tormentor! Spare me something, I'm in your power!"

"Will you ate anything?" said Mrs. Sullivan; "poor erathur, you look like hunger an' distress; there's enough in the house, blessed be them that sent it! an' you had bether thry an' take some nourishment, any way;" and she raised her eyes in a silent prayer of relief and ease for the unhappy woman, whose unhallowed association had, in her opinion, sealed her doom.

"Will I?—will I?—oh!" she replied, "may you never know misery for offering it! Oh, bring me something—some refreshment—some food—for I'm dying with hunger."

Mrs. Sullivan, who, with all her superstition, was remarkable for charity and benevolence, immediately placed food and drink before her, which the stranger absolutely devoured—taking care occasionally to secrete under the protuberance which appeared behind her neck, a portion of what she ate. This, however, she did, not by stealth, but openly; merely taking means to prevent the concealed thing, from being, by any possible accident discovered.

When the craving of hunger was satisfied, she appeared to suffer less from the persecution of her tormentor than before; whether it was, as Mrs. Sullivan thought, that the food with which she plied it, appeased in some degree its irritability, or lessened that of the stranger, it was difficult to say; at all events, she became more composed; her eyes resumed somewhat of a natural expression; each sharp ferocious glare, which shot from them with such intense and rapid flashes, partially disappeared; her knit brows dilated, and part of a forehead, which had once been capacious and handsome, lost the contractions which deformed it by deep wrinkles. Altogether the change was evident, and very much relieved Mrs. Sullivan, who could not avoid observing it.

"It's not that I care much about it, if you'd think it not right o' me, but it's odd enough for you to keep the lower part of your face muffled up in that black cloth, an' then your forehead, too, is covered down on your face a bit? If they're part of the *bargain*,"—and she shuddered at the thought—"between you an' anything that's not good—hem!—I think you'd do well to throw thim off o' you, an' turn to thim that can protect you from everything that's bad. Now a scapular would keep all the divils in hell from one; an' if you'd"——

On looking at the stranger she hesitated, for the wild expression of her eyes began to return.

"Don't begin my punishment again," replied the woman; "make no allus—don't make mention in my presence of anything that's good. Husht,—husht,—it's beginning—easy now—easy! No," said she, "I came to tell you, that only for my breakin' a vow I made to this thing upon me, I'd be happy instead of miserable with it. I say, it's a good thing to have, if the person will use this bottle," she added, producing one, "as I will direct them."

"I wouldn't wish, for my part," replied Mrs. Sullivan, "to have anything to do wid it—neither act nor part;" and she crossed herself devoutly, on contemplating such an unholy alliance as that at which her companion hinted.

"Mary Sullivan," replied the other, "I can put good fortune and happiness in the way of you and yours. It is for you the good is intended; if *you* don't get both, *no other* can," and her eyes kindled as she spoke, like those of the Pythoness in the moment of inspiration.

Mrs. Sullivan looked at her with awe, fear, and a strong mixture of curiosity; she had often heard that the *Lianhan Shee* had, through means of the person to whom it was bound, conferred wealth upon several, although it could never render this important service to those who exercised direct authority over it. She therefore experienced

something like a conflict between her fears and a love of that wealth, the possession of which was so plainly intimated to her.

"The money," said she, "would be one thing, but to have the *Lianhan Shee* planted over a body's shouldher—och; the saints preserve us!—no, not for oceans of hard goold would I have it in my company one minnit. But in regard to the money—hem!—why, if it could be managed widout havin' act or part wid *that thing*, people would do anything in rason and fairity."

"You have this day been kind to me," replied the woman, "and that's what I can't say of many—dear help me!—husht! Every door is shut in my face! Does not every cheek get pale when I am seen? If I meet a fellow-creature on the road, they turn into the field to avoid me; if I ask for food, it's to a deaf ear I speak; if I am thirsty, they send me to the river. What house would shelter me? In cold, in hunger, in drought, in storm, and in tempest, I am alone and unfriended, hated, feared, an' avoided; starving in the winter's cold, and burning in the summer's heat. All this is my fate here; and—oh! oh! oh!—have mercy, tormentor—have mercy! I will not lift my thoughts *there*—I'll keep the paction—but spare *me now!*"

She turned round as she spoke, seeming to follow an invisible object, or, perhaps, attempting to get a more complete view of the mysterious being which exercised such a terrible and painful influence over her. Mrs. Sullivan, also, kept her eye fixed upon the lump, and actually believed that she saw it move. Fear of incurring the displeasure of what it contained, and a superstitious reluctance harshly to thrust a person from her door who had eaten of her food, prevented her from desiring the woman to depart.

"In the name of Goodness," she replied, "I will have nothing to do wid your gift. Providence, blessed be his name, has done well for me an' mine, an' it mightn't be right to go beyant what it has pleased *him* to give me."

"A rational sentiment!—I mean there's good sense in what you say," answered the stranger: "but you need not be afraid," and she accompanied the expression by holding up the bottle and kneeling: "now," she added, "listen to me, and judge for yourself, if what I say, when I swear it, can be a lie." She then proceeded to utter oaths of the most solemn nature, the purport of which was to assure Mrs. Sullivan that drinking of the bottle would be attended with no danger.

"You see this little bottle, drink it. Oh, for my sake and your own drink it; it will give wealth without end to you and to all belonging to you. Take one-half of it before sunrise, and the other half when he goes down. You must stand while drinking it, with your face to the east, in the morning; and at night, to the west. Will you promise to do this?"

"How would drinkin' the bottle get me money?" inquired Mrs. Sullivan, who certainly felt a strong tendency of heart to the wealth.

"That I can't tell you now, nor would you understand it, even if I could; but you will know all when what I say is complied with."

"Keep your bottle, dacent woman. I wash my hands of it: the saints above guard me from the timptation! I'm sure it's not right, for as I'm a sinner, 'tis getting stronger every minute widin me? Keep it! I'm loth to bid any one that *ett* o' my bread to go from my hearth, but if you go, I'll make it worth your while. Saints above, what's comin' over me. In my whole life I never had such a hankerin' afther money! Well, well, but it's quare entirely!"

"Will you drink it?" asked her companion. "If it does hurt or harm to you or yours, or anything but good, may what is hanging over me be fulfilled!" and she extended a thin, but, considering her years, not ungraceful arm, in the act of holding out the bottle to her kind entertainer.

"For the sake of all that's good and gracious take it without scruple—it is not hurtful, a child might drink every drop that's in it. Oh, for the sake of all you love, and of all that love you, take it!" and as she urged her, the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"No, no," replied Mrs. Sullivan, "it'll never cross my lips; not if it made me as rich as ould Hendherson, that airs his guineas in the sun, for fraid they'd get light by lyin' past."

"I entreat you to take it?" said the strange woman.

"Never, never!—once for all—I say, I won't; so spare your breath."

The firmness of the good housewife was not, in fact to be shaken; so, after exhausting all the motives and arguments with which she could urge the accomplishments of her design, the strange woman, having again put the bottle into her bosom, prepared to depart.

She had now once more become calm, and resumed her seat with the languid air of one who has suffered much exhaustion and excitement. She put her hand upon her forehead for a few moments, as if collecting her faculties, or endeavoring to remember the purport of their previous conversation. A slight moisture had broken through her skin, and altogether, notwithstanding her avowed

criminality in entering into an unholy bond, she appeared an object of deep compassion.

In a moment her manner changed again, and her eyes blazed out once more, as she asked her alarmed hostess :—

"Again, Mary Sullivan, will you take the gift that I have it in my power to give you? ay or no? speak, poor mortal, if you know what is for your own good?"

Mrs. Sullivan's fears, however, had overcome her love of money, particularly as she thought that wealth obtained in such a manner could not prosper; her only objection being to the means of acquiring it.

"Oh!" said the stranger, "am I doomed never to meet with any one who will take the promise off me by drinking of this bottle? Oh! but I am unhappy! What it is to fear—ah! ah!—and keep *his* commandments. Had *I* done so in my youthful time, I wouldn't now—ah—merciful mother, is there no relief? kill me, tormentor; kill me outright, for surely the pangs of eternity cannot be greater than those you now make me suffer. Woman," said she, and her muscles stood out in extraordinary energy—"woman, Mary Sullivan—ay, if you should kill me—blast me—where I stand, I will say the word—woman—you have daughters—teach them—to fear—" Having got so far, she stopped—her bosom heaved up and down—her frame shook dreadfully—her eyeballs became lurid and fiery—her hands were clenched, and the spasmodic throes of inward convulsion worked the white froth up to her mouth; at length she suddenly became like a statue, with this wild, supernatural expression intense upon her, and with an awful calmness, by far more dreadful than excitement could be, concluded by pronouncing, in deep, husky tones, the name of God.

Having accomplished this with such a powerful struggle, she turned round, with pale despair in her countenance and manner, and with streaming eyes slowly departed, leaving Mrs. Sullivan in a situation not at all to be envied.

In a short time the other members of the family, who had been out at their evening employments, returned. Bartley, her husband, having entered somewhat sooner than his three daughters from milking, was the first to come in; presently the girls followed, and in a few minutes they sat down to supper, together with the servants, who dropped in one by one, after the toil of the day. On placing themselves about the table, Bartley, as usual, took his seat at the head; but Mrs. Sullivan, instead of occupying hers, sat at the fire in a state of uncommon agitation. Every two or three minutes she would cross herself devoutly, and mutter such prayers against spiritual influences of an evil nature, as she could compose herself to remember.

"Thin, why don't you come to your supper, Mary," said the husband, "while the sowans are warm? Brave and thick they are this night, any way."

His wife was silent; for so strong a hold had the strange woman and her appalling secret upon her mind, that it was not till he repeated his question three or four times—raising his head with surprise, and asking, "Eh, thin, Mary, what's come over you—is it unwell you are?"—that she noticed what he said.

"Supper!" she exclaimed, "unwell! 'tis a good right I have to be unwell,—I hope nothin' bad will happen, any way. Feel my face, Nanny," she added, addressing one of her daughters, "it's as cowld an' wet as a lime-stone—ay, an' if you found me a corpse before you, it wouldn't be at all strange."

There was a general pause at the seriousness of this intimation. The husband rose from his supper, and went up to the hearth where she sat.

"Turn round to the light," said he; "why, Mary dear, in the name of wondher, what ails you? for you're like a corpse, sure enough. Can't you tell us what has happened, or what put you in such a state? Why, childhre, the cowld sweat's teemin' off her!"

The poor woman, unable to sustain the shock produced by her interview with the stranger, found herself getting more weak, and requested a drink of water; but before it could be put to her lips, she laid her head upon the back of the chair and fainted. Grief, and uproar, and confusion followed this alarming incident. The presence of mind, so necessary on such occasions, was wholly lost; one ran here, and another there, all jostling against each other, without being cool enough to render her proper assistance. The daughters were in tears, and Bartley himself was dreadfully shocked by seeing his wife apparently lifeless before him.

She soon recovered, however, and relieved them from the apprehension of her death, which they thought had actually taken place. "Mary," said the husband, "something quare entirely has happened, or you wouldn't be in this state!"

"Did any of you see a strange woman lavin' the house, a minute or two before ye came in?" she inquired.

"No," they replied, "not a stim of any one did we see."

"Wurrah dheelish! No?—now is it possible ye didn't?" She then described her

but all declared they had seen no such person.

"Bartley, whisper," said she, and beckoning him over to her, in a few words she revealed the secret. The husband grew pale, and crossed himself. "Mother of Saints! childhre," said he, "a *Lianhan Shee!*" The words were no sooner uttered than every countenance assumed the pallidness of death: and every right hand was raised in the act of blessing the person, and crossing the forehead. "*The Lianhan Shee!!*" all exclaimed in fear and horror—"This day's Friday, God betwixt us an' harm!"*

It was now after dusk, and the hour had already deepened into the darkness of a calm, moonless, summer night; the hearth, therefore, in a short time, became surrounded by a circle, consisting of every person in the house; the door was closed and securely bolted;—a struggle for the safest seat took place, and to Bartley's shame be it spoken, he lodged himself on the hob within the jamb, as the most distant situation from the fearful being known as the *Lianhan Shee.* The recent terror, however, brooded over them all; their topic of conversation was the mysterious visit, of which Mrs. Sullivan gave a painfully accurate detail; whilst every ear of those who composed her audience was set, and every single hair of their heads bristled up, as if awakened into distinct life by the story. Bartley looked into the fire soberly, except when the cat, in prowling about the dresser, electrified him into a start of fear, which sensation went round every link of the living chain about the hearth.

The next day the story spread through the whole neighborhood, accumulating in interest and incident as it went. Where it received the touches, embellishments, and emendations, with which it was amplified, it would be difficult to say; every one told it, forsooth, *exactly* as he heard it from another; but indeed it is not improbable, that those through whom it passed were unconscious of the additions it had received at their hands. It is not unreasonable to suppose that imagination in such cases often colors highly without a premeditated design of falsehood. Fear and dread, however, accompanied its progress; such families as had neglected to keep holy water in their houses borrowed some from their neighbors; every old prayer which had become rusty from disuse, was brightened up—charms were hung about the necks of cattle—and gospels about those of children—crosses were placed over the doors and windows;—no unclean water was thrown out before sunrise or after dusk—

"E'en those prayed now who never prayed before,
And those who always prayed, still prayed the more."

The inscrutable woman who caused such general dismay in the parish was an object of much pity. Avoided, feared, and detested, she could find no rest for her weary feet, nor any shelter for her unprotected head. If she was seen approaching a house, the door and windows were immediately closed against her; if met on the way she was avoided as a pestilence. How she lived no one could tell, for none would permit themselves to know. It was asserted that she existed without meat or drink, and that she was doomed to remain possessed of life, the prey of hunger and thirst, until she could get some one weak enough to break the spell by drinking her hellish draught, to taste which, they said, would be to change places with herself, and assume her despair and misery.

There had lived in the country about six months before her appearance in it, a man named Stephenson. He was unmarried, and the last of his family. This person led a solitary and secluded life, and exhibited during the last years of his existence strong symptoms of eccentricity, which, for some months before his death, assumed a character of unquestionable derangement. He was found one morning hanging by a halter in his own stable, where he had, under the influence of his malady, committed suicide. At this time the public press had not, as now, familiarized the minds of the people to that dreadful crime, and it was consequently looked upon *then* with an intensity of horror, of which we can scarcely entertain any adequate notion. His farm remained unoccupied, for while an acre of land could be obtained in any other quarter, no man would enter upon such unhallowed premises. The house was locked up, and it was currently reported that Stephenson and the devil each night repeated the hanging scene in the stable; and that when the former was committing the "hopeless sin," the halter slipped several times from the beam of the stable-loft, when Satan came, in the shape of a dark complexioned man with a hollow voice, and secured the rope until Stephenson's end was accomplished.

In this stable did the wanderer take up her residence at night; and when we consider the belief of the people in the night-scenes, which were supposed to occur in it, we need not be surprised at the new feature of horror which this circumstance superadded to her character. Her presence and

* This short form is supposed to be a safeguard against the Fairies. The particular day must be always named.

appearance in the parish were dreadful; a public outcry was soon raised against her, which, were it not from fear of her power over their lives and cattle, might have ended in her death. None, however, had courage to grapple with her, or to attempt expelling her by violence, lest a signal vengeance might be taken on any who dared to injure a woman that could call in the terrible aid of the *Lianhan Shee*.

In this state of feeling they applied to the parish priest, who, on hearing the marvellous stories related concerning her, and on questioning each man closely upon his authority, could perceive, that, like most other reports, they were to be traced principally to the imagination and fears of the people. He ascertained, however, enough from Bartley Sullivan to justify a belief that there was something certainly uncommon about the woman; and being of a cold, phlegmatic disposition, with some humor, he desired them to go home, if they were wise—he shook his head mysteriously as he spoke—"and do the woman no injury, if they didn't wish"—and with this abrupt hint he sent them about their business.

This, however, did not satisfy them. In the same parish lived a suspended priest, called Father Philip O'Dullaghy, who supported himself, as most of them do, by curing certain diseases of the people—miraculously! He had no other means of subsistence, nor indeed did he seem strongly devoted to life, or to the pleasures it afforded. He was not addicted to those intemperate habits which characterize "Blessed Priests" in general; spirits he never tasted, nor any food that could be termed a luxury, or even a comfort. His communion with the people was brief, and marked by a tone of severe contemptuous misanthropy. He seldom stirred abroad except during morning, or in the evening twilight, when he might be seen gliding amidst the coming darkness, like a dissatisfied spirit. His life was an austere one, and his devotional practices were said to be of the most remorseful character. Such a man, in fact, was calculated to hold a powerful sway over the prejudices and superstitions of the people. This was true. His power was considered almost unlimited, and his life one that would not disgrace the highest saint in the calendar. There were not wanting some persons in the parish who hinted that Father Felix O'Rourke, the parish priest, was himself rather reluctant to incur the displeasure, or challenge the power, of the *Lianhan Shee*, by driving its victim out of the parish. The opinion of these persons was, in its distinct unvarnished reality, that Father Felix absolutely showed the white feather on this critical occasion—that he became shy, and begged leave to decline being introduced to this intractable pair—seeming to intimate that he did not at all relish adding them to the stock of his acquaintances.

Father Philip they considered as a decided contrast to him on this point. His stern and severe manner, rugged, and, when occasion demanded, daring, they believed suitable to the qualities requisite for sustaining such an interview. They accordingly waited on him; and after Bartley and his friends had given as faithful a report of the circumstances as, considering all things, could be expected, he told Bartley he would hear from Mrs. Sullivan's own lips the authentic narrative. This was quite satisfactory, and what was expected from him. As for himself, he appeared to take no particular interest in the matter, further than that of allaying the ferment and alarm which had spread through the parish.

"Plase your Reverence," said Bartley, "she came in to Mary, and she alone in the house, and for the matther o' that, I believe she laid hands upon her, and tossed and tumbled the crathur, and she but a sickly woman, through the four corners of the house. Not that Mary lets an so much, for she's afeard; but I know from her way, when she spakes about her, that it's thruth, your Reverence."

"But didn't the *Lianhan Shee*," said one of them, "put a sharp-pointed knife to her breast, wid a divilish intintion of makin' her give the best of aitin' an' dhrinkin' the house afforded?"

"She got the victuals, to a sartinty," replied Bartley, "and 'overlooked' my woman for her pains; for she's not the picture of herself since."

Every one now told some magnified and terrible circumstance, illustrating the formidable power of the Lianhan Shee.

When they had finished, the sarcastic lip of the priest curled into an expression of irony and contempt; his brow, which was naturally black and heavy, darkened; and a keen, but rather a ferocious-looking eye, shot forth a glance, which, while it intimated disdain for those to whom it was directed, spoke also of a dark and troubled spirit in himself. The man seemed to brook with scorn the degrading situation of a religious quack, to which some incontrollable destiny had doomed him.

"I shall see your wife to-morrow," said he to Bartley; "and after hearing the plain account of what happened, I will consider what is best to be done with this dark, perhaps unhappy, perhaps guilty character; but whether dark, or unhappy, or guilty, I, for one, should not and will not avoid her.

Go, and bring me word to-morrow evening, when I can see her on the following day. Begone!"

When they withdrew, Father Philip paced his room for some time in silence and anxiety.

"Ay," said he, "infatuated people, sunk in superstition and ignorance, yet, perhaps, happier in your degradation than those who, in the pride of knowledge, can only look back upon a life of crime and misery. What is a sceptic? What is an infidel? Men who, when they will not submit to moral restraint, harden themselves into scepticism and infidelity, until, in the headlong career of guilt, that which was first adopted to lull the outcry of conscience, is supported by the pretended pride of principle. Principle in a sceptic! Hollow and devilish lie! Would *I* have plunged into scepticism, had I not first violated the moral sanctions of religion? Never. I became an infidel, because I first became a villain! Writhing under a load of guilt, that which I wished might be true I soon forced myself to think true: and now"—he here clenched his hands and groaned—"now—ay—now—and hereafter—oh, *that* hereafter! Why can I not shake the thoughts of it from my conscience? Religion! Christianity! With all the hardness of an infidel's heart I feel your truth; because, if every man were the villain that infidelity would make him, then indeed might every man curse God for his existence bestowed upon him—as I would, but dare not do. Yet why can I not believe?—Alas! why should God accept an unrepentant heart? Am I not a hypocrite, mocking him by a guilty pretension to his power, and leading the dark into thicker darkness? Then these hands—blood!—broken vows!—ha! ha! ha! Well, go—let misery have its laugh, like the light that breaks from the thunder-cloud. Prefer Voltaire to Christ; sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind, as I have done—ha, ha, ha! Swim, world—swim about me! I have lost the ways of Providence, and am dark! *She* awaits me; but I broke the chain that galled us: yet it still rankles—still rankles!"

The unhappy man threw himself into a chair in a paroxysm of frenzied agony. For more than an hour he sat in the same posture, until he became gradually hardened into a stiff, lethargic insensibility, callous and impervious to feeling, reason, or religion—an awful transition from a visitation of conscience so terrible as that which he had just suffered. At length he arose, and by walking moodily about, relapsed into his usual gloomy and restless character.

When Bartley went home, he communicated to his wife Father Philip's intention of calling on the following day, to hear a correct account of the *Lianhan Shee*.

"Why, thin," said she, "I'm glad of it, for I intinded myself to go to him, any way, to get my new scapular consecrated. How-an'-ever, as he's to come, I'll get a set of gospels for the boys an' girls, an' he can consecrate all when his hand's in. Aroon, Bartley, they say that man's so holy that he can do anything—ay, melt a body off the face o' the earth, like snow off a ditch. Dear me, but the power they have is strange all out!"

"There's no use in gettin' him anything to ate or dhrink," replied Bartley; "he wouldn't take a glass o' whiskey once in seven years. Throth, myself thinks he's a little too dry; sure he might be holy enough, an' yet take a sup of an odd time. There's Father Felix, an' though we all know he's far from bein' so blessed a man as him, yet he has friendship an' neighborliness in him, an' never refuses a glass in rason."

"But do you know what I was tould about Father Philip, Bartley?"

"I'll tell you that afther I hear it, Mary, my woman; you won't expect me to tell what I don't know?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Behave, Bartley, an' quit your jokin' now, at all evints; keep it till we're talkin' of somethin' else, an' don't let us be coumittin' sin, maybe, while we're spakin' of what we're spakin' about; but they say it's as thruc as the sun to the dial:—the Lent afore last itself it was,—he never tasted mate or dhrink durin' the whole seven weeks! Oh, you needn't stare! it's well known by thim that has as much sinse as you—no, not so much as you'd carry on the point o' this knittin'-needle. Well, sure the housekeeper an' the two sarvants wondhered—faix, they couldn't do less—an' took it into their heads to watch him closely; an' what do you think—blessed be all the saints above!—what do you think they *seen?*"

"The Goodness above knows; for me—I don't."

"Why, thin, whin he was asleep they seen a small silk thread in his mouth, that came down through the ceilin' from heaven, an' he suckin' it, just as a child would his mother's breast whin the crathur 'ud be asleep: so that was the way he was supported by the angels! An' I reminder myself, though he's a dark, spare, yallow man at all times, yet he never looked half so fat an' rosy as he did the same Lent!"

"Glory be to Heaven! Well, well—*it is* sthrange the power they have! As for him, I'd as *lee* meet St. Pether, or St. Pathrick himself, as him; for one can't but fear him, somehow."

"Fear him! Och, it 'ud be the pity o' thim that 'ud do anything to vex or anger that man. Why, his very look 'ud wither thim, till there wouldn't be the thrack* o' thim on the earth; an' as for his curse, why it 'ud scorch thim to ashes!"

As it was generally known that Father Philip was to visit Mrs. Sullivan the next day, in order to hear an account of the mystery which filled the parish with such fear, a very great number of the parishioners were assembled in and about Bartley's long before he made his appearance. At length he was seen walking slowly down the road, with an open book in his hand, on the pages of which he looked from time to time. When he approached the house, those who were standing about it assembled in a body, and, with one consent, uncovered their heads, and asked his blessing. His appearance bespoke a mind ill at ease; his face was haggard, and his eyes bloodshot. On seeing the people kneel, he smiled with his usual bitterness, and, shaking his hand with an air of impatience over them, muttered some words, rather in mockery of the ceremony than otherwise. They then rose, and blessing themselves, put on their hats, rubbed the dust off their knees, and appeared to think themselves recruited by a peculiar accession of grace.

On entering the house the same form was repeated; and when it was over, the best chair was placed for him by Mary's own hands, and the fire stirred up, and a line of respect drawn, within which none was to intrude, lest he might feel in any degree incommoded.

"My good neighbor," said he to Mrs. Sullivan, "what strange woman is this, who has thrown the parish into such a ferment? I'm told she paid you a visit? Pray sit down."

"I humbly thank your Reverence," said Mary, curtseying lowly, "but I'd rather not sit, sir, if you plase. I hope I know what respect names, your Reverence. Barny Bradagh, I'll thank you to stand up, if you plase, an' his Reverence to the fore, Barny."

"I ax your Reverence's pardon, an' yours, too, Mrs. Sullivan: sure we didn't mane the disrespect, any how, sir, plase your Reverence."

"About this woman, and the *Lianhan Shee?*" said the priest, without noticing Barny's apology. "Pray what do you precisely understand by a *Lianhan Shee?*"

"Why, sir," replied Mary, "some sihrange bein' from the good people, or fairies, that sticks to some persons. There's a bargain, sir, your Reverence, made atween thim; an' the divil, sir, that is, the ould boy—the saints about us!—has a hand in it. The *Lianhan Shee*, your Reverence, is never seen only by thim it keeps wid; but—hem!—it always, with the help of the ould boy, contrives, sir, to make the person brake the agreement, an' thin it has *thim* in *its* power; but if they *don't* brake the agreement, thin *it's* in *their* power. If they can get any body to put in their place, they may get out o' the bargain; for they can, of a sartainty, give oceans o' money to people, but can't take any themselves, plase your Reverence. But sure, where's the use o' me to be tellin' your Reverence what you know bether nor myself?—an' why shouldn't you, or any one that has the power you have?"

He smiled again at this in his own peculiar manner, and was proceeding to inquire more particularly into the nature of the interview between them, when the noise of feet, and sounds of general alarm, accompanied by a rush of people into the house, arrested his attention, and he hastily inquired into the cause of the commotion. Before he could receive a reply, however, the house was almost crowded; and it was not without considerable difficulty, that, by the exertions of Mrs. Sullivan and Bartley, sufficient order and quiet were obtained to hear distinctly what was said.

"Plase your Reverence," said several voices at once, "they're comin', hot-foot, into the very house to us! Was ever the likes seen! an' they must know right well, sir, that you're widin in it."

"Who are coming?" he inquired.

"Why the woman, sir, an' her *good pet*, the *Lianhan Shee*, your Reverence."

"Well," said he, "but why should you all appear so blanched with terror? Let her come in, and we shall see how far she is capable of injuring her fellow-creatures: some maniac," he muttered, in a low soliloquy, "whom the villany of the world has driven into derangement—some victim to a hand like m——. Well, they say there *is* a Providence, yet such things are permitted!"

"He's sayin' a prayer now," observed one of them; "haven't we a good right to be thankful that he's in the place wid us while she's in it, or dear knows what harm she might do us—maybe *rise* the wind!"*

As the latter speaker concluded, there was a dead silence. The persons about the door crushed each other backwards, their feet set out before them, and their shoulders laid with violent pressure against those who

* Track, foot-mark, put for life.

* It is generally supposed by the people, that persons who have entered into a compact with Satan can raise the wind by calling him up, and that it cannot be laid unless by the death of a black cock, a black dog, or an unchristened child.

stood behind, for each felt anxious to avoid all danger of contact with a being against whose power even a blessed priest found it necessary to guard himself by a prayer.

At length a low murmur ran among the people—"Father O'Rourke!—here's Father O'Rourke!—he has turned the corner after her, an' they're both comin' in." Immediately they entered, but it was quite evident from the manner of the worthy priest that he was unacquainted with the person of this singular being. When they crossed the threshold, the priest advanced, and expressed his surprise at the throng of people assembled.

"Plase your Reverence," said Bartley, "*that's* the woman," nodding significantly towards her as he spoke, but without looking at her person, lest the evil eye he dreaded so much might meet his, and give him "the blast."

The dreaded female, on seeing the house in such a crowded state, started, paused, and glanced with some terror at the persons assembled. Her dress was not altered since her last visit; but her countenance, though more meagre and emaciated, expressed but little of the unsettled energy which then flashed from her eyes, and distorted her features by the depth of that mysterious excitement by which she had been agitated. Her countenance was still muffled as before, the awful protuberance rose from her shoulders, and the same band which Mrs. Sullivan had alluded to during their interview, was bound about the upper part of her forehead.

She had already stood upwards of two minutes, during which the fall of a feather might be heard, yet none bade God bless her—no kind hand was extended to greet her—no heart warmed in affection towards her; on the contrary, every eye glanced at her, as a being marked with enmity towards God. Blanched faces and knit brows, the signs of fear and hatred, were turned upon her; her breath was considered pestilential, and her touch paralysis. There she stood, proscribed, avoided, and hunted like a tigress, all fearing to encounter, yet wishing to exterminate her! Who could she be?—or what had she done, that the finger of the Almighty marked her out for such a fearful weight of vengeance?

Father Philip rose and advanced a few steps, until he stood confronting her. His person was tall, his features dark, severe, and solemn: and when the nature of the investigation about to take place is considered, it need not be wondered at, that the moment was, to those present, one of deep and impressive interest—such as a visible conflict between a supposed champion of God and a supernatural being was calculated to excite.

"Woman," said he, in his deep stern voice, "tell me who and what you are, and why you assume a character of such a repulsive and mysterious nature, when it can entail only misery, shame, and persecution on yourself? I conjure you, in the name of Him after whose image you are created, to speak truly?"

He paused, and the tall figure stood mute before him. The silence was dead as death—every breath was hushed—and the persons assembled stood immovable as statues! Still she spoke not; but the violent heaving of her breast evinced the internal working of some dreadful struggle. Her face before was pale—it was now ghastly; her lips became blue, and her eyes vacant.

"Speak!" said he, "I conjure you in the name of the power by whom we live!"

It is probable that the agitation under which she labored was produced by the severe effort made to sustain the unexpected trial she had to undergo.

For some minutes her struggle continued; but having begun at its highest pitch, it gradually subsided until it settled in a calmness which appeared fixed and awful as the resolution of despair. With breathless composure she turned round, and put back that part of her dress which concealed her face, except the band on her forehead, which she did not remove; having done this she turned again, and walked calmly towards Father Philip, with a deadly smile upon her thin lips. When within a step of where he stood, she paused, and riveting her eyes upon him exclaimed—

"Who and what am I? The victim of infidelity and you, the bearer of a cursed existence, the scoff and scorn of the world, the monument of a broken vow and a guilty life, a being scourged by the scorpion lash of conscience, blasted by periodical insanity, pelted by the winter's storm, scorched by the summer's heat, withered by starvation, hated by man, and touched into my inmost spirit by the anticipated tortures of future misery. I have no rest for the sole of my foot, no repose for a head distracted by the contemplation of a guilty life; I am the unclean spirit which walketh to seek rest and findeth none; I am—*what you have made me!* Behold," she added, holding up the bottle, "this failed, and I live to accuse you. But no, you are my husband—though our union was but a guilty form, and I will bury that in silence. You thought me dead, and you flew to avoid punishment—did you avoid it? No; the finger of God has written pain and punishment upon your brow. I have

been in all characters, in all shapes, have spoken with the tongue of a peasant, moved in my natural sphere; but my knees were smitten, my brain stricken, and the wild malady which banishes me from society has been upon me for years. Such I am, and such, I say, have you made me. As for you, kind-hearted woman, there was nothing in this bottle but pure water. The interval of reason returned this day, and having remembered glimpses of our conversation, I came to apologize to you, and to explain the nature of my unhappy distemper, and to beg a little bread, which I have not tasted for two days. I at times conceive myself attended by an evil spirit shaped out by a guilty conscience, and this is the only familiar which attends me, and by it I have been dogged into madness through every turning of life. Whilst it lasts I am subject to spasms and convulsive starts which are exceedingly painful. The lump on my back is the robe I wore when innocent in my peaceful convent."

The intensity of general interest was now transferred to Father Philip; every face was turned towards him, but he cared not. A solemn stillness yet prevailed among all present. From the moment she spoke, her eye drew his with the power of a basilisk. His pale face became like marble, not a muscle moved; and when she ceased speaking, his blood-shot eyes were still fixed upon her countenance with a gloomy calmness like that which precedes a tempest. They stood before each other, dreadful counterparts in guilt, for truly his spirit was as dark as hers.

At length he glanced angrily around him; —"Well," said he, "what is it now, ye poor infatuated wretches, to trust in the sanctity *of man?* Learn from me to place the same confidence *in God* which you place in his *guilty creatures*, and you will not lean on a broken reed. Father O'Rourke, you, too, witness my disgrace, but not my punishment. It is pleasant, no doubt, to have a topic for conversation at your Conferences; enjoy it. As for you, Margaret, if society lessen misery, we may be less miserable. But the band of your order, and the remembrance of your vow is on your forehead, like the mark of Cain—tear it off, and let it not blast a man who is the victim of prejudice still, nay of superstition, as well as of guilt; tear it from my sight." His eyes kindled fearfully, as he attempted to pull it away by force.

She calmly took it off, and he immediately tore it into pieces, and stamped upon the fragments as he flung them on the ground.

"Come," said the despairing man—"come—there is a shelter for you, *but no peace!*—food, and drink, and raiment, but *no peace!*—NO PEACE!" As he uttered these words, in a voice that sank to its deepest pitch, he took her hand, and they both departed to his own residence.

The amazement and horror of those who were assembled in Bartley's house cannot be described. Our readers may be assured that they deepened in character as they spread through the parish. An undefined fear of this mysterious pair seized upon the people, for their images were associated in their minds with darkness and crime, and supernatural communion. The departing words of Father Philip rang in their ears: they trembled, and devoutly crossed themselves, as fancy again repeated the awful exclamation of the priest—"No peace! no peace!"

When Father Philip and his unhappy associate went home, he instantly made her a surrender of his small property; but with difficulty did he command sufficient calmness to accomplish even this. He was distracted—his blood seemed to have been turned to fire—he clenched his hands, and he gnashed his teeth, and exhibited the wildest symptoms of madness. About ten o'clock he desired fuel for a large fire to be brought into the kitchen, and got a strong cord, which he coiled and threw carelessly on the table. The family were then ordered to bed. About eleven they were all asleep; and at the solemn hour of twelve he heaped additional fuel upon the living turf, until the blaze shone with scorching light upon everything around. Dark and desolating was the tempest within him, as he paced, with agitated steps, before the crackling fire.

"She is risen!" he exclaimed—"the spectre of all my crimes is risen to haunt me through life! I *am* a murderer—yet she lives, and my guilt is not the less! The stamp of eternal infamy is upon me—the finger of scorn will mark me out—the tongue of reproach will sting me like that of a serpent—the deadly touch of shame will cover me like a leper—the laws of society will crush the murderer, not the less that his wickedness in blood has miscarried: after that comes the black and terrible tribunal of the Almighty's vengeance—of his fiery indignation! Hush!—What sounds are those? They deepen—they deepen! Is it thunder? It cannot be the crackling of the blaze! It *is* thunder!—but it speaks only to *my* ear! Hush!—Great God, there is a change in my voice! It is hollow and supernatural! Could a change have come over me? Am I living? Could I have——Hah!—Could I have departed? and am I now at length given over to the worm that never

dies? If it be at my heart, I may feel it. God!—I am damned! Here is a viper twined about my limbs trying to dart its fangs into my heart! Hah!—there are feet pacing in the room, too, and I hear voices! I am surrounded by evil spirits! Who's there?—What are you?—Speak!—They are silent!—There is no answer! Again comes the thunder! But perchance this is not my place of punishment, and I will try to leave these horrible spirits!"

He opened the door, and passed out into a small green field that lay behind the house. The night was calm, and the silence profound as death. Not a cloud obscured the heavens;—the light of the moon fell upon the stillness of the scene around him, with all the touching beauty of a moonlit midnight in summer. Here he paused a moment, felt his brow, then his heart, the palpitations of which fell audibly upon his ear. He became somewhat cooler; the images of madness which had swept through his stormy brain disappeared, and were succeeded by a lethargic vacancy of thought, which almost deprived him of the consciousness of his own identity. From the green field he descended mechanically to a little glen which opened beside it. It was one of those delightful spots to which the heart clingeth. Its sloping sides were clothed with patches of wood, on the leaves of which the moonlight glanced with a soft lustre, rendered more beautiful by their stillness. That side on which the light could not fall, lay in deep shadow, which occasionally gave to the rocks and small projecting precipices an appearance of monstrous and unnatural life. Having passed through the tangled mazes of the glen, he at length reached its bottom, along which ran a brook, such as in the description of the poet,—

> ———"In the leafy month of June,
> Unto the sleeping woods all night,
> Singeth a quiet tune."

Here he stood, and looked upon the green winding margin of the streamlet—but its song he heard not. With the workings of a guilty conscience, the beautiful in nature can have no association. He looked up the glen, but its picturesque windings, soft vistas, and wild underwood mingling with gray rocks and taller trees, all mellowed by the moonbeams, had no charms for him. He maintained a profound silence—but it was not the silence of peace or reflection. He endeavored to recall the scenes of the past day, but could not bring them back to his memory. Even the fiery tide of thought, which, like burning lava, scared his brain a few moments before, was now cold and hardened. He could remember nothing. The convulsion of his mind was over, and his faculties were impotent and collapsed.

In this state he unconsciously retraced his steps, and had again reached the paddock adjoining his house, where, as he thought, the figure of his paramour stood before him. In a moment his former paroxysm returned, and with it the gloomy images of a guilty mind, charged with the extravagant horrors of brain-stricken madness.

"What!" he exclaimed, "the band still on your forehead! Tear it off!"

He caught at the form as he spoke, but there was no resistance to his grasp. On looking again towards the spot it had ceased to be visible. The storm within him arose once more; he rushed into the kitchen, where the fire blazed out with fiercer heat; again he imagined that the thunder came to his ears, but the thunderings which he heard were only the voice of conscience. Again his own footsteps and his voice sounded in his fancy as the footsteps and voices of fiends, with which his imagination peopled the room. His state and his existence seemed to him a confused and troubled dream; he tore his hair—threw it on the table—and immediately started back with a hollow groan; for his locks, which but a few hours before had been as black as a raven's wing, were now white as snow!

On discovering this, he gave a low but frantic laugh. "Ha, ha, ha!" he exclaimed; "here is another mark—here is food for despair. Silently, but surely, did the hand of God work this, as proof that I am hopeless! But I will bear it; I will bear the sight! I now feel myself a man blasted by the eye of God Himself! Ha, ha, ha! Food for despair! Food for despair!"

Immediately he passed into his own room, and approaching the looking-glass beheld a sight calculated to move a statue. His hair had become literally white, but the shades of his dark complexion, now distorted by terror and madness, flitted, as his features worked under the influence of his tremendous passions, into an expression so frightful, that deep fear came over himself. He snatched one of his razors, and fled from the glass to the kitchen. He looked upon the fire, and saw the white ashes lying around its edge.

"Ha!" said he, "the light is come! I see the sign. I am directed, and I will follow it. There is yet ONE hope. The immolation! I shall be saved, yet so as by fire. It is for this my hair has become white;—the sublime warning for my self-sacrifice! The color of ashes!—white—white! It is so!—I will sacrifice my body in material fire, to save my soul from that which is eternal!

But I had anticipated the sign. The self-sacrifice is accepted!"*

We must here draw a veil over that which ensued, as the description of it would be both unnatural and revolting. Let it be sufficient to say, that the next morning he was found burned to a cinder, with the exception of his feet and legs, which remained as monuments of, perhaps, the most dreadful suicide that ever was committed by man. His razor, too, was found bloody, and several clots of gore were discovered about the hearth; from which circumstances it was plain that he had reduced his strength so much by loss of blood, that when he committed himself to the flames, he was unable, even had he been willing, to avoid the fiery and awful sacrifice of which he made himself the victim. If anything could deepen the the impression of fear and awe, already so general among the people, it was the unparalleled nature of his death. Its circumstances are yet remembered in the parish and county wherein it occurred—*for it is no fiction*, gentle reader! and the titular bishop who then presided over the diocese, declared, that while he lived, no person bearing the unhappy man's name should ever be admitted to the clerical order.

The shock produced by his death struck the miserable woman into the utter darkness of settled derangement. She survived him some years, but wandered about through the province, still, according to the superstitious belief of the people, tormented by the terrible enmity of the *Lunhan Shee*.

* As the reader may be disposed to consider the nature of the priest's death an unjustifiable stretch of fiction, I have only to say in reply, that it is no fiction at all. It is not, I believe, more than forty, or perhaps fifty, years since a priest committed his body to the flames, for the purpose of saving his soul by an incrematory sacrifice. The object of the suicide being founded on the superstitious belief, that a priest guilty of great crimes possesses the privilege of securing salvation by self-sacrifice. We have heard two or three legends among the people in which this principle predominated. The outline of one of these, called "The Young Priest and Brian Braar," was as follows:—

A young priest on his way to the College of Valladolid, in Spain, was benighted; but found a lodging in a small inn on the roadside. Here he was tempted by a young maiden of great beauty, who, in the moment of his weakness, extorted from him a bond signed with his blood, binding himself to her forever. She turned out to be an evil spirit: and the young priest proceeded to Valladolid with a heavy heart, confessed his crime to the Superior, who sent him to the Pope, who sent him to a Friar in the County of Armagh, called Brian Braar, who sent him to the devil. The devil, on the strength of Brian Braar's letter, gave him a warm reception, held a cabinet council immediately, and laid the despatch before his colleagues, who agreed that the claimant should get back his bond from the brimstone lady who had inveigled him. She, however, obstinately refused to surrender it, and stood upon her bond, until threatened with being thrown three times into Brian Braar's furnace. This tamed her: the man got his bond, and returned to Brian Braar on earth. Now Brian Braar had for three years past abandoned God, and taken to the study of magic with the devil; a circumstance which accounts for his influence below. The young priest, having possessed himself of his bond, went to Lough Derg to wash away his sins; and Brian Braar, having also become penitent, the two worthies accompanied each other to the lake. On entering the boat, however, to cross over to the island, such a storm arose as drove them back. Brian assured his companion that he himself was the cause of it.

"There is now," said he, "but one more chance *for me*; and we must have recourse to it." He then returned homewards, and both had reached a hill-side near Bryan's house, when the latter desired the young priest to remain there a few minutes, and he would return to him; which he did with a hatchet in his hand.

"Now," said he, "you must cut me into four quarters, and mince my body into small bits, then cast them into the air, and let them go with the wind."

The priest, after much entreaty, complied with his wishes, and returned to Lough Derg, where he afterwards lived twelve years upon one meal of bread and water *per diem*. Having thus purified himself, he returned home; but, on passing the hill where he had minced the Friar, he was astonished to see the same man celebrating mass, attended by a very penitential-looking congregation of spirits.

"Ah," said Brian Braar, when mass was over, "you are now a happy man. With regard to my state *for the voluntary sacrifice I have made of myself, I am to be saved*; but I must remain on this mountain until the Day of Judgment." So saying, he disappeared.

There is little to be said about the superstition of the *Lunhan Shee*, except that it existed as we have drawn it, and that it is now fading fast away. There is also something appropriate in associating the heroine of this little story with the being called the *Lunhan Shee*, because, setting the superstition aside, any female who fell into her crime was called *Lunhan Shee*. *Lunhan Shee an Sogarth* signifies a priest's paramour, or, as the country people say, "Miss." Both terms have now nearly become obsolete.

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"WHO'S THEEK? WHAT ARE YOU? SPEAK!"—*Lianhan Shee*, p. 355, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

GOING TO MAYNOOTH.

Young Denis O'Shaughnessy was old Denis's son; and old Denis, like many great men before him, was the son of his father and mother in particular, and a long line of respectable ancestors in general. He was, moreover, a great historian, a perplexing controversialist, deeply read in Dr. Gallagher and Pastorini, and equally profound in the history of Harry the Eighth, and Luther's partnership with the devil. Denis was a tall man, who, from his peculiar appearance, and the nature of his dress, a light drab-colored frieze, was nicknamed the Walking Pigeon-house; and truly, on seeing him at a distance, a man might naturally enough hit upon a worse comparison. He was quite straight, carried both his arms hanging by his sides, motionless and at their full length, like the pendulums of a clock that has ceased going. In his head, neck, and chest there was no muscular action visible; he walked, in fact, as if a milk-pail were upon his crown, or as if a single nod of his would put the planets out of order. But the principal cause of the similarity lay in his roundness, which resembled that of a pump, running to a point, or the pigeon-house aforesaid, which is still better.

Denis, though a large man, was but a small farmer, for he rented only eighteen acres of good land. His family, however, like himself, was large, consisting of thirteen children, among whom Denis Junior stood pre-eminent. Like old Denis, he was exceedingly long-winded in argument, pedantic as the schoolmaster who taught him, and capable of taking a very comprehensive grasp of any tangible subject.

Young Denis's display of controversial talents was so remarkably precocious, that he controverted his father's statements upon all possible subjects, with a freedom from embarrassment which promised well for that most distinguished trait in a controversialist—hardihood of countenance. This delighted old Denis to the finger ends.

"Dinny, if he's spared," he would say, "will be a credit to us all yet. The sorra one of him but's as manly as anything, and as long-headed as a four-footed baste, so he is! Nothing daunts or dashes him, or puts him to an amplush: but he'll look you in the face so stout an' cute, an' never redden or stumble, whether he's right or wrong, that it does one's heart good to see him. Then he has such a luning to it, you see, that the crathur 'ud ground an argument on anything, thin draw it out to a norration an' make it as clear as rock-water, besides incensing you so well into the rason of the thing, that Father Finnerty himself 'ud hardly do it betther from the althar."

The highest object of an Irish peasant's ambition is to see his son a priest. Whenever a farmer happens to have a large family, he usually destines one of them for the church, if his circumstances are at all such as can enable him to afford the boy a proper education. This youth becomes the centre in which all the affections of the family meet. He is cherished, humored in all his caprices, indulged in his boyish predilections, and raised over the heads of his brothers, independently of all personal or relative merit in himself. The consequence is, that he gradually became self-willed, proud, and arrogant, often to an offensive degree; but all this is frequently mixed up with a lofty bombast, and an under-current of strong disguised affection, that render his early life remarkably ludicrous and amusing. Indeed, the pranks of pedantry, the pretensions to knowledge, and the humor with which it is mostly displayed, render these scions of divinity, in their intercourse with the people until the period of preparatory education is completed, the most interesting and comical class, perhaps, to be found in the kingdom. Of these learned priestlings young Denis was undoubtedly a first-rate specimen. His father, a man of no education, was, nevertheless, as profound and unfathomable upon his favorite subjects as a philosopher; but this profundity raised him mightily in the opinion of the people, who admired him the more the less they understood him.

Now old Denis was determined that young Denis should tread in his own footsteps; and, sooth to say, young Denis possessed as bright a talent for the dark and mysterious as the father himself. No sooner had the son commenced Latin with the intention of adorning the church, than the father put him in training for controversy. For a considerable time the laurels were uniformly borne away by the veteran: but what will not learning do? Ere long the son got as far as syntax, about which time the father began to lose ground, in consequence of some ugly quotations which the son threw into his gizzard, and which unfortunately stuck there. By and by the father receded more and more, as the son advanced in his Latin and Greek, until, at length, the encounters were only re-

sorted to for the purpose of showing off the son.

When young Denis had reached the age of sixteen or seventeen, he was looked upon by his father and his family, as well as by all their relations in general, as a prodigy. It was amusing to witness the delight with which the worthy man would call upon his son to exhibit his talents, a call to which the son instantly attended. This was usually done by commencing a mock controversy, for the gratification of some neighbor to whom the father was anxious to prove the great talents of his son. When old Denis got the young *sogarth* fairly in motion, he gently drew himself out of the dispute, but continued a running comment upon the son's erudition, pointed out his good things, and occasionally resumed the posture of the controversialist to reinspirit the boy if he appeared to flag.

"Dinny, abouchal, will you come up till Phadrick Murray hears you argnin' Scripthur wid myself, Dinny. Now, Phadrick, listen, but keep your tongue sayin' nothin'; just lave us to ourselves. Come up, Dinny, till you have a hate at arguin' wid myself."

"Fadher, I condimnate you at once—I condimnate you as being a most ungrammatical ould man, an' not fit to argue wid any one that knows Murray's English Grammar, an' more espaciously the three concords of Lily's Latin one; that is the cognation between the nominative case and the verb, the consanguinity between the substantive and the adjective, and the blood-relationship that irritates between the relative and the antecedent."

"I tould you, Phadrick!! There's the boy that can rattle off the high English, and the larned Latin, jist as if he was born wid an English Dictionary in one cheek, a Latin Neksuggawn in the other, an Doctor Gallagher's Irish Sermons nately on the top of his tongue between the two."

"Fadher, but that unfortunately I am afflicted wid modesty, I'd blush *crocus* for your ignorance, as Virgil asserts in his Bucolics, *ut Virgilius ait in Bucolicis;* and as Horatius, a book that I'm well acquainted wid, says in another place, *Hac pertinent verba,* says he, *commodandi, comparandi, dandi, promittendi, solvendi imperandi nuntiandi, fidendi, obsequendi, minandi irascendi, et iis contraria.*"

"That's a good boy, Dinny; but why would you blush for *my* ignorance, avourneen? Take care of yourself now an' spake deep, for I'll outargue you at the heel o' the hunt, cute as you are."

"Why do I blush for your ignorance, is it? why thin, I'm sure I have sound rasons for it; only think of the gross persivarance wid which you call that larned work, the Lexicon in Greek, a neck-suggan. Fadher, never attimpt to argue or display your ignorance wid me again. But, moreover, I can probate you to be an ungrammatical man from your own *modus* of argument."

"Go an, avourneen. Phadrick!!"

"I'm listenin'. The sorra's no match for his cuteness, an' one's puzzled to think where he can get it all."

"Why, you don't know at all what I could do by larnin'. It would be no throuble to me to divide myself into two halves, an' argue the one agin the other."

"You would, in throth, Dinny."

"Ay, father, or cut myself acrass, an' dispute my head, maybe, agin my heels."

"Throth, would you!"

"Or practise logic wid my right hand, and bate that agin wid my left."

"The sarra lie in it."

"Or read the Greek Tistament wid my right eye, an thranslate it at the same time wid my left, according to the Greek an' English sides of my face, wid my tongue constrein' into Irish, unknownst to both o' them."

"Why, Denis, he must have a head like a bell to be able to get into things."

"Throth an' he has that, an' 'ill make a noise in conthroversy yet, if he lives. Now, Dinny, let us have a hate at histhory."

"A hate at histhory?—wid all my heart; but before we begin, I tell you that I'll con found you precipitately; for you see, if you bate me in the English, I'll scarify you wid Latin, and give you a bang or two of Greek into the bargain. Och! I wish you'd hear the sackin' I gave Tom Reilly the other day; rubbed him down, as the masther says, wid a Greek towel, an' whenever I complimented him with the loan of a cut on the head, I always gave him a plaster of Latin to heal it; but the sorra worse healin' flesh in the world than Tom's is for the Latin, so I bruised a few Greek roots and laid them to his *caput* so nate, that you'd laugh to see him. Well is it histhory we are to begin wid? If it is, come on—advance. I'm ready for you—in protection—wid my guards up."

"Ha, ha, ha! Well, if he isn't the drollest crathur, an' so cute! But now for the *histhory.* Can you prove to me, upon a clear foundation, the differ atween black an' white, or prove that Phadrick Murray here, long life to him, is an ass? Now, Phadrick, listen, for you must decide betune us."

"Orra, have you no other larnin' than that to argue upon? Sure if you call upon me to decide, I must give it agin Dinny. Why, my judgment won't be worth a hap'orth, if he makes an ass of me!"

"What matther how you decide, man alive, if he proves you to be one; sure that's

all we want. Never heed shakin' your head—listen an' it will be well worth your while. Why, man, you'll know more nor you ever knew or suspected before, when he proves you to be an ass."

"In the first place, fadher, you're ungrammatical in one word; instead of sayin' 'prove,' always say probate, or probe; the word is descinded, that is, the ancisthor of it, is *probo*, a deep Greek word—*probo, probas, prob-ass*, that is to say, I'm to *probe* Phadrick here to be an *ass*. Now, do you see how pat I brought that in? That's the way, Phadrick, I chastise my fadher with the languages."

"In throth it is; go an avick. Phadrick!"

"I'm listenin'."

"Phadrick, do you know the differ atween black an' white?"

"Atween black an' white? Hut, gorsoon, to be sure I do."

"Well, an' what might it be, Phadrick, my larned Athiop? What might it be, I negotiate?"

"Why, thin, the differ atween them is this, Dinny, that black is—let me see—why—that black is *not* red—nor yallow—nor brown—nor green—nor purple—not cutbeard—nor a heather color—nor a grogram"——

"Nor a white?"

"Surely, Dinny, not a white, abouchal; don't think to come over me that way."

"But I want to know what color it *is*, most larned sager."

"All rasonable, Dinny, Why, thin, black is—let me see—hut, death alive!—it's—a—a—why, it's black, an' that's all I can say about it; yes, faix, I can—black is the color of Father Curtis's coat."

"An' what color is that, Phadrick?"

"Why, it's black, to be sure."

"Well, now, what color is white, Phadrick?"

"Why, it's a snow-color: for all the world the color of snow."

"White is?"

"Ay, is it."

"The dear help your head, Phadrick, if that's all you know about snow. In England, man, snow is an Oxford gray, an' in Scotland, a pepper an' salt, an' sometimes a cutbeard, when they get a hard winther. I found that much in the Greek, any way, Phadrick. Thry agin, you imigrant, I'll give you another chance—what color is white?"

"Why, thin, it's—white—an' nothin' else. The sorra one but you'd puzzle a saint wid your long-headed screwtations from books."

"So, Phadrick, your preamble is, that white is white, an' black is black?"

"Asy, avick, I said, sure enough, that white is white; but the black I deny—I said it was the color of Father Curtis's black coat."

"Oh, you barbarian of the world, how I scorn your profundity an' emotions! You're a disgrace to the human sex by your superciliousness of knowledge, an' your various quotations of ignorance. *Ignorantia*, Phadrick, is your date an' superscription. Now, stretch out your ears, till I probate, or probe to you the differ atween black an' white."

"Phadrick!!" said the father.

"I'm listenin'."

"Now, Phadrick, here's the griddle, an' here's a clane plate. Do you see them here beside one another?"

"I'm lookin' at them."

"Now, shut your eyes."

"Is that *your* way, Denis, of judgin' colors?"

"Shut your eyes, I say, till I give you *ocular* demonstration of the differ atween these two respectable colors."

"Well, they're shut."

"An' keep them so. Now, what differ do you *see* atween them?"

"The sorra taste, man alive; I never *seen* anything in my whole life so clearly of a color as they are both this minute."

"Don't you see now, Phadrick, that there's not the smallest taste o' differ in them, an' that's accordin' to Euclid."

"Sure enough, I see the divil a taste o' differ atween the two."

"Well, Phadrick, that's the point settled. There's no discrimination at all atween black an' white. They're both of the same color—so long as you keep your eyes shut."

"But if a man happens to open his eyes, Dinny?"

"He has no *right* to open them, Phadrick, if he wants to prove the truth of a thing. I should have said *probe*—but it does not significate."

"The heavens mark you to grace, Dinny. You did that in brave style. Phadrick, ahagur, he'll make the darlin' of an arguer whin he gets the robes an him."

"I don't deny that; he'll be aquil to the best o' thim: still, Denis, I'd rather, whin I want to pronounce upon colors, that he'd let me keep my eyes open."

"Ay, but he did it out o' the books, man alive; an' there's no goin' beyant thim. Sure he could prove it out of the Divinity, if you went to that. An' what is still more, he could, by shuttin' your eyes, in the same way prove black to be white, an' white black, jist as asy."

"Surely myself doesn't doubt it. I suppose, by shuttin' my eyes, the same lad could prove anything to me."

"But, Dinny, avourneen, you didn't prove

Phadrick to be an ass yit. Will you do that by histhory, too, Dinny, or by the norrations of Illocution?"

"Father, I'm surprised at your gross imperception. Why, man, if you were not a *rara avis* of somnolency, a man of most frolicsome determinations, you'd be able to see that I've proved Phadrick to be an ass already."

"Throth, I deny that you did; there wasn't a word about my bein' an ass, in the last discoorse. It was all upon the differ atween black an' white."

"Oh, how I scorn your gravity, man! *Ignorantia*, as I said, is your date an' superscription; an' when you die, you ought to go an' engage a stone-cutter to carve you a headstone, an', make him write on it, *Hic jacet Ignorantius Redivivus*. An' the translation of that is, accordin' to Publius Virgilius Maro—'here lies a quadruped who didn't know the differ atween black an' white.'"

"Well, by the livin', Dinny, I dunna where you get all this deep readin'."

"Sure he gets it all in the Dixonary."

"Bedad, that Dixonary must be a fine book entirely, to thim that undherstand it."

"But, Dinny, will you tell Phadrick the Case of Conscience atween Barny Branagan's two goats an' Parra Ghastha's mare?"

"Fadher, if you were a grammarian, I'd castigate your incompatability as it desarves—I'd lay the scourge o' syntax upon you, as no man ever got it since the invintion o' the nine parts of speech. By what rule of logic can you say that aither Barny Branagan's goats or Parra Ghastha's mare had a conscience? I tell you it wasn't they had the conscience, but the divine who decided the difficulty. Phadrick, lie down till I illusthrate."

"How is that, Dinny? I can hear you sittin'."

"Lie down, you reptile, or I shall decline the narration altogether."

"Arra, lie down, Phadrick; sure he only wants to show you the rason o' the thing."

"Well, well; I'm down. Now Dinny, don't let your feet be too larned, if you plase."

"Silence!—*taceto!* you reptile. Now, Phadrick, here, on this side o' you, lies Barny Branagan's field; an' there, on that side, lies a field of Parra Ghastha's; you're the ditch o' mud betuxt them."

"The ditch o' mud! Faix that's dacent!"

"Now here, on Barny Branagan's side, feeds Parra Ghastha's mare; an' there, on Parra Ghastha's side, feed Barny Branagan's goats. Do you comprehend? Do you insinuate?"

"I do—I do. Death alive! there's no use in punchin' my sides wid your feet that way."

"Well, get up now an' set your ears."

"Now listen to him, Phadrick!"

"It was one night in winter, when all nature shone in the nocturnal beauty of tenebrosity: the sun had set about three hours before; an', accordin' to the best logicians, there was a dearth of light. It's the general opinion of philosophers—that is, of the soundest o' them—that when the sun is down the moon an' stars are usually up; an' so they were on the night that I'm narratin' about. The moon was, wid great respect to her character, night-walkin' in the sky; and the stars vegetated in celestial genuflexion around her. Nature, Phadrick, was in great state; the earth was undher our feet, an' the sky above us. The frost, too, was hard, Phadrick, the air keen, an' the grass tendher. All things were enrobed wid verisimilitude an' scrupulosity. In this manner was the terraqueous part of our system, when Parra Ghastha's mare, after havin' taken a cowld collation on Barny Branagan's grass, was returnin' to her master's side o' the merin; an' Barny Branagan's goats, havin' tasted the sweets of Parra Ghastha's cabbages, were on their way acrass the said merin to their own side. Now it so happened that they met exactly at a narrow gap in the ditch behind Rosha Halpin's house. The goats, bein' coupled together, got one on each side of the rift, wid the rope that coupled them extended acrass it. The mare stood in the middle of it, so that the goats were in the way of the mare, an' the mare in the way of the goats. In the meantime they surveyed one another wid great composure, but had neither of them the politeness to stir, until Rosha Halpin came suddenly out, an' emptied a vessel of untransparent wather into the ditch. The mare, who must have been an animal endowed wid great sensibility of soul, stooped her head suddenly at the noise; an' the goats, who were equally sentimental, gave a start from nervishness. The mare, on raisin' her head, came in contact wid the cord that united the goats; an' the goats, havin' lost their commandin' position, came in contact wid the neck o' the mare. *Quid multis?* They pulled an' she pulled, an' she pulled an' they pulled, until at length the mare was compelled to practise the virtue of resignation in the ditch, wid the goats about her neck. She died by suspinsion; but the mettlesome ould crathur, wid a love of justice that did her honor, hanged the goats in requital; for they departed this vale of tears on the mountain side along wid her, so that they had the satisfaction of dyin' a social death together.—Now, Phadrick, you quad-

ruped, the case of conscience is, whether Parra Ghastha has a right to make restitution to Barny Branagan for the loss of his goats, or Barny Branagan to Parra Ghastha for the loss of his mare?"

"Bedad, that's a puzzler!"

"Isn't it, Phadrick? But wait till you hear how he'll clear it up! Do it for Phadrick, Dimy."

"Yis, Phadrick, I'll illusthrate your intellects by divinity. You see, Phadrick, you're to suppose me to be in the chair, as confessor. Very well, — or *valde*, in the larned languages—Parra Ghastha comes to confess to me, an' tells me that Barny Branagan wants to be paid for his goats. I tell him it's a disputed point, an that the price o' the *goats* must go to the church. On the other hand, Barny Branagan tells me that Parra Ghastha wishes to be paid for his mare. I say again, it's a disputed point, an' that the price o' the *mare* must go to the church—the amount of the proceeds to be applied in prayer towards the benefit of the parties, in the first instance, an' of the faithful in general afterwards."

"Phadrick!!!"

"Oh, that I may never, but he bates the globe!"

Denny's character is a very common one in the remote parts of Ireland, where knowledge is novelty, and where the slightest tinge of learning is looked upon with such reverence and admiration, as can be properly understood only by those who have an opportunity of witnessing it. Indeed, few circumstances prove the great moral influence which the Irish priesthood possesses over the common people more forcibly, than the extraordinary respect paid by the latter to such as are designed for the "mission." The moment the determination is made, an incipient sanctity begins, as it were, to consecrate the young priest; and a high opinion of his learning and talents to be entertained, no matter how dull he may be so far as honest nature is concerned. Whatever he says is sure to have some hidden meaning in it, that would be highly edifying, if they themselves understood it. But their own humility comes in here to prop up his talents; and whatsoever perplexity there may be in the sense of what he utters, is immediately attributed to learning altogether beyond *their* depth.

Love of learning is a conspicuous principle in an Irish peasant; and in no instance is it seen to greater advantage, than when the object of it appears in the "makins of a priest." Among all a peasant's good and evil qualities, this is not the least amiable. How his eye will dance in his head with pride, when the young priest thunders out a line of Virgil or Homer, a sentence from Cicero, or a rule from Syntax! And with what complacency and affection will the father and relations of such a person, when sitting during a winter evening about the hearth, demand from him a translation of what he repeats, or a grammatical analysis, in which he must show the dependencies and relations of word upon word—the concord, the verb, the mood, the gender, and the case; into every one and all of which the learned youth enters with an air of oracular importance, and a pollysyllabicism of language that fails not in confounding them with astonishment and edification. Neither does Paddy confine himself to Latin or Greek, for his curiosity in hearing a little upon all known branches of human learning is boundless. When a lad is *designed* for the priesthood, he is, as if by a species of intuition, supposed to know more or less of everything—astronomy, fluxions, Hebrew, Arabic, and the black art, are subjects upon which he is frequently expected to dilate; and vanity scruples not, under the protection of their ignorance, to lead the crudite youth through what they believe to be the highest regions of imagination, or the profoundest depths of science and philosophy.

It is, indeed, in those brilliant moments, when the young priest is launching out in full glory upon some topic of which he knows not a syllable, that it would be a learned luxury to catch him. These flights, however, are very pardonable, when we consider the importance they give him in the eyes of his friends, and reflect upon that lofty and contemptuous pride, and those delectable sensations which the appearance of superior knowledge gives to the pedant, whether raw or trained, high or low, in this profession or the other. It matters little that such a feeling dilates the vanity in proportion to the absence of real knowledge or good sense: it is not real, but affected knowledge, we are writing about. Pride is confined to no condition; nor is the juvenile pedantry of a youth upon the hob of an Irish chimney-corner much different from the pride which sits upon the brow of a worthy Lord Mayor, freshly knighted, lolling with strained dignity beside his honorable brother, the mace, during a city procession; or of a Lady Mayoress, when she reads upon a dead wall her own name flaming in yellow capitals, at the head of a subscription ball; or, what is better still, the contemptuous glance which, while about to open the said ball, her ladyship throws at that poor creature—the Sheriff's wife.

In addition, however, to the enjoyment of

this assumption of profound learning which characterizes the young priest, a different spirit, considerably more practical, often induces him to hook in other motives. The learning of Denis O'Shaughnessy, for instance, blazed with peculiar lustre whenever he felt himself out at elbows; for the logic with which he was able to prove the connection between his erudition and a woollen-draper's shop, was, like the ignorance of those who are to be saved, invincible. Whenever his father considered a display of the son's powers in controversy to be *capital*, Denis, who knew the *mollia tempora fandi*, applied to him for a hat. Whenever he drew a heretic, as a person who will be found hereafter without the wedding garment, and clinched the argument with half a dozen quotations from syntax or Greek grammar, he uniformly came down upon the father for a coat, the cloth of which was finer in proportion to the web of logic he wove during the disputation. Whenever he seated himself in the chair of rhetoric, or gave an edifying homily on prayer, with such eloquence as rendered the father's admiration altogether inexpressible, he applied for a pair of small-clothes; and if, in the excursiveness of his vigorous imagination he travelled anywhere beyond the bounds of common sense, he was certain to secure a pair of shoes.

This, of course, did not escape the satirical observation of the neighbors, who commented upon the circumstance with that good humor which renders their mother-wit so pleasant and spicy. The scenes where many of these displays took place, varied according to the occurrence of those usual incidents which diversify country life. Sometimes old Denis's hearth was selected; at others, a neighboring wakehouse, and not unfrequently the chapel-green, where, surrounded by a crowd of eager listeners, the young priest and his Latin would succeed in throwing the hedge-schoolmaster and his problems completely into the shade.

The father's pride, on these occasions, always prompted him to become the aggressor; but he only did this to draw out the talents of his son to more advantage. Never was man foiled with less regret than old Denis; nor did ever man more bitterly repent those little touches of vanity, which sometimes induced him, when an opportunity of prostrating Denny arrived, to show what he *could* have done, by giving the son's argument an unexpected brainblow. These accidental defeats always brought the son more than he lost by them; for the father usually made him a peace-offering in the shape of pocket-money, books, or clothes. The great amusement of the peasantry around the chapel-green of a Sunday, was to hear the father and son engaged in argument; and so simple was the character of both, that their acquaintances declared they could know by the state of young Denis's coat, and the swaggering grasp with which old Denis held his staff, that an encounter was about to take place.

"Young O'Shaughnessy's gettin' bare," they would observe; "there'll be hard arguin' till he gets the clothes. He's puttin' in for a black coat now, he's so grave. Go on, Denny," they would say again: "more power an' a dacenter sleeve to your elbow. Stick to him!—very good!—that's a clincher!—you're gone beyond the skirts, Denny!—let him pocket that larnin'. Dinis, you're bate, body and slaves!*—you're no match for the gorsoon, Dinis. Good agin, abouchal!—that's puttin' the collar on it!"—And so on, varying the phrase according to the whim of the moment.

Nothing gave the father greater pleasure than these observations, although the affected earnestness with which he encountered the son, and his pretended indignation at those who affirmed him to have been beaten, were highly amusing to the bystanders.

Such discussions were considered highly edifying and instructive by them, and they were sometimes at a loss whether to give the palm of ingenuity and eloquence to the father or Denny. The reader, however, must not suppose that the contemptuous expressions scattered over Denny's rhetorical flourishes, when discussing these points with his father, implied want of reverence or affection—far from it. On the contrary, the father always liked him the better for them, inasmuch as they proved Denny's vast superiority over himself. They were, therefore, only the licenses and embellishments of discussion, tolerated and encouraged by him to whom they were applied.

Denny at length shot up to the stature of a young man, probably about eighteen; and during the two last years of his school studies he presented a considerable, if not a decidedly marked change in his character and external appearance. His pride became more haughty, and the consciousness of his learning, and of the influence annexed to the profession for which he was intended, put itself forth with less discussion, but more energy. His manners and attitude became constrained; the expression of his face began to darken, and to mould itself into a stiff, gloomy formality, that was strongly calculated to conceal the natural traits of his character. His dress, too, had undergone a

* Altogether—completely.

great improvement; for instead of wearing shop blue or brown, he wore good black broad-cloth, had a watch in his fob, a respectable hat, and finer linen.

This change, now necessary in consequence of his semiclerical character, influenced him through every relation of life. His nearest friends, whilst their pride in him increased, fell off to a more respectful distance; and his deportment, so far from being that of a good-humored Bobadil of polemics and pedantry upon all known and unknown subjects, became silent and solemn, chequered only during the moments of family conviviality by an excessive flow of that pleasant and still incomprehensible learning for the possession of which he had so honestly earned himself a character. Much of his pedantry was now lopped off, it is true, because the pride of his station prevented him from entering into discussions with the people. It cost him, however, some trouble to overcome his early tendencies; nor, after all, can it be affirmed that he altogether succeeded in eradicating them. Many a grave shrug, and solemn wink, and formal nod, had he to answer for, when his foot touched the debatable land of controversy. Though contrary to the keeping and dignity of his position in life, yet did honest Demy then get desperately significant, and his face amazingly argumentative. Many a pretender has he fairly annihilated by a single smile of contempt that contained more logic than a long argument from another man. In fact, the whole host of rhetorical figures seemed breaking out of his face. By a solitary glance of his eye he could look a man into a dilemma, and practise a *sorites*, or a home-made syllogism, by the various shiftings of his countenance, as clearly as if he had risen to the full flight of his former bombast. He had, in short, a *prima facie* disposition to controversy; his nose was set upon his face in a kind of firm defiance against infidels, heretics, and excommunicated persons; and when it curled with contempt of another, or with pride in the power that slumbered in itself, it seemed to give the face from which it projected, and the world at large, the assurance of a controversialist. Nor did his negative talents rest here: a twist of his mouth to the right or left ear, was nicely shaded away into a negative or affirmative, according as he intended it should be taken; and when he used his pocket-handkerchief, he was certain, though without uttering a syllable, to silence his opponent, so contemptuously did his intonations rout the arguments brought against him. The significance and force of all these was heightened by the mystery in which they were wrapped; for whenever unbending decorum constrained him to decline the challenges of the ignorant, with whom discussion would now be degradation, what could he do to soothe his vanity, except, as the poet says, with folded arms and a shaking of the head to exclaim—"*Well, well we know;* or, *if we could, and if we would;* or, *if we list to speak;* or, *there be an if they might;*" which left the imaginations of his hearers at liberty to conceive more fully of those powers which his modesty declined exhibiting. For some time before he got absolutely and finally into black, even his father gave up his accustomed argument in despair. The son had become an adept in all the intricacies and obscurities of Latin, and literally overwhelmed the old man with small inundations of that language, which though, like all inundations, rather muddy, yet were they quite sufficient to sweep the worthy veteran before them.

Young Denis O'Shaughnessy was now pretty nearly finished at school, that is to say, almost fit for Maynooth; his studies, though higher, were less assiduous; his leisure was consequently greater; and it is well known, that a person of his character is never asked to work, except it be his own pleasure to labor a day or two, by way of amusement. He might now be seen walking of a warm day along the shady sides of the hedges, with a book in his hand, or stretched listlessly upon the grass, at *study;* or sauntering about among the neighboring workmen, with his forefinger between the leaves of his book, a monument of learning and industry.

It is not to be supposed, however, that Denis, who was an Irishman of eighteen, handsome and well made, could be altogether insensible to female beauty, and seductive charms of the sex. During his easy saunterings—or, as the Scotch say, "dannerings"—along the roads and about the green hedges, it often happened that he met a neighbor's daughter; and Denis, who, as a young gentleman of breeding, was bound to be courteous, could not do less than accost her with becoming urbanity.

"Good-mornin', Miss Norah," we will suppose him to say, when meeting a good-looking arch girl of his acquaintance.

"Good-morrow, Mr. O'Shaughnessy. I hope you're well, sir."

"Indeed I am, at present, in superlatively ecclesiastical health, Miss Norah. I hope all *your* family are well?"

"All very well, I thank you, sir, barrin' myself."

"An' pray what's the matther wid you, Miss Norah? I hope" (with an exceeding grave but complacent smile) "you're

not affected wid the amorous passion of love?"

"Oh, that 'ud be tellin', Mr. O'Shaughnessy! But supposin' I am, what ought I to do?"

"That's really a profound question, Miss Norah. But though I cannot tell you what to do, I can tell you what I think."

"An' what is that, sir?"

"Why, Miss Norah, that he who is so beatified as to secure you in the matrimonial paction—*compactum* it is in the larned languages—in other words—to condescend to your capacity—he who is married to you will be a happy man. There is a juvenility about your eyes, and an efflorescence of amaranthine odoriferousness about your cheeks and breath that are enough to communicate the centrifugal motion to any brain adorned with the slightest modicum of sentiment."

"He who marries me will be a happy man!" she exclaimed, repeating these expressions, probably because they were the only words she understood. "I hope so, Misther O'Shaughnessy. But, sure enough, who'd expect to hear sich soft talk from the makins of a priest? Very well, sir! Upon my word I'll be tellin' Father Finnerty that you do be spakin' up to the girls!—Now!!"

"No, no, Miss Norah; you wouldn't do that merely for my sayin' that you're the handsomest girl in the parish. Father Finnerty himself might say as much, for it would be nothing but veracity—nothing but truth, Miss Norah."

"Ah! but he wouldn't be pattin' me on the cheek! Be asy, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; there's Darby Brady lookin' at you, an' he'll be tellin'!"

"Where?" said Denis, starting.

The girl replied only by an arch laugh.

"Upon my classicality, Miss Norah, you're a rogue; there's nobody lookin', you seraphim!"

"Then there's a pair of us rogues, Misther Dinis."

"No, no, Miss Norah; I was only feeling your cheek as a philosophical experiment. Philosophers often do it, in order to make out an hypothesis."

"Misther Dinis, if I'm not marrid till you're a priest, won't you say the words for me for nothing?"

"So long as you ask it wid such a brilliant smile, Miss Norah, do you think that any educated young man who has read about beauty an' sentimentality in books, could refuse you? But you know, Miss Norah, that the clergyman who marries a couple has always the right of kissing the bride. Now I wouldn't claim my right *then;* but it might be possible by a present compromise to—to——. What would you think, for instance, to give me that *now?*"

"To give you what?"

"Why the ——— indeed it's but a slight recompense, the—k—the salutation—the kiss. You know what tasting the head means?"

"Faix, Misther Dinis, you're a great rogue. Who'd think it indeed? Sure enough, they say smooth water runs deep! Why one 'ud suppose butther wouldn't melt in your mouth to look at you; an' yet you want to be toyin' wid the girls! Indeed an' faix, it's a great shame for the likes o' you, that's bint on Maynooth, to be thinkin' of coortin' at all. But wait! Upon my word, I'll have a fine story agin you, plase goodness!"

This latter threat the mischievous girl threw out with a grave face, in order to bring Denis into a more ridiculous dilemma; for she saw clearly that he labored under a heavy struggle between timidity and gallantry. The *ruse* succeeded. Denis immediately changed his tone, and composed his face into a grave admonitory aspect, nearly equal to a homily on prudence and good conduct.

"Miss Norah," said he, "perhaps I acted wrong in carrying my trial of your disposition too far. It's a thing, however, which we who are intended for the church are ordered to do, that we may be able to make out what are called in this very book you see wid me, *cases of conscience.* But the task is now over, Miss Norah; and, in requital for your extreme good nature, I am bound to administer to you a slight lecture on decorum.

"In the first place, attend your duties regularly. I will soon be goin' to Maynooth; an' as you are one of the girls for whom I have the greatest regard, I will expect on my return to hear a good account of you. It is possible that you'll be introduced in my absence to the honors of matrimony; but even so, I know that peace, an' taciturnity, an' submission will be your most signal qualifications. You will then be in a situation equal to that of a Roman matron. As for us, Miss Norah, we are subject to the dilapidations of occasional elevation. The ambrosia of sentiment lies in our path. We care not for the terrestrialities of life, when separated from the great principle of the poet—

'Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.'

That's Hebrew, Miss Norah!"

"They say you know a power of larnin', Misther Dinis."

"YOU'RE A FOOL, MISTHER O'SHAUGHNESSY! WHY DIDN'T YOU TAKE THE KISS, AN' SPARE THE KING'S ENGLISH?"

—*Going to Maynooth*, p. 985, *T. and S. of the I. F.*

"Yes, I know the seven languages; but what is all that compared to the cardinal virtues. This world is a mere bird of passage, Miss Norah; and it behooves us to be ever on the wing for futurity and premeditation. Now, will you remember the excellent moral advice I have given you?"

"Indeed I will, sir," replied the roguish minx, tripping away; "particularly that you promised to marry me for nothin' if I'd give you a kiss!"

"Give up everything like levity, Miss Norah. Attend your du—"

"You're a fool, Misther O'Shaughnessy! Why didn't you take the kiss, an' spare the king's English?"

On making this observation she redoubled her pace, and left Denis now perfectly sensible that he was a proper subject for her mirth. He turned about, and called after her—

"Had I known that you were only in jocosity, Miss Nora, upon my classicality, I'd have given you the k—."

He now perceived that she was beyond hearing, and that it was unnecessary to finish the sentence.

These accidental meetings between Denis and the pretty daughters of the neighboring farmers were, somehow, very frequent. Our hero, however, was always extremely judicious in tempering his gallantry and moral advice to his young female acquaintances. In the beginning of the conversation he was sly and complimentary, afterwards he became more insinuating, then more direct in his praises of their beauty; but as his timidity on the point of character was known, the mischief-loving girls uniformly ended with a threat of exposing him to the priest, to his friends, or to the neighbors, as the whim directed them. This brought him back to his morality again; he immediately commenced an exhortation touching their religious duties, thus hoping to cover, by a trait more becoming his future destination, the little harmless *badinage* in which he had indulged.

The girls themselves frequently made him the topic of conversation, a proof that he was not altogether indifferent to them. In these little conclaves he came very well off. Among them all it was admitted "that there was a rogue in his coat;" but this was by no means uttered in a tone of voice that betrayed any disrelish to him. On the contrary, they often said—and many of them with an involuntary sigh—that "he was too purty to be made a priest of;" others, that "it was a pity to make a priest of so fine a young man;" others, again, that "if he must be a priest, the colleens would be all flockin' to hear his sarmons." There was one, however, among them who never mentioned him either in praise or censure; but the rapid changes of her expressive countenance gave strong indications to an observing eye that his name, person, and future prospects were capable of exciting a deep and intense interest in her heart.

At length he began to appear on horseback; and as he had hitherto been in the habit of taking that exercise bare-backed, now he was resolved to get into a saddle, and ride like a gentleman. Henceforth he might be seen mounted upon one of his father's horses, quite erect, and with but one spur, which was, in fact, the only spur, except the whiskey bottle, that had been in the family for three generations. This was used, he declared, for no other purpose in life than that of "stimulating the animal to the true clerical trot."

From the moment he became a mounted man he assumed an air of less equivocal command in the family; and not only to his own relations was this authority manifested, but to his more distant acquaintances, and, in short, to the whole parish. The people now began to touch their hats to him, which act of respect he returned as much in imitation of the parish priest as possible. They also began to ask him what o'clock it was, and Denis, with a peculiar condescension, balanced still with becoming dignity, stopped, pulled out his watch, and told the hour, after which he held it for a few seconds to his ear with an experienced air, then put it in a dignified manner in his fob, touched the horse with the solitary spur, put himself more erect, and proceeded with—as he himself used to say, when condemning the pride of the curate—"all the lordliness of the parochial priest."

The notions which the peasantry entertain of a priest's learning are as extravagant as they are amusing, and such, indeed, as would be too much for the pedantic vanity inseparable from a half-educated man to disclaim. The people are sufficiently reasonable, however, to admit gradations in the extent of knowledge acquired by their pastors; but some of the figures and illustrations which they use in estimating their comparative merits are highly ludicrous. I remember a young man, who, at the age of twenty-two, set about preparing himself for the church. He lived in the bosom of a mountain, whose rugged breast he cultivated with a strength proportioned to the difficulty of subduing it. He was a powerful young fellow, quiet and inoffensive in his manners, and possessed of great natural talents. It was upon a Monday morning, in the month of June, that the school-room door opened a foot and a half

wider than usual, and a huge, colossal figure stalked in, with a kind of bashful laugh upon his countenance, as if conscious of the disproportion betwixt his immense size and that of the other schoolboys. His figure, without a syllable of exaggeration, was precisely such as I am about to describe. His height six feet, his shoulders of an enormous breadth, his head red as fire; his body-coat made after the manner of his grandfather's—the skirts of it being near his heels—and the buttons behind little less than eighteen inches asunder. The pockets were cut so low, that when he stretched his arm to its full length, his fingers could not get further than the flaps; the breast of it was about nine inches longer than was necessary, so that when he buttoned it, he appeared all body. He wore no cravat, nor was his shirt-collar either pinned or buttoned, but lay open as if to disclose an immense neck and chest scorched by the sun into a rich and healthy scarlet. His chin was covered with a *sole* of red dry bristles that appeared to have been clipped about a fortnight before; and as he wore neither shoe nor stocking, he exhibited a pair of legs to which Rob Roy's were drumsticks. They gave proof of powerful strength, and the thick *fell* of bristly hair with which they were covered argued an amazing hardihood of constitution and tremendous physical energy.

"Sure, Masther, I'm comin' to school to you!" were the first words he uttered.

Now there ran beneath the master's solemnity of manner a broad but shallow under-current of humor, which agreed but poorly with his pompous display of learning. On this occasion his struggle to retain the grave and overcome the ludicrous was unavailing. The startling fact thus uncouthly announced by so grotesque a candidate for classical knowledge occasioned him to receive the intelligence with more mirth than was consistent with good breeding. His pupils, too, who were hitherto afraid to laugh aloud, on observing his countenance dilate into an expression of laughter which he could not conceal, made the roof of the house ring with their mirth.

"Silence, gintlemen," said he; "*legite, perlegite, et relegite*—study, gintlemen, study—pluck the tree of knowledge, I say, while the fruit is in season. Denny O'Shaughnessy, what are you facetious for? *Quid rides, Dionysi?* And so, Pether—is Pether your pronomen—*quo nomine gowdes?* Silence, boys!—perhaps he was at Latin before, and we'll try him—*quo nomine gowdes, Pethre?*"

A stare of awkward perplexity was the only reply he could get from the colossus he addressed.

"And so you're fished up from the Streights* at last, Pether?"

"Sir, my name's not Pether. My father's name is Paddy Doorish, but my own is Franky. I was born in Lisnagh; but we lived double as long as I can mind in the Mountain Bar."

"And, Franky, what put Latin into your head?"

"There was no Latin put into my head; I'm comin' to you for that."

"And, you graceful sprig of juvenility, have you the conscience to think that I'd undhertake to fill what you carry on your showlders on the same terms that I'd take for replenishing the head of a rasonable youth? Would you be so unjust in all the principles of correct erudition as to expect that, my worthy Man-mountain?"

"I don't expect it," said Frank; "all that's in your head wouldn't fill the corner of mine, if you go accordin' to size; but I'll *pay* you for tachin' me as much as you know yourself, an' the more I larn the less pains you'll have wid me."

Franky, however, made an amazing progress—so very rapid, indeed, that in about three years from that day he found himself in Maynooth, and in three years more was an active curate, to whom that very teacher appeared as slavishly submissive as if he had never ridiculed his vulgarity or ungainly dimensions. Poor Frank, however, in consequence of the rapid progress he made, and of the very short interval which elapsed from the period of his commencing Latin until that of his ordination, was assigned by the people the lowest grade in learning. The term used to designate the rank which they supposed him to hold, was both humorous and expressive.

"Franky," they would say, "is no *finished* priest in the larnin'; *he's but a scowdher.*"

Now a *scowdher* is an oaten cake laid upon a pair of tongs placed over the *greeshaugh*, or embers, that are spread out for the purpose of baking it. In a few minutes the side first laid down is scorched: it is then turned, and the other side is also scorched; so that it has the appearance of being baked, though it is actually quite raw within. It is a homely, but an exceedingly apt illustration, when applied to such men as Frank.

"Poor Frank," they would observe, "is but a *scowdher*—the sign of the tongs—No. 11, is upon him; so that it is asy known he never was laid to the *muddha arran,*"†—that

* Alluding to the Colossus of Rhodes.

† The *Muddha Arran* is literally "the bread stick," a term in opposition to the *scowdher*. It is a forked stick with three legs, that stands opposite

is to say, properly baked—or duly and thoroughly educated.

Denis, however, to resume more directly the thread of our narrative, on finding himself mounted, took an inveterate prejudice against walking. There was something, he thought, far more dignified in riding than in pacing slowly upon the earth, like a common man who had not the justification of Latin and Greek for becoming an equestrian. Besides this accomplishment, there were also many other habits to be broken off, and more genteel ones to be adopted in their place. These were all suggested by his rising pride; and, in sooth, they smacked strongly of that adroitness with which the Irish priest, and every priest, contrives to accomplish the purpose of feeding well through the ostensible medium of a different motive.

He accordingly took his father aside one morning, after he had eaten a more meagre breakfast that usual, and, after licking his lips, addressed him in these words:—

"I think, father, that upon considerating the consequence to which I am now entitled, and the degree of respectability which, in my own person—*in propria persona*—I communicate to the vulgarians with whom I am connected—I call them vulgarians from no derogatory motive; but you will concede yourself, that they are ignorant of the larned languages, an' consequently, though dacent enough, still, in reference to Latin and Greek, but vulgarians. Well! *Quid multis?*—I say, that taking all these things into speculation, looking at them—*veluti in speculum*—it is neither dacent nor becoming that I should ate in the manner I have done, as vulgarly as themselves—that I should ate, I say, any longer, without knife and fork. Neither, I announce, shall I in future drink my milk any longer, as I have with all humility done hitherto, out of a noggin; nor continue to disrobe my potatoes any longer without a becoming instrument. I must also have better viands to consume. You are not to be informed that I am in that situation of life, in which, from my education and other accomplishments, I must be estimated as duly qualified to ate beef and mutton instead of bacon, an' to have my *tay* breakfast instead of stirabout, which, in polite society, is designated *porridge*. You know yourself, and must acknowledge, that I'm soon likely to confer distinction and pre-eminence upon the poor illiterate, but honest creatures, with whom I am associated in the bonds of blood-relationship. If I were a dunce, or a booby, or a leather head, the case might be different; but you yourself are well acquainted with my talents of logic and conthroversy; an' I have sound rasons and good authority, which I could quote, if necessary, for proving that nothing increases the weight of the brain, and accelerates to gravity and solidity more than good feeding. Pay attention, therefore, to my words, for I expect that they will be duly observed:—buy me a knife and fork; and when I get them, it's not to lay them past to rust, you consave. The beef and mutton must follow; and in future I'm resolved to have my *tay* breakfast. There are geese, and turkeys, and pullets enough about the yard, and I am bent on accomplishing myself in the art of carving them. I'm not the man now to be placed among the other riff-raff of the family over a basket of potatoes, wid a black clerical coat upon me, and a noggin of milk under my arm! I tell you the system must be changed: the schoolmaster is abroad, and I'll tolerate such vulgarity no longer. Now saddle the horse till I ride across the bog to Pether Rafferty's Station, where I'm to sarve mass; plase heaven, I'll soon be able to say one myself, and give you all a lift in spirituals—ehem!"

"Throth, Dinny, I b'lieve you're right, avick; and——"

"*Vick* me no longer, father—that's another thing I forgot. It's full time that I should be *sirred*; and if my own relations won't call me *Sir* instead of Dinny, it's hardly to be expected that strangers will do it. I wish to goodness you had never stigmatized me wid so vulgar an epithet as Dinny. The proper word is Dionysius; and, in future, I'll expect to be called Misther Dionysius."

"Sure, I or your mother needn't be *sirrin'* you, Dinny?"

"I haven't made up my mind as to whether I'll demand that proof of my respectability from you and my mother, or not; but on this I'm immovable, that instead of Dinny, you must, as I said, designate me Dionysius."

"Well, well, avourneen, I suppose only it's right you wouldn't be axin' us; but I'm sure your poor mother will never be able to get her tongue about Dionnisis, it's so long and larned a word."

"It *is* a larned word, no doubt; but she must persevere until she's able to masther it. I wouldn't for three tenpennies that the priest would hear one of you call me Dinny; it would degradate me very much in his estimation. At all events, if my mother cannot manage the orthography of Dionysius, let it be Denis, or anything but that signature of vulgarity, Dinny. Now, father, you won't neglect to revale what I've ordered to the family?"

"No, indeed, I will not, avick—I mane

the fire, and supports the cake, which is placed on the edge until it is gradually baked. The *Scowther* is, for the most part, made in cases of hurry.

Dionnisis, avourneen—I'll tell them everything as you ordhered; but as to Dionnisis, I'm cock sure that poor Mave will never be able to get her ould tongue about so newfangled a piece of larnin' as that is. Well, well, this knowledge bates the world!"

When the horse was saddled, and Dionysius on his way with all due pomp to the Station, old Denis broke the matter to his wife.

"Mave, achora," said he, "I have sthrange news to tell you: sure Dionnisis is goin' to make himself a gintleman."

"Sure what?"

"Dionnisis, our son Dionnisis, is goin' to make himself a gintleman; he'll ate no longer widout a knife and fork."

"Saints about us!" exclaimed Mave, rising and looking with alarm into her husband's face—"saints about us, Denis, what is it ails you? Sure there would be nothin' wrong wid you about the head, Denis? or maybe it's a touch of a faver you've got, out riddling that corn bare-headed, yistherday? I remimber the time my Aunt Bridget tuck the scarlet faver, she begun to rave and spake foolish in the same way."

"Why, woman, if your Aunt Bridget had a faver made up of all the colors in the rainbow, I tell you I'm spakin' sinse! Our son Dionnisis proved himself a gintleman out in the garden wid me about an hour ago."

"I suppose so, Denis," she replied, humoring him, for she was still doubly convinced that he labored under some incipient malady, if not under actual insanity; "an' what son is *this*, Dinny? I've never heard of *him* before."

"Our son Denis, woman alive! You must know he's not to be called Dinny or Dinis any more, but Dionnisis; he's to begin atin' wid a knife an' fork to-morrow; we must get him beef and mutton, and a tay breakfast. He say's it's not fair play in any one that's so deep read in the larnin' as he is, to ate like a vulgarian, or to peel his phaties wid his fingers, an' him knows so much Latin an' Greek; an' my sowl to happiness but he'll stick to the gintlemanly way of livin', so far as the beef, an' mutton, and tay is consarned."

"He will! An', Dinis O'Shaughnessy, who has a bether right to turn gintleman, nor the gorsoon that studied for that! Isn't it proud you ought to be that he has the spirit to think of sich things?"

"I'll engage, Mave, on that point you'll find him spirited enough; for my part, I don't begrudge him what he wants; but I heard the people say, that no man's a gintleman who's not *College-bred;* and you know he's not that yet."

"You forget that he has gentle blood in his veins, Denis. There was a day when my family, the Magennises, held their heads up; and Kolumkill says that the same time is to come back agin to all the ould families. Who knows if it's altogether from *himself* he's takin' to the beef an' mutton, but from *prophecy;* he knows what he's about, I'll warrant him. For our part, it's not right for us to cross him in it; it's for the good of the church, no doubt, an' we might lose more by a *blast* upon the corn or the cattle, than he'd ate the other way. That's my dhrame out that I had last night about him. I thought we were all *gother* somewhere that I can't rightly remimber; but anyhow there was a great *sight* of people in it, an' high doin's goin' an in the atin' way. I looked about me, an' seen ever so many priests dressed all like the Protestant clargy; our Dinis was at the head of them, wid a three-cocked hat, an' a wig upon him; he was cuttin' up beef an' mutton at the rate of a weddin', an' dhrinkin' wine in metherfuls."

"'Musha, Dinis,' says myself, 'what's all this for?'

"'Why,' says he, 'it's all for the good of the church an' the faithful. I'm now Archbishop of the county,' says he; 'the Protestants are all banished, an' we are in their place.'

"The sorra one o' myself all this time but thought he was a priest still; so says I, 'Dinny, you're a wantin' to anoint Paddy Diarmud, who's given over, an' if you don't make haste, you won't *overtake* him?'

"'He must wait then till mornin',' says Dinny; 'or if he chooses to die against my will, an' the will o' the church, let him take the quensequences. We're wealthy now.'

"I was so much frightened at the kind of voice that he spoke to me in, that I awoke; an' sure enough, the first thing I heard was the fizzin' o' bacon on the pan. I wondered who could be up so early, an' puttin' my head through the door, there was Dinny busy at it, wid an ould knife in one hand, an' an iron skiver in the other imitatin' a fork.

"'What are you doin' so early, Dinny?' says I.

"'I'm practisin',' says he.

"'What for?' says I.

"'Oh, I'm practisin',' says he, back again, 'go to bed; I'm practisin' for the church, an' the Station that's to be in Pether Rafferty's to-day.'

"Now, Dinny, between you an' me, that dhrame didn't come for nothin'. So give the gorsoon his way, an' if he chooses to be a gintleman, why let him; he'll be the more honor to thim that reared him."

"Thrue for you, indeed, Mave; he always had a high spirit ever since he was intinded

for the *robes*, and would have his own way and will in whatever he took into his head, right or wrong, as cleverly as if he had the authority for it."

"An' so he ought, seein' he wasn't to be slavin' at the spade, like the rest o' the family. The ways o' them that have great larnin' as he has, isn't like other people's ways —they must be humored, and have their own will, otherwise what 'ud they be betther than their neighbors?"

The other arrangements laid down by Denis, touching his determination not to be addressed so familiarly by his brothers and sisters, were next discussed in this conversation, and, of course, the same prejudice in his favor was manifested by his indulgent parents. The whole code of his injunctions was subsequently disclosed to the family in all its extent and rigor. Some of them heard it with surprise, and other with that kind of dogged indignation evinced by those who are in some degree prepared for the nature of the communication about to be laid before them. Altogether, the circumstances in which it placed them were peculiar and embarrassing. The Irish peasant can seldom bear to have the tenderness of domestic affection tampered with, whether from pride, caprice, or any other motive not related to his prejudices. In this instance the strongest feelings of the O'Shaughnessys were brunted, as it were, in hostile array against each other; and although the moral force on each side was nearly equal, still the painful revulsion produced by Denis's pride, as undervaluing their affection, and substituting the cold forms of artificial life for the warmth of honest hearts like theirs, was, in the first burst of natural fervor, strongly, and somewhat indignantly expressed.

Denis had been their pride, the privileged person among them—the individual whose talents were to throw lustre upon a nameless and unknown family; the future priest—the embryo preacher of eminence—the resistless controversialist—the holy father confessor —and, perhaps, for with that vivacity of imagination peculiar to the Irish, they could scarcely limit his exaltation—perhaps the bishop of a whole diocese. Had not the Lord Primate himself been the son of as humble a man? "And who knows," said his youngest and fairest sister, who of all the family was most devoted to him, "but Dinny might yet be a primate?" And as she spoke, the tear of affection, pride, and enthusiasm glistened in her eye. Denis, therefore, had been much, even in his youth, to their simple hearts, and far more to their hopes and expectations, than he was in all the pride of his petty polemics; but when he, before whose merits, both real and imaginary, every heart among them bowed as before the shrine of a tutelar saint, turned round, ere the destined eminence he aimed at was half attained, and laid upon their fervent affection the icy chain of pride and worldly etiquette —the act was felt keenly and unexpectedly as the acute spasm of some sudden malady.

The father and mother, however, both, defended him with great warmth; and by placing his motives in that point of view which agreed best with their children's prejudices, they eventually succeeded in reconciling his brothers and sisters in some degree to the necessity of adopting the phraseology he proposed—that they might treat him with suitable respect in the eye of the world.

"It's proud of him we ought to be," said his father, "and delighted that he has sich a risin' spirit; an' sure the more respect is paid to him the greater credit he will be to ourselves."

"But, sure he has no right," said his eldest brother, "to be settin' up for a gentleman till he's priested. I'm willin' enough to *sir* him, only that it cuts me more than I'll say, to think that I must be callin' the boy that I'd spill the dhrop of my blood for, afther the manner of a sthranger; and besides," he added, "I'm not clear but the neighbors will be passin' remarks upon us, as they did when you and he used to be arguin'."

"I'd like to see them that 'ud turn it into a joke," said his father; "I would let them know that Dinis O'Shaughnessy's dog is neither to be made or meddled wid in a disrespectful manner, let alone his son. We are not widout friends and connections that 'ud take our quarrel upon them in his defince, if there was a needcessity for it; but there will not, for didn't my heart lep the other day to my throat wid delight, when I saw Larry Neil put his hand to his hat to him, comin' up the Esker upon the mare; and may I never do an ill turn, if he didn't answer the bow to Larry, as if he was the priest of the parish already. It's the wondher of the world how he picks up a jinteel thing any how, an' ever did, since he was the hoith o' that."

"Why," said the mother, "what a norration yez rise about thratin' the boy as every one like him ought to be thrated. Wait till ye see him a parish priest, and then ye'll be comin' round him to get your daughters to keep house for him, and your sons edicated and made priests of; but now that the child takes a ginteel relish for beef and mutton, and wants to be respected, ye are mane an' low spirited enough to grumble about it."

"No mother," said his youngest sister,

bursting into tears, "I'd beg it for him, sooner nor he should want; but I can't bear to be callin' my brother Dinny—*sir*—like a stranger. It looks as if *I* didn't love him, or as if *he* was forgettin' us, or carin' less about us nor he used to do."

This, in fact, was the root and ground of the opposition which Denis's plan received at the hands of his relations; it repressed the cordial and affectionate intercourse which had hitherto subsisted between them; but the pride of life, and, what is more, the pride of an office which ought always to be associated with humility, had got into his heart; the vanity of learning, too, thin and shallow though it was, inflated him; and the effect of both was a gradual induration of feeling—an habitual sense of his own importance, and a notion of supreme contempt for all who were more ignorant than himself.

After the first impression of pain and mortification had passed away from the minds of his brothers and sisters, it was, however, unanimously admitted that he was right; and ere long, no other feeling than one of good-humor, mingled with drollery, could be perceived among them. They were clearly convinced, that he claimed no more from strangers than was due to him; but they certainly were not prepared to hear that he had brought the exactions of personal respect so completely and unexpectedly home to themselves as he had done. The thing, too, along with being unreasonable, was awkward and embarrassing in the extreme; for there is a kind of feeling among brothers and sisters, which, though it cannot be described, is very trying to their delicacy and shamefacedness under circumstances of a similar nature. In humble life you will see a married woman who cannot call her husband after his Christian name; or a husband, who, from some extraordinary restraint, cannot address his wife, except in that distant manner which the principle I allude to dictates, and habit confirms.

Denis, however, had overcome this modesty, and felt not a whit too shamefaced to arrogate to his own learning and character the most unhesitating manifestation of their deference and respect, and they soon scrupled not to pay it.

The night of that evening was pretty far advanced, when a neighbor's son, named Condy Callaghan, came to inform the family, that Denis, when crossing the bog on his way home, had rode into a swamp, from which he found much difficulty in extricating himself, but added, "the mare is sunk to the saddle-skirts, and cannot get out widout men and ropes." In a short time a sufficient number of the neighbors were summoned together, and proceeded to the animal's relief. Denny's importance, as well as his black dress, was miserably tarnished; he stood, however, with as dignified an air as possible, and, in a bombastic style, proceeded to direct the men as to the best manner of relieving her.

"Asy, Dinny," said his brother, with a good-humored but significant smile—"larning may be very good in its place; in the mane time, lave the business in our hands rather than in your own head—or if you have e'er a scrap of Greek or Latin that 'ud charm ould Sobersides out, where was the use of sendin' for help?"

"I say," replied Dennis, highly offended, "I'll not tolerate vulgarity any longer; you must *larn* to address me in a more polite style. If the animal—that purblind quadruped—walked into the mire, by what logic can you produce an association between her blindness and my knowledge of Latin and Greek? But why do I degradate my own consequence by declaiming to you an eulogium upon logic? It's only throwing pearls before swine."

"I didn't mane to offind you," replied the warm-hearted brother; "I meant you no offince in what I said, so don't take it ill—we'll have Sobersides out in no time—an' barrin' an extra rubbin' down to both of you, neither will be the worse, I hope."

"As to what you hope or despair, Brian, it could produce no other impression on the subtility of my fancy than pity for the man who could compare me—considering the brilliancy of my career, and the extent of my future speculations—to a quadruped like Sobersides, by asserting that I, as well as she, ought to be *rubbed down!* And were it not that I confront the offince with your own ignorance, I would expose you before the townland in which we stand; ay, to the whole parish—but I spare you, out of respect to my own consequence."

"I ax your pardon," said the brother, "I won't offind you in the same way again. What I said, I said to you as I thought a brother might—I ax your pardon!"

There was a slight agitation approaching to a tremor in his brother's voice, that betokened sorrow for his own impropriety in too familiarly addressing Denis, and perhaps regret that so slight and inoffensive a jest should have been so harshly received in the presence of strangers, by a brother who in reality had been his idol. He reflected upon the conversation held on that morning in the family, touching Denny's prerogative in claiming a new and more deferential deportment from them all; and he could not help

feeling that there was in it a violation of some natural principle long sacred to his heart. But the all-prevading and indefinite awe felt for that sacerdotal character into which his brother was about to enter, subdued all, and reconciled him to those inroads upon violated Nature, despite her own voice, loudly expressed as it was in his bosom.

When the family was once more assembled that night, Denis addressed them in a tone, which implied that the *odium theologicum* had not prevented the contrition expressed by his brother from altogether effacing from his mind the traces of his offence.

"Unworthy of respect," he proceeded, "as it appears by some of my relations I am held," and he glanced at his brother, "yet I beg permission to state, that our worthy parochial priest, or I should rather say, the Catholic Rector of this parish, is of a somewhat different habit of thought or contemplation. I dined with him to-day—ehem—dined with him upon an excellent joint of mutton—I say, father—the *mutton* was good—and with his proud, pertinacious curate, whom I do not at all relish; whether, as Homer says—I enumerate his scurrilous satire, or his derogatory insinuations. His parochial pastor and spiritual superior is a gentleman, or, as Horace says, *homo factus ad unguem*—which is paraphrastically—every inch a gentleman—or more literally, a gentleman to the tops of his fingers—ehem—hem—down to the very nails—as it were.

"Well—having discussed that—*observatis observandis, quoad sacerdotem*—having passed my eulogium upon Father Finnerty—upon my word and credit though, punch is *prima facie* drink—and father, that brings me to remember an omission which I committed in my dialogue with you this morning. I forgot to say, that after my dinner, in the manner I expounded to you, it will be necessary to have a tumbler of punch—for, as Father Finnerty says, there is nothing which so effectually promotes the organs of digestion. Now, my introduction of *this*, in the middle of my narrative, is what the hypercritics call a *Parenthesis*, which certainly betrays no superficial portion of literary perusal on my part, if you could at all but understand it as well as Father Finnerty, our worthy parochial incumbent, does. As for the curate, should I ever come to authority in the Irish hierarchy, I shall be strongly disposed to discountenance him; if it were only for his general superciliousness of conduct. So there's another clause disposed of.

"Well—to proceed—I say I have intelligence regarding myself, that will be by no means unsavory to you all. Father Finnerty and I had, about an hour before dinner this day, a long and tedious conversation, the substance of which was my future celebrity in the church. He has a claim on the Bishop, which he stated to me will be exercised in my favor, although there are several candidates for it in this parish, not one of whom, however, is within forty-five degrees of being so well qualified for college as myself. Father, is there not a jar—an *amphora*—as that celebrated satirist Juvenile has it—an *amphora*—in the chimly-brace, filled with liquor—get it, and let us inter animosity—I'll not be long a member of the domestic circle with you—so, upon the basis of the communication I have to make, let us, as I said, become sextons to animosity and care. 'Dionysius,' said Father Finnerty, addressing me, which shows, at all events, that I am not so unimportant as some of my friends would suppose—'*Dionysius*,' said he *inter nos*—'between you and me, I believe I have it in my power to send up a candidate to Maynooth. 'Tis true, I never make a promise—*nunquam facio votum*, except in certain cases, or, in other words, Dionysius, *exceptis excipiendis*—in which is the *essence*, as it were, of a proper vow.' In the meantime he proceeded—'With regard to your prospects in the church, I can only say, in the first place, and I say it with much truth and sincerity—*that I'm badly off for a horse;* that, however, is, as I said, *inter nos—sub sigillo.* The old *garran* I have is fairly worn out—and, not that I say it, your father has as pretty a colt as there is within the bounds—*intra terminos parochii mei*, within the two ends of my parish: *verbum sat*—which is, I'm sure you're a sensible and discreet young man. Your father, Dionysius, is a parishioner whom I regard and esteem to the highest degree of comparison, and you will be pleased to report my eulogium to himself and to his decent family—and proud may they be of having so brilliant a youth among them as you are—ehem!'

"Now, you may all think that this was plain conversation; but I had read too much for that. In fact, it was *logic*—complete, convincing logic, every word of it. So I responded to him in what is called in the books, the *argumentum ad crumenam;* although I question but it ought to be designated here the *argumentum ad bestiam.* Said I, 'Father Finnerty, the colt, my paternal property, which you are pleased to eulogize so highly, is a good one; it was designed for myself when I should come out on the mission; however, I will undertake to say, if you get me into Maynooth, that my father, on my authority, will *lend* you the colt tomorrow, and the day of his claiming it will

be dependent upon the fulfilment of your promise or *votum*.'

"'*Signatum et sigillatum est*,' said he—for, indeed, the best part of the discussion was conducted in Latin; 'and now,' he continued, 'my excellent Dionysius, nothing remains but that the colt be presented ——'

——"'Lent,' I responded, correcting him, you see, even although he was the priest—'*lent*,' said I; 'and your Reverence will be good enough to give the *votum* before one or two of my friends.'

"He looked at me sharply, not expecting to find such deep logic in one he conjectured to be but a *tyro*.

"'You will be a useful man in the church,' he added, 'and you deserve to be pushed on at all events. In the meantime, tell your father that I'll ride up and breakfast with him to-morrow, and he can have a friend or two to talk over the *compactum*.'

"So, father, there's the state of the question at present; the accomplishment of the condition is dependent upon yourself."

My readers may perceive that Denis, although a pedant, was not a fool. It has been said that no man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre;* but I think the truth of the sentiment contained in that saying is questionable. Denis, on the contrary, was nowhere so great a man as in his own chimney-corner, surrounded by his family. It was there he was learned, accomplished, profound; next to that, he was great among those who, although not prejudiced in his favor by the bonds of affection, were too ignorant to discover those literary pranks which he played off, because he knew he could do so without detection. The basis, however, of his character was shrewd humor and good sense; and even at the stage of life which we have just described, it might have been evident to a close observer that, when a proper knowledge of his own powers, joined to a further acquaintance with the world, should enable him to cast off the boyish assumption of pedantry, a man of a keen, ready intellect and considerable penetration would remain.

Many of my readers may be inclined to exclaim that the character of Denny is not to be found in real life; but they are mistaken who think so. They are not to suppose that Denis O'Shaughnessy was the same person in his intercourse with intelligent men and scholars, that he appeared among the illiterate peasantry, or his own relations. Far from it. With the former, persons like him are awkward and bashful, or modest and unassuming, according to the bent of their natural disposition. With scholars Denis made few pretensions to superior knowledge; but, on the contrary, took refuge, if he dreaded a scrutiny into his acquirements, in the humblest acknowledgment of his limited reading, and total unacquaintance with those very topics on which he was, under other circumstances, in the habit of expatiating so fluently. In fact, were I to detail some of the scenes of his exhibitions as they were actually displayed, *then* I have no doubt I might be charged with coloring too highly.

When Denis had finished the oration from the chimney-corner, delivered with suitable gesticulations while he stood drying himself at the fire after the catastrophe of the swamp, a silence of some minutes followed. The promise of the colt made to the priest with such an air of authority, was a *finale* which the father did not expect, and by which he was not a little staggered.

"I could like it all very well," replied the father, "save an' except givin' away the coult that's worth five-an'-twenty guineas, if he's worth a *'crona-bawn*. To tell the blessed thruth, Dinis, if you had settled the business widout *that*, I'd be betther plased."

"Just exercise your contemplation upon it for a short period," replied Denis, "and you will perceive that I stipulated to *lend* him before witnesses; and if Father Finnerty does not matriculate me into Maynooth, then do you walk down some brilliant morning or other, and take your baste by the head, direct yourself home, hold the bridle as you proceed, and by the time you're at the rack, you'll find the horse at the manger. I have now stated the legality of the matter, and you may act as your own subtility of perception shall dictate. I have laid down the law, do you consider the equity."

"Why," said the father, "if I thought he would get you into"——

"Correct, quite correct: the cardinal point there is the *if*. If he does, give him the horse; but if not, reclaim the quadruped without hesitation. I am not to be kept back, if profundity and erudition can substantiate a prospect. Still, father, the easiest way is the safest, and the shortest the most expeditious."

The embarrassing situation in which the other members of the family were placed, imposed upon them a profound silence, in reference to the subject of conversation. Yet, while Denny delivered the aforesaid harangue from the chimney-corner, every eye was fixed upon him with an expression of pride and admiration which escaped not his own notice. Their deportment towards him was affectionate and respectful; but none of them could so far or so easily violate old habits as to address him according to his

own wishes; they therefore avoided addressing him at all.

The next morning Father Finnerty paid them his purposed visit, and, as he had promised, arrived in time for breakfast. A few of Denis's relations *were* assembled, and in their presence the arrangements respecting the colt and Denny's clerical prospects were privately concluded. So far everything was right; the time of Denny's departure for Maynooth was to be determined by the answer which Father Finnerty should receive from the bishop; for an examination must, of course, take place, which was to be conducted by the prelate, or by some other clergyman appointed for that purpose. This and the necessary preparation usual on such occasions, were the only impediments in the way of his departure for Maynooth, a place associated with so many dreams of that lowly ambition which the humble circumstances of the peasantry permit them to entertain.

The Irish people, I need scarcely observe, are a poor people; they are, also, very probably, for the same reason, an imaginative people; at all events, they are excited by occurrences which would not produce the same vivacity of emotion which they experience upon any other people in the world. This, after all, is but natural; a long endurance of hunger will render the coarsest food delicious; and, on the contrary, when the appetite is glutted with the richest viands, it requires a dish whose flavor is proportionably high and spicy to touch the jaded palate. It is so with our moral enjoyments. In Ireland, a very simple accession to their hopes or comforts produces an extraordinary elevation of mind, and so completely unlocks the sluices of their feelings, that every consideration is lost in the elation of the moment. At least it was so in Denis O'Shaughnessy's family upon this occasion.

No sooner had Father Finnerty received the colt, and pledged himself that Denny should have the place at Maynooth that was then vacant, than a tumultuous expression of delight burst from his family and relations. Business was then thrown aside for the day; the house was scoured and set in order, as if it were for a festival; their best apparel was put on; every eye was bright, every heart throbbed with a delightful impulse, whilst kindness and hilarity beamed from their faces. In a short time they all separated themselves among their neighbors to communicate the agreeable tidings; and the latter, with an honest participation in their happiness, instantly laid aside their avocations, and flocked to Denis O'Shaughnessy's, that they might congratulate him and his friends upon what was considered the completion of their hopes. When the day was more advanced, several of Denny's brothers and sisters returned, and the house was nearly filled with their acquaintances and relations. Ere one o'clock had passed they were all assembled, except old Denis, of whom no person could give any intelligence. Talk, loud laughter, pure poteen, and good-humor, all circulated freely; the friendly neighbor unshaved, and with his Sunday coat thrown hastily over his work-day apparel, drank to Denny's health, and wished that he might "bate all Maynewth out of the face; an' sure there's no doubt of that, any how—doesn't myself remimber him puttin' the explanations to Pasthorini before he was the bulk o' my fist?" His brothers and sisters now adopted with enthusiasm the terms of respect which he had prescribed for them through his father; he was *Sirred* and *Misthered*, and all but *Reverenced*, with a glow of affectionate triumph which they strove not to conceal. He was also overwhelmed with compliments of all hues and complexions: one reminded him of the victory he obtained over a hedge-schoolmaster who came one Sunday a distance of fifteen miles to *sack* him in English Grammar on the chapel-green; but as the man was no classical scholar, "Sure," observed his neighbor, "I remember well that he couldn't get a word out of Misther Denis's head there but Latin; so that the poor crathur, afther travellin' fifteen long miles, had to go home agin, the show o' the world, widout undherstandin' a sintence of the larnin' that was put an him; an' so here's wishin' you health, Misther Dinis, agra, an' no fear in life but you'll be the jewel at the prachin,' sir, plase Goodness!"

Another reminded him of "how often he proved Phaidrick Murray to be an ass, and showed him how he couldn't make out the differ atween black an' white."

"Sure, an' he did," said Phadrick, scratching his head, for he was one of the first at the house; "an' no wondher, wid his long-headed screwtations from the books. Throth, his own father was the best match, barrin' Father Lawdher that was broke of his bread, he ever met wid, till he got too many for him by the Latin an' Greek."

This allusion to old Denis occasioned his absence to be noticed.

"Can nobody tell where Denis More is?" said the wife; "my gracious, but it's quare he should be from about the place this day, any way. Brian, mavourneen, did you see him goin' any where?"

"No," said Brian, "but I see him comin down there carryin' some aitables in a basket."

Brian had scarcely ended when his father entered, bearing beef and mutton, as aforesaid, both of which he deposited upon the kitchen table, with a jerk of generosity and pride, that seemed to say, as he looked significantly at Denny—and, in fact, as he did say afterwards—"Never spare, Dinny; ate like a gintleman; make yourself as bright an' ginteel as you can; you won't want for beef an' mutton!"

Old Denis now sat down, and, after wiping the perspiration from his forehead, took the glass of poteen which the wife handed him: he held it between his finger and thumb for a moment, glanced around him upon the happy faces present, then laid it down again, fixed his eyes upon his son, and cast them once more upon the company. The affectionate father's heart was full; his breast heaved, and the large tears rolled slowly down his cheeks. By a strong effort, however, he mastered his emotion; and taking the glass again, he said in broken voice:—

"Neighbors!—God bless yez!—God bless yez!—Dinny—Dinny—I"——

The last words he pronounced with difficulty; and drinking off his glass, set it down empty upon the table. He then rose up, and shook his neighbors by the hand—

"I am," said he, "a happy man, no doubt of it, an' we're all happy; an' it's proud any father might be to hear the account of his son, that I did of mine, as I was convoyin' Father Finnerty a piece o' the way home. 'Your son,' says he, when he took that bit of a coult out o' my hand, 'will be an honor to you all. I tell you,' says he, 'that he's nearly as good a scholar, as myself, an' spakes Latin not far behind my own; an' as for a pracher," says he, 'I can tell you that he'll be hard *farther* nor any man I know.' He tould me them words wid his own two lips. An' surely, neighbors," said he, relapsing into strong feeling, "you can't blame me for bein' both proud and happy of sich a son."

My readers, from the knowledge already given them of Denny's character, are probably disposed to think that his learning was thrown out on this occasion in longer words and more copious quotations than usual. This, however, was not the case; so far from that, he never displayed less pedantry, nor interspersed his conversation with fewer scraps of Latin. In fact, the proceedings of the day appeared to affect him with a tone of thought, decidedly at variance with the exuberance of joy experienced by the family. He was silent, moody, and evidently drawn by some secret reflection from the scene around him. He held a book in his hand, into which he looked from time to time, with the air of a man who balances some contingency in his mind. At length, when the conversation of those who were assembled became more loud and boisterous, he watched an opportunity of gliding out unperceived; having accomplished this, he looked cautiously about him, and finding himself not observed, he turned his steps to a glen which lay about half a mile below his father's house.

At the lowest skirt of this little valley, protected by a few spreading hawthorns, stood a small white farm-house, more immediately shaded by a close row of elder or boor-tree, which hung over one of the gables, and covered the garden gate, together with a neat grassy seat, that was built between the gate, and the gable. It was impervious to sun and rain: one of those pretty spots which present themselves on the road-side in the country, and strike the eye with a pleasing notion of comfort; especially when, during a summer shower, the cocks and hens of the little yard are seen by the traveller who takes shelter under it, huddled up in silence, the white dust quite dry, whilst the heavy shower patters upon the leaves above, and upon the dark drenched road beside him.

Under the shade of this sat an interesting girl, aged about seventeen, named Susan Connor. She was slender, and not above the middle size; but certainly, in point of form and feature, such as might be called beautiful—handsome she unquestionably was; but be that as it may, with this rustic beauty the object of Denis's stolen visit was connected. She sat knitting under the shade of elder which we have described, a sweet picture of innocence and candor. Our hero's face, as he approached her, was certainly a fine study for any one who wished to embody the sad and the ludicrous. Desperate was the conflict between pedantry and feeling which he experienced. His manner appeared more pompous and affected than ever; yet was there blended with the flush of approaching triumph as a candidate, such woe-begone shades of distress flitting occasionally across his feature, as rendered his countenance inscrutably enigmatical.

When the usual interchange of preliminary conversation had passed, Denis took his seat beside her on the grassy bench; and after looking in several directions, and giving half a dozen hems, he thus accosted her:—

"Susan, cream of my affections, I may venture to conjecture that the fact, or *factum*, of my being the subject of a *fama clamosa* today, has not yet reached your ears?"

"Now, Denis, you are at your deep larning from the books again. Can't you keep your reading for them that undherstands it, an' not be spakin' so Englified to a simple girl like me?"

"There is logic in that same, however. Do you know, Susan, I have often thought that, provided always you had reaved proper instruction, you would have made a first-rate classical scholar."

"So you tould me, Denis, the Sunday we exchanged the promise. But sure when you get me, I can larn it. Won't you tache me, Denis?"

She turned her laughing eyes archly at him as she spoke, with a look of joy and affection: it was a look, indeed, that staggered for the moment every ecclesiastical resolution within him. He returned her glance, and ran over the features of her pure and beautiful countenance for some minutes; then, placing his open hand upon his eyes, he seemed buried in reflection. At length he addressed her:—

"Susan, I am thinking of that same Sunday evening on which we exchanged the hand-promise. I say, Susan,—*dimidium animæ meæ*—I am in the act of meditating upon it; and sorry am I to be compel—to be under the neces—to be reduced, I say—that is *redactus* in the larned langua——: in other words—or terms, indeed, is more elegant—in other terms, then, Susan, I fear that what I just now alluded to, touching the *fama clamosa* which is current about me this day, will render that promise a rather premature one on both our parts. Some bachelors in my situation might be disposed to call it foolish, but I entertain a reverence—a veneration for the feelings of the feminine sex, that inclines me to use the mildest and most classical language in divulging the change that has taken place in my fortunes since I saw you last."

"What do you mane, Denis?" inquired Susan, suddenly ceasing to knit, and fixing her eyes upon him with a glance of alarm.

"To be plain, Susy, I find that Maynooth is my destination. It has been arranged between my father and Doctthor Finnerty, that I must become a laborer in the vineyard; that is, that I must become a priest, and cultivate the grape. It's a sore revelation to make to an amorous maiden; but destiny will be triumphant:—

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis."

The poor girl suddenly laid down the work on which she had been engaged, her face became the color of ashes, and the reply she was about to make died upon her lips. She again resumed her stocking, but almost instantly laid it down a second time, and appeared wholly unable either to believe or comprehend what he said.

"Denis," she at length asked, "Did you say that all is to be over between us?"

"That was my insinuation," replied Denis. "The fact is, Susy, that destiny is adverse; clean against our union in the bonds of matrimonial ecstacy. But, Susy, my charmer, I told you before that you were not destitute of logic, and I hope you will bear this heavy visitation as becomes a philosopher."

"Bear it, Denis! How ought I to bear it, after your saying and swearing, too, that neither father, nor mother, nor priest, nor anybody else would make you desart me?"

"But, Susan, my nightingale, perhaps you are not aware that there is an authority in existence to which father, mother, and all must knuckle down. That is the church, Susan. Reflect—*dulce decus meum*—that the power of the church is able to loose and unloose, to tie and untie, to forgive and to punish, to raise to the highest heaven, or to sink to the profoundest Tartarus. That power, Susan, thinks proper to claim your unworthy and enamored swain as one of the brightest Colossuses of her future glory. The Irish hierarchy is plased to look upon me as a luminary of almost superhuman brilliancy and coruscation: my talents she pronounces to be of the first magnitude; my eloquence classical and overwhelming, and my learning only adorned by that poor insignificant attribute denominated by philosophers unfathomability!—hem!—hem!"

"Denis," replied the innocent girl, "you sometimes speak that I can undherstand you; but you oftener spake in a way that I can hardly make out what you say. If it's a thing that my love for you, or the solemn promise that passed between us, would stand in your light, or prevint you from higher things as a priest, I am willing to—to—to give you up, whatever I may suffer. But you know yourself, that you brought me on from time to time undher your promise, that nothing would ever lead you to lave me in sorrow an' disappointment. Still, I say, that—— But, Denis, is it thrue that you could lave *me* for *anything?*"

The innocent confidence in his truth expressed by the simplicity of her last question, staggered the young candidate; that is to say, her words, her innocence, and her affection sank deeply into his heart.

"Susan," he replied, "to tell the blessed truth, I am fairly dilemma'd. My heart is in your favor; but—but—hem—you don't know the prospect that is open to me. You don't know the sin of keeping back such a—a—a—galaxy as I am from the church. I say you don't know the *sin* of it. *That's* the difficulty. If it was a common case it would be nothing! but to keep back a person like me—a *rara avis in terris*—from the priest-

hood, is a sin that requires a great dale of interest with the Pope to have absolved."

"Heaven above forgive me!" exclaimed the artless girl. "In that case I wouldn't for the riches of the wide earth stand between you and God. But I didn't know that before, Denis; and if you had tould me, I think, sooner than get into sich a sin I'd struggle to keep down my love for you, even although my heart should break."

"Poor darling," said Denis, taking her passive hand in his, "and would it go so hard with you? Break your heart! Do you love me so well as that, Susan?"

Susan's eyes turned on him for a moment, and the tears which his question drew forth gave it a full and a touching reply. She uttered not a word, but after a few deep sobs wiped her eyes, and endeavored to compose her feelings.

Denis felt the influence of her emotions; he remained silent for a short time, during which, however, ambition drew in the background all those dimly splendid visions that associate themselves with the sacerdotal functions, in a country where the people place no bounds to the spiritual power of their pastors.

"Susan," said he, after a pause, "do you know the difference between a Christian and a hathen?"

"Between a Christian an' a hathen? Why aren't hathens all sinners?"

"Very right. Faith, Susan, you would have shone at the classics. You see *dilecta cordis mei*, or, *cordi meo*, for either is good grammar—you see, Susan, the difference between a Christian and a hathen is this:—a Christian bears disappointments, with fortitude—with what is denominated Christian fortitude; whereas, on the contray, a hathen doesn't bear disappointments at all. Now, Susan, it would cut me to the heart to find that you would become a hathen on this touching and trying occasion."

"I'll pray to God, Denis. Isn't that the way to act under afflictions?"

"Decidedly. There is no other legitimate mode of quelling a heart-ache. And, Susan, when you go to supplication you are at liberty to mention my name—no, not yet; but if I were once consecrated you might. However, it is better to sink this; say nothing about me when you pray, for, to tell you truth, I believe you have as much influence above—*super astra*—as I have. There is one argument which I am anxious to press upon you. It is a very simple but a very respectable one after all. I am not all Ireland. You will find excellent good husbands even in this parish. There is, as the old proverb says, as good fish in the *say* as ever were caught. Do you catch one of them. For me, Susan, the vineyard claims me; I must, as I said, cultivate the grape. We must, consequently—hem!—we must—hem!—hem!—consequently strive to forget—hem!—I say, to forget each other. It is a trial—I know—a desperte visitation, poor fawn, upon your feelings; but, as I said, destiny will be triumphant. What is decreed, is decreed—I must go to Maynooth."

Susan rose, and her eyes flashed with an indignant sense of the cold-blooded manner in which he advised her to select another husband. She was an illiterate girl, but the purity of her feeling supplied the delicacy which reading and a knowledge of more refined society would have given her.

"Is it from *your* lips, Denis," she said, "that I hear sich a mane and low-minded an advice? Or do you think that with my weak, and I now see, foolish heart, settled upon you, I could turn round and fix my love upon the first that might ax me? Denis, you promised before God to be mine, and mine only; you often said and swore that you loved me above any human being; but I now see that you only intended to lead me into sin and disgrace, for indeed, and before God I don't think—I don't—I don't—believe that you *ever* loved me."

A burst of grief, mingled with indignation and affliction, followed the words she had uttered. Denis felt himself called on for a vindication, and he was resolved to give it.

"Susan," he returned, "your imagination is erroneous. By all the classical authors that ever were written, you are antipodially opposed to facts. What harm is there, seeing that you and I can never be joined in wedlock—what harm is there, I say, in recommending you another husb——".

Susan would hear no more. She gathered up her stocking and ball of thread, placed them in her apron, went into her father's house, shut and bolted the door, and gave way to violent grief. All this occurred in a moment, and Denis found himself excluded.

He did not wish, however, to part from her in anger; so, after having attempted to look through the keyhole of the door, and applied his eye in vain to the window, he at length spoke.

"Is there any body within but yourself, Susy?"

He received no reply.

"I say, Susy—*dilecta juventutis meæ*—touching the recommendation—now don't be crying—touching the recommendation of another husband, by all the classics that ever were mistranslated, I meant nothing but the purest of consolation. If I did, may I be reduced to primeval and aboriginal ignorance!

But you know yourself, that they never prospered who prevented a *rara avis* like me from entering the church—from laboring in the vineyard, and cultivating the grape. Don't be hathenish; but act with a philosophy suitable to so dignified an occasion—Farewell! *Mocte virtute*, and be firm. I swear again by all the class——"

The appearance of a neighbor caused him to cut short his oath. Seeing that the man approached the house, he drew off, and returned home, more seriously affected by Susan's agitation than he was willing to admit even to himself.

This triumph over his affection was, in fact, only the conquest of one passion over another. His attachment to Susan Connor was certainly sincere, and ere the prospects of his entering Maynooth were unexpectedly brought near him, by the interference of Father Finnerty, his secret purpose all along had been to enter with her into the state of matrimony, rather than into the church. Ambition, however, is beyond all comparison the most powerful principle of human conduct, and so Denny found it. Although his unceremonious abandonment of Susan appeared heartless and cruel, yet it was not effected on his part without profound sorrow and remorse. The two principles, when they began to struggle in his heart for supremacy, resembled the rival destinies of Cæsar and Mark Antony. Love declined in the presence of ambition; and this, in proportion as all the circumstances calculated to work upon the strong imagination of a young man naturally fond of power, began to assume an appearance of reality. To be, in the course of a few years, a *bona fide* priest; to possess unlimited sway over the fears and principles of the people; to be endowed with spiritual gifts to he knew not what extent; and to enjoy himself as he had an opportunity of seeing Father Finnerty and his curate do, in the full swing of convivial pleasure, upon the ample hospitality of those who, in addition to this, were ready to kiss the latchet of his shoes—were, it must be admitted, no inconsiderable motives in influencing the conduct of a person reared in an humble condition of life. The claims of poor Susan, her modesty, her attachment, and her beauty—were all insufficient to prevail against such a host of opposing motives; and the consequence, though bitter, and subversive of her happiness, was a final determination on the part of Denny, to acquaint her, with a kind of ex-officio formality, that all intercourse upon the subject of their mutual attachment must cease between them. Notwithstanding his boasted knowledge, however, he was ignorant of sentiment, and accordingly confined himself, as I have intimated, to a double species of argument; that is to say, first, the danger and sin of opposing the wishes of the church which had claimed him, as he said, to labor in the vineyard; and secondly, the undoubted fact, that there were plenty of good husbands besides himself in the world, from some one of which, he informed her, he had no doubt, she could be accommodated.

In the meantime, her image, meek, and fair, and uncomplaining, would from time to time glide into his imagination; and the melody of her voice send its music once more to his vaccillating heart. He usually paused then, and almost considered himself under the influence of a dream; but ambition, with its train of shadowy honors, would immediately present itself, and Susan was again forgotten.

When he rejoined the company, to whom he had given the slip, he found them all gone, except about six or eight whom his father had compelled to stop for dinner. His mind was now much lighter than it had been before his interview with Susan, nor were his spirits at all depressed by perceiving that a new knife and fork lay glittering upon the dresser for his own particular use.

"Why, thin, where have you been all this time," said the father, "an' we wantin' to know whether you'd like the mutton to be boiled or roasted!"

"I was soliloquizing in the glen below," replied Denny, once more assuming his pedantry, "meditating upon the transparency of all human events; but as for the beef and mutton, I advise you to boil the beef, and roast the mutton, or *vice versa*, to boil the mutton, and roast the beef. But I persave my mother has anticipated me, and boiled them both with that flitch of bacon that's playing the vagrant in the big pot there. *Tria juncta in uno*, as Horace says in the Epodes, when expatiating upon the Roman Emperors—ehem!"

"Misther Denis," said one of those present, "maybe you'd tell us upon the watch, what the hour is, if you phase, sir; myself never can know right at all, except by the shadow of the sun from the corner of our own gavel."

"Why," replied Denis, pulling it out with much pomp of manner, "it's just half-past two to a quarter of a minute, and a few seconds."

"Why thin what a quare thing entirely a watch is," the other continued; "now what makes you hould it to your ear, Misther Denis, if you phase?"

"The efficient cause of that, Larry, is, that the drum of the ear, you persave—the

drum of the ear—is enabled to catch the intonations produced by the machinery of its internal operations—otherwise the fact of applying it to the ear would be unnecessary—altogether unnecessary."

"Dear me! see what it is to have the knowledge, any way! But isn't it quare how it moves of itself like a livin' crathur? How is that, Misther Denis?"

"Why, Larry,—ehem—you see the motions of it are—that is—the works or operations, are all continually going; and sure it is from that explanation that we say a watch *goes* well. That's more than you ever knew before, Larry."

"Indeed it surely is, sir, an' is much oblaged to you, Misther Denis; sure if I ever come to wear a watch in my fob, I'll know something about it, anyhow."

For the remainder of that day Denis was as learned and consequential as ever; his friends, when their hearts were opened by his father's hospitality, all promised him substantial aid in money, and in presents of such articles as they supposed might be serviceable to him in Maynooth. Denny received their proffers of support with suitable dignity and gratitude. A scene of bustle and preparation now commenced among them, nor was Denny himself the least engaged; for it somehow happened, that notwithstanding his profound erudition, he felt it necessary to read night or day in order to pass with more *eclat* the examination which he had to stand before the bishop ere his appointment to Maynooth. This ordeal was to occur upon a day fixed for the purpose, in the ensuing month; and indeed Denis occupied as much of the intervening period in study as his circumstances would permit. His situation was, at this crisis, certainly peculiar. Every person related to him in the slightest degree contrived to revive their relationship; his former school-fellows, on hearing that he was actually destined to be of the church, renewed their acquaintance with him, and those who had been servants to his father, took the liberty of speaking to him upon the strength of that fact. No child, to the remotest shade of affinity, was born, for which he did not stand godfather; nieces and nephews thickened about him, all with remarkable talents, and many of them, particularly of the nieces, said to be exceedingly genteel—very thrifty for their ages, and likely to make excellent housekeepers. A strong likeness to himself was also pointed out in the features of his nephews, one of whom had his born nose—another his eyes—and a third again had his brave high-flown way with him. In short, he began to feel some of the inconveniences of greatness; and, like it, to be surrounded by cringing servility and meanness. When he went to the chapel he was beset, and followed from place to place, by a retinue of friends who were all anxious to secure to themselves the most conspicuous marks of his notice. It was the same thing in fair or market; they contended with each other who should do him most honor, or afford to him and his father's immediate family the most costly treat, accompanied by the grossest expressions of flattery. Every male infant born among them was called Dionysius; and every female one Susan, after his favorite sister. All this, to a lad like Denis, already remarkable for his vanity, was very trying; or rather, it absolutely turned his brain, and made him probably as finished a specimen of pride, self-conceit, and domineering arrogance, mingled with a kind of lurking humorous contempt for his cringing relations, as could be displayed in the person of some shallow but knavish prime minister, surrounded by his selfish sycophants, whom he encourages and despises.

At home he was idolized—overwhelmed with respect and deference. The slightest intimation of his wish was a command to them; the beef, and fowl, and mutton, were at hand in all the variety of culinary skill, and not a soul in the house durst lay a hand upon his knife and fork but himself. In the morning, when the family were to be seen around the kitchen table at their plain but substantial breakfast, Denis was lording it in solitary greatness over an excellent breakfast of tea and eggs in another room.

It was now, too, that the king's English, as well as the mutton, was carved and hacked to some purpose; epithets prodigiously long and foreign to the purpose were pressed into his conversation, for no other reason than because those to whom he spoke could not understand them; but the principal portion of his time was devoted to study. The bishop, he had heard, was a sound scholar, and exceedingly scrupulous in recommending any to Maynooth, except such as were well versed in the preparatory course. Independently of this, he was anxious, he said, to distinguish himself in his examination, and, if possible, to sustain as high a character with the bishop and his fellow-students, as he did among the peasantry of his own neighborhood.

At length the day approached. The bishop's residence was not distant more than a few hours' ride, and he would have sufficient time to arrive there, pass his examination, and return in time for dinner. On the eve of his departure, old Denis invited Father Finnerty, his curate and about a dozen rela-

tions and friends, to dine with him the next day; when—Denis having surmounted the last obstacle to the accomplishment of his hopes—their hearts could open without a single reflection to check the exuberance of their pride, hospitality, and happiness.

I have often said to my friends, and I now repeat it in print, that after all there is no people bound up so strongly to each other by the ties of domestic life as the Irish. On the night which preceded this joyous and important day, a spirit of silent but tender affection dwelt in every heart of the O'Shaughnessys. The great point of interest was Denis. He himself was serious, and evidently labored under that strong anxiety so natural to a youth in his circumstances. A Roman Catholic bishop, too, is a personage looked upon by the people with a kind of feeling that embodies in it awe, reverence, and fear. Though, in this country, an humble man possessing neither the rank in society, outward splendor, nor the gorgeous profusion of wealth and pomp which characterize a prelate of the Established Church; yet it is unquestionable that the gloomy dread, and sense of formidable power with which they impress the minds of the submissive peasantry, immeasurably surpass the more legitimate influence which any Protestant dignitary could exercise over those who stand, with respect to him, in a more rational and independent position.

It was not surprising that Denis, who practised upon ignorant people that petty despotism for which he was so remarkable, should now, on coming in contact with great spiritual authority, adopt his own principles, and relapse from the proud pedant into the cowardly slave. True it is that he presented a most melancholy specimen of independence in a crisis where moral courage was so necessary; but his dread of the coming day was judiciously locked up in his own bosom. His silence and apprehension were imputed to the workings of a mind learnedly engaged in arranging the vast stores of knowledge with which it was so abundantly stocked; his moody picture of the bishop's brow; his reflection that he was going before so sacred a person, as a candidate for the church, with his heart yet redolent of earthly affection for Susan Connor; his apprehension that the bishop's spiritual scent might sagaciously smell it out, were all put down by the family to the credit of uncommon learning, which, as his mother observed truly, "often makes men do quare things." His embarrassments, however, inasmuch as they were ascribed by them to wrong causes, endeared him more to their hearts than ever. Because he spoke little, neither the usual noise nor bustle of a large family disturbed the silence of the house; every word was uttered that evening in a low tone, at once expressive of tenderness and respect. The family supper was tea, in compliment to Denis; and they all partook of it with him. Nothing humbles the mind, and gives the natural feelings their full play, so well as a struggle in life, or the appearance of its approach.

"Denis," said the father, "the time will come when we won't have you at all among us; but, thank goodness, you'll be in a better place."

Denis heard him not, and consequently made no reply.

"They say Maynewth's a tryin' place, too," he continued, "an' I'd be sorry to see him pulled down to anatomy, like some of the scarecrows that come out of it. I hope you'll bear it bethher."

"Do you speak to me?" said Denis, awaking out of a reverie.

"I do, *sir*," replied the father; and as he uttered the words the son perceived that his eyes were fixed upon him with an expression of affectionate sorrow and pride.

The youth was then in a serious mood, free from all the dominion of that learned *mania* under which he had so frequently signalized himself: the sorrow of his father, and a consciousness of the deep affection and unceasing kindness which he had ever experienced from him, joined to a recollection of their former friendly disputes and companionship, touched Denny to the quick. But the humility with which he applied to him the epithet *sir*, touched him most. What! thought he—ought my affectionate father to be thrown to such a distance from a son, who owes everything to his love and goodness! The thought of his stooping so humbly before him smote the boy's heart, and the tears glistened in his eyes.

"Father," said he, "you have been kind and good to me, beyond my deserts; surely then I cannot bear to hear you address me in that manner, as if we were both strangers. Nor while I am with you, shall any of you so address me. Remember that I am still *your* son and their brother."

The natural affection displayed in this speech soon melted the whole family into tears—not excepting Denis himself, who felt that grief which we experience when about to be separated for the first time from those we love.

"Come over, avourneen," said his mother, drying her eyes with the corner of her check apron: "come over, acushla machree, an' sit beside me: sure although we're sorry for you, Denis, it's proud our hearts are of you, an' good right we have, a sullish! Come

over, an let me be near you as long as I can, any way."

Denis placed himself beside her, and the proud mother drew his head over upon her bosom, and bedewed his face with a gush of tears.

"They say," she observed, "that it's sinful to shed tears when there's no occasion for grief; but I hope it's no sin to cry when one's heart is full of somethin' that brings them to one's eyes, whether they will or not."

"Mave," said the father, "*I'll* miss him more nor any of you: but sure he'll often send letters to us from Maynewth, to tell us how he's gettin' on; an' we'll be proud enough, never fear."

"You'll miss me, Denis," said his favorite sister, who was also called Susan; "for you'll find no one in Maynewth that will keep your linen so white as I did: but never fear, I'll be always knittin' you stockings; an' every year I'll make you half-a-dozen shirts, and you'll think them more natural nor other shirts, when you know they came from your own home—from them that you love! Won't you, Denis?"

"I will, Susy; and I will love the shirts for the sake of the hands that made them."

"And I won't allow Susy Connor to help me as she used to do: they'll be all Alley's sewin' and mine."

"The poor colleen—listen to her!" exclaimed the affectionate father; "indeed you will, Susy; ay, and hem his cravats, that we'll send him ready made an' all."

"Yes," replied Denis, "but as to Susy Connor—hem—why, upon considera—he—hem—upon second thoughts, I don't see why you should prevent her from helping you; she's a neighbor's daughter, and a well-wisher, of whose prosperity in life I'd always wish to hear.

"The poor girl's very bad in her health, for the last three weeks," observed his other sister Alley: "she has lost her appetite, an' is cast down entirely in her spirits. You ought to go an' see her, Denis, before you set out for the college, if it was only on her dacent father's account. When I was tellin' her yisterday that you wor to get the bishop's letter for Maynewth to-morrow, she was in so poor a state of health that she nearly fainted. I had to give her a drink of wather, and sprinkle her face with it. Well, she's a party crathur, an' a good girl, an' was always that, clear knows!"

"Denis achree," said his mother, somewhat alarmed, "are you any way unwell? Why your heart's batin' like a new catched chicken! Are you sick, acushla; or are you used to this?"

"It won't signify," replied Denis, gently raising himself from his mother's arms, "I will sit up, mother; it's but a sudden stroke or two of *tremor cordis*, produced probably by having my mind too much upon one object."

"I think," said his father, "he will be the betther of a little drop of the poteen made into punch, an' for that matter we can all take a sup of it; as there's no one here but ourselves, we will have it snug an' comfortable."

Nothing resembles an April day more than the general disposition of the Irish people. When old Denis's proposal for the punch was made, the gloom which hung over the family—originating, as it did, more in joy than in sorrow—soon began to disappear. Their countenances gradually brightened, by and by mirth stole out, and ere the punch had accomplished its first round, laughter, and jest, and good-humor,—each, in consequence of the occasion, more buoyant and vivacious than usual, were in full play. Denis himself, when animated by the unexcised liquor, threw off his dejection, and ere the night was half spent, found himself in the highest region of pedantry.

"I would not," said he, "turn my back upon any other candidate in the province, in point of preparatory excellence and ardency of imagination. I say, sitting here beside you, my worthy and logical father, I would not retrograde from any candidate for the honors of the Catholic Church in the province—in the kingdom—in Europe; and it is not improbable but I might progradiate another step, and say Christendom at large. And now, what's a candidate? Father, you have some apprehension in you, and are a passable second-hand controversialist—what's a candidate? Will you tell me?"

"I give it up, Denis; but you'll tell us."

"Yes, I will tell you. Candidate signifies a man dressed in fustian; it comes from *candidus*, which is partly Greek, partly Latin, and partly Hebrew. It was the learned designation for Irish linen, too, which in the time of the Romans was in great request at Rome; but it was changed to signify fustian, because it was found that everything a man promised on becoming a candidate for any office, turned out to be only fustian when he got it."

"Denis, avourneen," said his mother, "the greatest comfort myself has is to be thinkin' that when you're a priest, you can be sayin' masses for my poor sinful sowl."

"Yes, there is undoubtedly comfort in that reflection; and depend upon it, my dear mother, that I'll be sure to *clinch* your masses in the surest mode. I'll not fly over them like Camilla across a field of potato oats, without discommoding a single walk, as

too many of my worthy brethren—I mane as too many of those whose worthy brother I will soon be—do in this present year of grace. I'm no fool at the Latin, but, as I'm an unworthy candidate for Maynooth, I cannot even understand every fifteenth word they say when reading mass, independently of the utter scorn with which they treat these two scholastic old worthies, called Syntax and Prosody."

"Denis," said the father, "nothing would give me greater delight than to be present at your first mass, an' your first sermon; and next to that I would like to be stumpin' about wid a decent staff in my hand, maybe wid a bit of silver on the head of it, takin' care of your place when you'd have a parish."

"At all events, if you're not with me, father, I'll keep you comfortable wherever you'll be, whether in this world or the other; for, plase goodness, I'll have some influence in both.—When I get a parish, however, it is not improbable that I may have occasion to see company; the neighboring gentlemen will be apt to relish my society, particularly those who are addicted to conviviality; and our object will be to render ourselves as populous as possible; now, whether in that case it would be compatible—but never fear, father, whilst I have the means, you or one of the family shall never want."

"Will you let the people be far behind in their dues, Denis?" inquired Brian.

"No, no—leave that point to my management. Depend upon it, I'll have them like mice before me—ready to run into the first augerhole they meet. I'll collect lots of oats, and get as much yarn every year as would clothe three regiments of militia, or, for that matther, of dragoons. I'll appoint my stations, too, in the snuggest farmers' houses in the parish, just as Father Finnerty, our worthy parochial priest, ingeniously contrives to do. And, to revert secondarily to the collection of the oats, I'll talk liberally to the Protestant boddaghs; give the Presbyterians a learned homily upon civil and religious freedom: make hard hits with them at that INCUBUS, the Established Church; and, never fear, but I shall fill bag after bag with good corn from many of both creeds."

"That," said Brian, "will be givin' them the bag to hould in airnest."

"No, Brian, but it will be makin' them fill the bag when I hold it, which will be better still."

"But," said Susan, "who'll keep house for you? You know that a priest can't live widout a housekeeper."

"That, Susy," replied Denis, "is, and will be the most difficult point on which to accomplish anything like a satisfactory determination. I have nieces enough, however. There's Peter Finnegan's eldest daughter Mary, and Hugh Tracy's Ailsey—(to whom he added about a dozen and a half more)—together with several yet to be endowed with existence, all of whom will be brisk candidates for the situation."

"I don't think," replied Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, "that you'll ever get any one who'd be more comfortable about you nor your own ould mother. What do you think of takin' myself, Denis?"

"Ay, but consider the accomplishments in the culinary art—*in re vel in arte culinaria*—which will be necessary for my housekeeper to know. How would you, for instance, dress a dinner for the bishop if he happened to pay me a visit, as you may be certain he will? How would you make pies and puddings, and disport your fancy through all the varieties of roast and boil? How would you dress a fowl that it would stand upon a dish as if it was going to dance a hornpipe? How would you amalgamate the different *genera* of wine with boiling fluid and crystallized saccharine matter? How would you dispose of the various dishes upon the table according to high life and mathematics? Wouldn't you be too old to bathe my feet when I'd be unwell? Wouldn't you be too old to bring me my whey in the morning soon as I'd awake, perhaps with a severe headache, after the plenary indulgence of a clerical compotation? Wouldn't you be too old to sit up till the middle of the nocturnal hour, awaiting my arrival home? Wouldn't you be—"

"Hut, tut, that's enough, Denny, I'd never do at all. No, no, but I'll sit a clane, decent ould woman in the corner upon a chair that you'll get made for me. There I'll be wid my pipe and tobacco, smokin' at my aise, chattin' to the sarvints, and sometimes discoorsin' the neighbors that'll come to inquire for you, when they'll be sittin' in the kitchen waitin' till you get through your office. Jist let me have that, Dinny achora, and I'll be as happy as the day's long."

"And I on the other side," said his father, naturally enough struck with the happy simplicity of the picture which his wife drew, "on the other side, Mave, a snug, decent ould man, chattin' to you across the fire, proud to see the bishop an' the gintlemen about him. An' I wouldn't ax to be taken into the parlor at all, except, maybe, when there would be nobody there but yourself, Denis; an' that your mother an' I would go into the parlor to get a glass of punch, or, if

it could be spared, a little taste of wine for novelty."

"And so you shall, both of you—you, father, at one side of the hob, and my mother here at the other, the king and queen of my culinarian dominions. But practice taciturnity a little—I'm visited by the muse, and must indulge in a strain of vocal melody—hem—'tis a few lines of my own composure, the offspring of a moment of inspiration by the nine female Heliconians; but before I incipiate, here's to my own celebrity to-morrow, and afterwards all your healths!"

He then proceeded to sing in his best style a song composed, as he said, by himself, but which, as the composition was rather an eccentric one, we decline giving.

"Denis," said his brother, "you'll have great sport at the Stations."

"Yes, Brian, most inimitable specimen of fraternity, I do look into the futurity of a station with great complacency. Hem—in the morning I rise up in imagination, and after reading part of my office, I and my curate—*ego et coadjutor meus*—or, if I get a large parish, perhaps I and my two curates—*ego et coadjutores mei*—order our horses, and of a fine, calm summer morning we mount them as gracefully as three throopers. The sun is up, and of coorse the moon is down, and the glitter of the light, the sparkling of the dew, the canticles of the birds, and the melodious cowing of the crows in Squire Grimshaw's rookery——"

"Why, Denis, is it *this* parish you'll have?"

"Silence, silence, till I complate my rural ideas—in some gentleman's rookery at all events; the thrush here, the blackbird there, the corn-craik chanting its varied note in another place, and so on. In the meantime we reverend sentimentalists advance, gazing with odoriferous admiration upon the prospect about us, and expatiating in the purest of Latin upon the beauties of unsophisticated nature. When we meet the peasants going out to their work, they put their hands to their hats for us; but as I am known to be the parochial priest, it is to me the salutation is directed, which I return with the air of a man who thinks nothing of such things; but, on the contrary, knows them to be his due. The poor creatures of curates you must know, don't presume to speak of themselves, but simply answer whenever I condescend to propose conversation, for I'll keep them down, never fear. In this edifying style we proceed—I a few steps in advance, and they at a respectful distance behind me, the heads of their horses just to my saddle skirts—my clerical boots as brilliant as the countenance of Phœbus, when decked with rosy smiles, theirs more subordinately polished, for there should be gradations in all things, and humility is the first of virtues in a Christian curate. My bunch of goold sales stands out proudly from my anterior rotundity, for by this time, plase God, I'll be getting frolicsome and corpulent: they with only a poor bit of ribbon, and a single two-penny kay, stained with verdigrace. In the meantime, we come within sight of the wealthy farmer's house, wherein we are to hold the edifying solemnity of a station. There is a joyful appearance of study and bustle about the premises: the peasantry are flocking towards it, dressed in their best clothes; the proprietors of the mansion itself are running out to try if we are in appearance, and the very smoke disports itself hilariously in the air, and bounds up as if it was striving to catch the first glimpse of the clargy. When we approach, the good man—*pater-familias*—comes out to meet us, and the good woman—*mater-familias*—comes curtseying from the door to give the *kead millia failtha*. No sooner do we parsave ourselves noticed, then out comes the Breviary, and in a moment we are at our morning devotions. I being the rector, am particularly grave and dignified. I do not speak much, but am rather sharp, and order the curates whom I treat, however, with great respect before the people, instantly to work. This impresses those who are present with awe and reverence for us all, especially for Father O'Shaughnessy *himself*—(that's me).—I then take a short turn or two across the floor, silently perusing my office, after which I lay it aside, and relax into a little conversation with the people of the house, to show that I can conciliate by love as readily as I can impress them with fear; for, you see *divide et impera* is as aptly applied to the passions as to maxims of state policy—ehem. I then go to my tribunal, and first hear the man and woman and family of the house, and afther them the other penitents according as they can come to me.

"Thus we go on absolving in great style, till it is time for the matutinal meal—vulgarly called breakfast; when the whiskey, eggs, toast, and tea as strong as Hercules, with ham, fowl, beef-steaks, or mutton-chops, all pour in upon us in the full tide of hospitality. Helter-skelter, cut and thrust, right and left, we work away, till the appetite reposes itself upon the cushion of repletion: and off we go once more, full an' warm, to the delicate employment of adjudicating upon sin and transgression, until dinner comes, when, having despatched *as many as possible*—for the quicker we get through them the better—we set about despatching what is always worth a ship-load of such riff-raff—videlicet, a good and extensive dinner. Oh, ye pagan gods of

eating and drinking, Bacchus and——let me see who the presiding deity of good feeding was in the Olympian synod—as I'm an unworthy candidate I forget that topic of learning; but no matter, *non constat*. Oh, ye pagan professors of ating and drinking, Bacchus, and Epicurus, and St. Heliogabalus, Anthony of Padua, and Paul the Hermit, who poached for his own venison, St. Tuck, and St. Tak'em, St. Drinkem, and St. Eatem, with all the other reverend worthies, who bore the blushing honors of the table thick upon your noses, come and inspire your unworthy candidate, while he essays to chant the praises of a Station dinner!

"Then, then, does the priest appropriate to himself his due share of enjoyment. Then does he, like Elias, throw his garment of inspiration upon his coadjutors. Then is the goose cut up, and the farmer's distilled Latin is found to be purer and more edifying than the distillation of Maynooth.

> 'Drink deep, or taste not *thot* Pierian spring,
> A little learning *here's* a dangerous thing.'

And so it is, as far as this inspiring language is concerned. A station dinner is the very pinnacle of a priest's happiness. There is the fun and frolic; then does the lemon-juce of mirth and humor come out of their reverences, like secret writing, as soon as they get properly warm. The song and the joke, the laugh and the leer, the shaking of hands, the making of matches, and the projection of weddings,—och, I must conclude, or my brisk fancy will dissolve in the deluding vision! Here's to my celebrity to-morrow, and may the Bishop catch a Tartar in your son, my excellent and logical father!—as I tell you among ourselves he will do. Mark me, I say it, but it's *inter nos*, it won't go further; but should he trouble me with profundity, may be I'll make a *ludibrium* of him."

"But you forget the weddings and christenings, Denis; you'll have great sport at them too."

"I can't remember three things at a time, Brian; but you are mistaken, however, I had them snug in one corner of my cranium. The weddings and the christenings! do you think I'll have nothing to do in them, you *stultus* you?"

"But, Denis, is there any harm in the priests enjoying themselves, and they so holy as we know they are?" inquired his mother.

"Not the least in life; considering what severe fasting, and great praying they have; besides it's necessary for them to take something to put the sins of the people out of their heads, and that's one reason why they are often jolly at Stations."

"My goodness, what light Denis can throw upon anything!"

"Not without deep study, mother; but let us have another portion of punch each, after which I'll read a Latin *De Profundis*, and we'll go to bed. I must be up early to-morrow; and, Brian, you'll please to have the black mare saddled and my spur brightened as jinteely as you can, for I must go in as much state and grandeur as possible." Accordingly, in due time, after hearing the *De Profundis*, which Denis read in as sonorous a tone, and as pompous a manner, as he could assume, they went to bed for the night, to dream of future dignities for their relative.

When Denis appeared the next morning, it was evident that the spirit of prophecy in which he had contemplated the enjoyments annexed to his ideal station on the preceding night, had departed from him. He was pale and anxious, as in the early part of the previous evening. At breakfast, his very appetite treacherously abandoned him, despite the buttered toast and eggs which his mother forced upon him with such tender assiduity, in order, she said, to make him stout against the Bishop. Her solicitations, however, were vain; after attempting to eat to no purpose, he arose and began to prepare himself for his journey. This, indeed, was a work of considerable importance, for, as they had no looking-glass, he was obliged to dress himself over a tub of water, in which, since truth must be told, he saw a very cowardly visage. In due time, however, he was ready to proceed upon his journey, apparelled in a new suit of black that sat stiffly and awkwardly upon him, crumpled in a manner that enabled any person, at a glance, to perceive that it was worn for the first time. When he was setting out, his father approached him with a small jug of holy water in his hand. "Denis," said he, "I think you won't be the worse for a sprinkle of this;" and he accordingly was about to shake it with a little brush over his person, when Denis arrested his hand.

"Easy, father," he replied, "you don't remember that my new clothes are on. I'll just take a little with my fingers, for you know one drop is as good as a thousand."

"I know that," said the father, "but on the other hand you know it's not *lucky* to refuse it."

"I didn't refuse it," rejoined Denis, "I surely took a *quantum suff.* of it with my own hand."

"It was very near a refusal," said the father, in a disappointed and somewhat sorrowful tone; "but it can't be helped now. I'm only sorry you put it and *quantum suff.* in connection at all. *Quantum suff.* is what

Father Finnerty says, when he will take no more punch; and it doesn't argue respect in you to make as little of a jug of holy wather as he does of a jug of punch."

"I'm sarry for it too," replied Denis, who was every whit as superstitious as his father; "and to atone for my error, I desire you will sprinkle me all over with it—clothes and all."

The father complied with this, and Denis was setting out, when his mother exclaimed, "Blessed be them above us, Denis More! Look at the boy's legs! There's luck! Why one of his stockin's has the wrong side out, and it's upon the right leg too! Well, this will be a fortunate day for you, Denis, any way; the same thing never happened myself, but something good followed it."

This produced a slight conflict between Denis's personal vanity and superstition; but on this occasion superstition prevailed: he even felt his spirits considerably elevated by the incident, mounted the mare, and after jerking himself once or twice in the saddle, to be certain that all was right, he touched her with the spur, and set out to be examined by the Bishop, exclaiming as he went, "Let his lordship take care that I don't make a *ludibrium* of him."

The family at that moment all came to the door, where they stood looking after, and admiring him, until he turned a corner of the road, and left their sight.

Many were the speculations entered into during his absence, as to the fact, whether or not he would put down the bishop in the course of the examination; some of them holding that he could do so if he wished; but others of them denying that it was possible for him, inasmuch as he had never received holy orders.

The day passed, but not in the usual way, in Denis More O'Shaughnessy's. The females of the family were busily engaged in preparing for the dinner, to which Father Finnerty, his curate, and several of their nearest and wealthiest friends had been invited; and the men in clearing out the stables and other offices for the horses of the guests. Pride and satisfaction were visible on every face, and that disposition to cordiality and to the oblivion of everything unpleasant to the mind, marked, in a prominent manner, their conduct and conversation. Old Denis went, and voluntarily spoke to a neighbor, with whom he had not exchanged a word, except in anger, for some time. He found him at work in the field, and, advancing with open hand and heart, he begged his pardon for any offence he might have given him.

"My son," said he, "is goin' to Maynooth; and as he is a boy that we have a good right to be proud of, and as our friends are comin' to ate their dinner wid us to-day, and as—as my heart is to full to bear ill-will against any livin' sowl, let alone a man that I know to be sound at the heart, in spite of all that has come between us—I say, Darby, I forgive you, and I expect pardon for my share of the offence. There's the hand of an honest man—let us be as neighbors ought to be, and not divided into parties and factions against one another, as we have been too long. Take your dinner wid us to-day, and let us hear no more about ill-will and unkindness."

"Denis," said his friend, "it ill becomes you to spake first. Tis I that ought to do that, and to do it long ago too; but you see, somehow, so long as it was to be decided by blows between the families, I'd never give in. Not but that *I* might do so, but my sons, Denis, wouldn't hear of it. Throth, I'm glad of this, and so will they too; for only for the honor and glory of houldin' out, we might be all friends through other long ago. And I'll tell you what, we couldn't do better, the two factions of us, nor join and thrash them Haigneys that always put between us."

"No, Darby, I tell you, I bear no ill-will, no bad thoughts agin any born Christian this day, and I won't hear of that. Come to us about five o'clock: we're to have Father Finnerty, and Father Molony, his curate: all friends, man, all friends; and Denny, God guard him this day, will be home, afther passin' the Bishop, about four o'clock."

"I always thought that gorsoon would come to somethin'. Why it was wondherful how he used to discoorse upon the chapel-green, yourself and himself: but he soon left you behind. And how he sealed up poor ould Dixon, the parish clark's mouth, at Barny Boccagh's wake. God rest his soul! It was talkin' about the Protestant church they wor. 'Why,' said Misther Denis, 'you ould termagent, can you tell me who first discovered your church?' The dotin' ould crathur began of hummin', and hawin', and advisin' the boy to have more sense. 'Come,' said he, 'you ould canticle, can you answer? But for fear you can't, I'll answer for you. It was the divil discovered it, one fine mornin' that he went out to get an appetite, bein' in delicate health.' Why, Denis, you'd tie all that wor present wid a rotten sthraw."

"Darby, I ax your pardon over agin for what came between us; and I see now bether than I did, that the fault of it was more mine nor yours. You'll be down surely about five o'clock?"

"I must go and take this beard off o' me,

and clane myself; and I may as well do that now: but I'll be down, never fear."

"In throth the boy was always bright!—ha, ha, ha!—and he sobered Dixon?"

"Had him like a judge in no time."

"Oh, he could do it—he could do that, at all times. God be wid you, Darby, till I see you in the evenin'.

"*Bannaght lhath*, Denis, an' I'm proud we're as we ought to be."

About four o'clock, the expected guests began to assemble at Denis's; and about the same hour one might perceive Susan O'-Shaughnessy running out to a stile a little above the house, where she stood for a few minutes, with her hand shading her eyes, looking long and intensely towards the direction from which she expected her brother to return. Hitherto, however, he could not be discovered in the distance, although scarcely five minutes elapsed during the intervals of her appearance at the stile to watch him. Some horsemen she did notice; but after straining her eyes eagerly and anxiously, she was enabled only to report, with a dejected air, that they were their own friends coming from a distant part of the parish, to be present at the dinner. At length, after a long and eager look, she ran in with an exclamation of delight, saying—

"Thank goodness, he's comin' at last; I see somebody dressed in black ridin' down the upper end of Tim Murly's *boreen*, an' I'm sure an' certain it must be Denis, from his dress!"

"I'll warrant it is, my colleen," replied her father; "he said he'd be here before the dinner would be ready, an' it's widin a good hour of that. I'll thry myself."

He and his daughter once more went out; but, alas! only to experience a fresh disappointment. Instead of Denis, it was Father Finnerty; who, it appeared, felt as anxious to be in time for dinner, as the young candidate himself could have done. He was advancing at a brisk trot, *not* upon the colt which had been presented to him, but upon his old nag, which seemed to feel as eager to get at Denis's oats, as its owner did to taste his mutton.

"I see, Susy, we'll have a day of it, plase goodness," observed Denis to the girl; "here's Father Finnerty, and I wouldn't for more nor I'll mention that he had staid away: and I hope the *conejuther* will come as well as himself. Do you go in, aroon, and tell them he's comin', and I'll go and meet him."

Most of Denis's friends were now assembled, dressed in their best apparel, and raised to the highest pitch of good humor; for no man who knows the relish with which Irishmen enter into convivial enjoyments, can be ignorant of the remarkable flow of spirits which the prospect of an abundant and hospitable dinner produces among them.

Father Finnerty was one of those priests who constitute a numerous species in Ireland; regular, but loose and careless in the observances of his church, he could not be taxed with any positive neglect of pastoral duty. He held his stations at stated times and places, with great exactness, but when the severer duties annexed to them were performed, he relaxed into the boon companion, sang his song, told his story, laughed his laugh, and occasionally danced his dance, the very *beau idéal* of a rough, shrewd, humorous divine, who, amidst the hilarity of convivial mirth, kept an eye to his own interest, and sweetened the severity with which he exacted his "dues" by a manner at once jocose and familiar. If a wealthy farmer had a child to christen, his reverence declined baptizing it in the chapel, but as a proof of his marked respect for its parents, he and his curate did them the honor of performing the ceremony at their own house. If a marriage was to be solemnized, provided the parties were wealthy, he adopted the same course, and manifested the same flattering marks of his particular esteem for the parties, by attending at their residence; or if they preferred the pleasure of a journey to his own house, he and his curate accompanied them home from the same motives. This condescension, whilst it raised the pride of the parties, secured a good dinner and a pleasant evening's entertainment for the priests, enhanced their humility exceedingly, for the more they enjoyed themselves, the more highly did their friends consider themselves honored. This mode of life might, one would suppose, lessen their importance and that personal respect which is entertained for the priests by the people; but it is not so—the priests can, the moment such scenes are ended, pass, with the greatest aptitude of habit, into the hard, gloomy character of men who are replete with profound knowledge, exalted piety, and extraordinary power. The sullen frown, the angry glance, or the mysterious allusion to the omnipotent authority of the church, as vested in their persons, joined to some unintelligible dogma, laid down as their authority, are always sufficient to check anything derogatory towards them, which is apt to originate in the unguarded moments of conviviality.

"Plase your Reverence, I'll put him up myself," said Denis to Father Finnerty, as he took his horse by the bridle, and led him towards the stable, "and how is *my* cowlt doin' wid you, sir?"

"Troublesome, Denis; he was in a bad state when I got him, and he'll cost me nearly his price before I have him thoroughly broke."

"He was pretty well broke wid me, I know," replied Denis, "and I'm afear'd you've given him into the hands of some one that knows little about horses. Mave," he shouted, passing the kitchen door, "here's Father Finnerty—go in, Doethor, and put big Brian Buie out o' the corner; for goodness sake *Eximinicate* him from the hob—an' sure you have power to do that any way."

The priest laughed, but immediately assuming a grave face, as he entered, exclaimed—

"Brian Buie, in the name of the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid's Elements—in the name of the cube and square roots—of Algebra, Mathematics, Fluxions, and the doctrine of all essential spirits that admit of proof—in the name of Nebuchadanezar the diviue, who invented the convenient scheme of taking a cold collation under a hedge—by the power of that profound branch of learning, the Greek Digemma—by the authority of true Latin, *primo*, of Beotian Greek, *secundo*, and of Arabian Hebrew, *tertio;* which is, when united by the skill of profound erudition, *primo, secundo, tertio;* or, being reversed by the logic of illustration, *tertio, secundo, primo. Commando te in nomine botteli potheeni boni drinkandi his œdibus, hac nocte, inter amicos excellentissimi amici mei, Dionissii O'Shaughnessy, quem beknavavi ex excellentissimo colto ejus, causa pedantissimi filii ejus, designati ecclesiæ, patri, sed nequaquam deo, nec naturæ, nec ingenio; —commando te inquam, Bernarde Buie, surgere, stare, ambulare, et decedere e cornero isto vel hobbo, qua nunc sedes!* Yes, I command thee, Brian Buie, who sit upon the hob of my worthy and most excellent friend and parishioner, Denis O'Shaughnessy, to rise, to stand up before your spiritual superior, to walk down from it, and to tremble as if you were about to sink into the earth to the neck, but no further; before the fulminations of him who can wield the thunder of that mighty Salmoneus, his holiness the Pope, successor to St. Peter, who left the servant of the Centurion earless—I command and objurgate thee, sinner as thou art, to vacate your seat on the hob for the man of sanctity, whose legitimate possession it is, otherwise I shall send you, like that worthy archbishop, the aforesaid Nebuchadanezar, to live upon leeks for seven years in the renowned kingdom of Wales, where the leeks may be seen to this day! Presto!"

These words, pronounced with a grave face, in a loud, rapid, and sonorous tone of voice, startled the good people of the house, who sat mute and astonished at such an exordium from the worthy pastor: but no sooner had he uttered Brian Buie's name, giving him, at the same time, a fierce and authoritative look, than the latter started to his feet, and stepped down in a kind of alarm towards the door. The priest immediately placed his hand upon his shoulder in a mysterious manner, exclaiming—

"Don't be alarmed, Brian, I have taken the force of the *anathema* off you; your power to sit or stand, or go where you please, is returned again. I wanted your seat, and Denis desired me to excommunicate you out of it, which I did, and you accordingly left it without your own knowledge, consent, or power; I transferred you to where you stand, and you had no more strength to resist me than if you were an infant not three hours in the world!"

"I ax God's pardon, an' your Reverence's," said Brian, in a tremor, "if I have given offince. Now, bless my soul! what's this? As sure as I stand before you, neighbors, I know neither act nor part of how I was brought from the hob at all—neither act nor part! Did any of yez see me lavin' it; or how did I come here—can you tell me?"

"Paddy," said one of his friends, "did you see him?"

"The sorra one o' me seen him," replied Paddy: "I was lookin' at his Reverence, sthrivin' to know what he was sayin'."

"Pether, did you?" another inquired.

"Me! I never seen a stim of him till he was standin' alone on the flure! Sure, when he didn't see or find himself goin', how could another see him?"

"Glory be to God!" exclaimed Mave; "one ought to think well what they say, when they spake of the clargy, for they don't know what it may bring down upon them, sooner or later!"

"Our Denis will be able to do that yet," said Susan to her elder sister.

"To be sure he will, *girsha*, as soon as he's ordained—every bit as well as Father Finnerty," replied Mary.

The young enthusiast's countenance brightened as her sister spoke: her dark eye became for a minute or two fixed upon vacancy, during which it flashed several times; until, as the images of her brother's future glory passed before her imagination, she became wrapt—her lip quivered—her cheek flushed into a deeper color, and the tears burst in gushes from her eyes.

The mother, who was now engaged in welcoming Father Finnerty—a duty which the priest's comic miracle prevented her from performing sooner—did not perceive

her daughter's agitation, nor, in fact, did any one present understand its cause. Whilst the priest was taking Brian Buie's seat, she went once more to watch the return of Denis; and while she stood upon the stile, her father, after having put up the horse, entered the house, "to keep his Reverence company."

"An' pray, Docthor," he inquired, "where is Father Molony, that he's not wid you? I hope he won't disappoint us; he's a mighty pleasant gintleman of an evenin', an', bavrin' your Reverence, I don't know a man tells a better story."

"He entreated permission from me this morning," replied Father Finnerty, "and that was leave to pay a visit to the Bishop, for what purpose I know not, unless to put in a word in season for the first parish that becomes vacant."

"Throth, an' he well deserves a parish," replied Denis; "an' although we'd be loath to part wid him, still we'd be proud to hear of his promotion."

"He'll meet Denis there," observed Susan, who had returned from the stile: "he'll be apt to be present at his trial wid the Bishop; an' maybe he'll be home along wid him. I'll go an' thry if I can see them agin;" and she flew out once more to watch their return.

"Now, Father Finnerty," said an uncle of Denis's, "you can give a good guess at what a dacent parish ought to be worth to a parish priest?"

"Mrs. O'Shaughnessy," said the priest, "is that fat brown goose suspended before the fire, of your own rearing?"

"Indeed it is, plase your Reverence; but as far as good male an' phaties could go for the last month, it got the benefit of them."

"And pray, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, have you many of the same kidney? I only ask for information, as I said to Peery Hacket's wife, the last day I held the Station in Peery's. There was just such another goose hanging before the fire; but, you must know, the cream of the joke was, that I had been after coming from the confessional, as hungry as a man could conveniently wish himself; and seeing the brown fat goose before the fire just as that is, why my teeth, Mave, began to get lachrymose. Upon my Priesthood it was such a goose as a priest's corpse might get up on its elbow to look at, and exclaim, '*avourneen machree*, it's a thousand pities that I'm not living to have a cut at you!'—ha, ha, ha! God be good to old Friar Hennessy, I have that joke from him.

"'Well, Mrs. Hacket,' says I, as I was airing my fingers at the fire, 'I dare say you haven't another goose like this about the house? Now, tell me, like an honest woman, have you any of the same kidney?—I only ask for information.'

"Mrs. Hacket, however, told me she believed there might be *a few* of the same kind straggling about the place, but said nothing further upon it, until the Saturday following, when her son brings me down a pair of the fattest geese I ever cut up for my Sunday's dinner. Now, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, wasn't that doing the thing *dacent?*"

"Well, well, Docthor," said Denis, "that was all right; let Mave alone, an' maybe she'll be apt to find out a pair that will match Mrs. Hacket's. Not that I say it, but she doesn't like to be outdone in anything."

"Docthor, I was wishin' to know, sir," continued the uncle of the absent *candidate*, "what the value of a good parish might be."

"I think, Mave, there's a discrepancy between the goose and the shoulder of mutton. The fact is, that if it be a disputation between them, as to which will be roasted first, I pronounce that the goose will have it. It's now, let me see, half past four o'clock, and, in my opinion, it will take a full half hour to bring up the mutton. So Mave, if you'll be guided by your priest, advance the mutton towards the fire about two inches, and keep the little *girsha* basting steadily, and then you'll be sure to have it rich and juicy."

"Docthor, wid submission, I was wantin' to know what a good parish might be——"

"Mike Lawdher, if I don't mistake, you ought to have good grazing down in your meadows at Ballinard. What will you be charging for a month or two's grass for this colt I've bought from my dacent friend, Denis O'Shaughnessy, here? And, Mike, be rasonable upon a poor man, for we're all poor, being only tolerated by the state we live under, and ought not, of course, to be hard upon one another."

"An' what did he cost you, Docthor?" replied Mike, answering one question by another; "what did you get for him, Denis?" he continued, referring for information to Denis, to whom, on reflection, he thought it more decorous to put the question.

Denis, however, felt the peculiar delicacy of his situation, and looked at the priest, whilst the latter, under a momentary embarrassment, looked significantly at Denis. His Reverence, however, was seldom at a loss.

"What would *you* take him to be worth, Mike?" he asked; "remember he's but badly trained, and I'm sure it will cost me both money and trouble to make anything dacent out of him."

"If you got him somewhere between five and twenty and thirty guineas, I would say

you have good value for your money, plase your Reverence. What do *you* say, Denis—am I near it?"

"Why, Mike, you know as much about a horse as you do about the Pentateuch or Paralipomenon. Five and twenty guineas, indeed! I hope you won't set your grass as you would sell your horses."

"Why, thin, if your Reverence *ped* ready money for him, I maintain he was as well worth twenty guineas as a thief's worth the gallows; an' you know, sir, I'd be long sorry to differ wid you. Am I near it now, Docthor?"

"Denis got for the horse more than that," said his Reverence, "and he may speak for himself."

"Thrue for you, sir," replied Denis; "I surely got above twenty guineas for him, an' I'm well satisfied wid the bargain."

"You hear that now, Mike—you hear what he says."

"There's no goin' beyant it," returned Mike; "the proof o' the puddin' is in the atin,' as we'll soon know, Mave—eh, Docthor?"

"I never knew Mave to make a bad one," said the priest, "except upon the day Friar Hennessy dined with me here—my curate was sick, and I had to call in the Friar to assist me at confession; however, to do Mave justice, it was not *her* fault, for the Friar drowned the pudding, which was originally a good one, with a deluge of strong whiskey.

"'It's too gross,' said the facetious Friar, in his loud, strong voice—'it's too gross, Docthor Finnerty, so let us *spiritualize* it, that it may be Christian atin,' fit for pious men to digest,' and then he came out with his thundering laugh—oigh, oigh, oigh, oigh! but he had consequently the most of the pudding to himself, an' indeed brought the better half of it home in his saddle-bags."

"Faix, an' he did," said Mave, "an' a fat goose that he coaxed Mary to kill for him unknownst to us all, in the coorse o' the day."

"How long is he dead, Docthor?" said Denis; "God rest him any way, he's happy!"

"He died in the hot summer, now nine years about June last; and talking about him, reminds me of a trick he put on me about two years before his death. He and I had not been on good terms for long enough before that time; but as the curate I had was then sickly, and as I wouldn't be allowed two, I found that it might be convenient to call in the Friar occasionally, a regulation he did not at all relish, for he said he could make far more by *questing* and poaching about among the old women of the parish, with whom he was a great favorite, in consequence of the Latin hymns he used to sing for them, and the great cures he used to perform—a species of devotion which neither I nor my curate had time to practise. So, in order to renew my intimacy, I sent him a bag of oatmeal and a couple of flitches of bacon, both of which he readily accepted, and came down to me on the following day to borrow three guineas. After attempting to evade him—for, in fact, I had not the money *to spare*—he at length succeeded in getting them from me, on the condition that he was to give my curate's horse and mine a month's grass, by way of compensation, for I knew that to expect payment from him was next to going for pity to a parson.

"'I will,' said he, 'give your horses the run of my best field'—for he held a comfortable bit of ground; 'but,' he added, 'as you have been always cutting at me about my principle, I must insist, if it was only to convince you of my ginerosity, that you'll have the choosing of the month to myself.'

"As I really wanted an assistant at the time, in consequence of my curate's illness, he had me bound, in some degree, to his own will. I accordingly gave him the money; but from that till the day of his death, he never sent for our horses, except when there was a foot and a half of snow on the ground, at which time he was certain to despatch a messenger for him, 'with Father Hennessy's compliments, and he requested Doctor Finnerty to send the horses to Father Hennessy's field, to ate their month's grass.'"

"But is it true, Docthor, that his face was shinin' after his death?"

"True enough, and to my own knowledge, long *before* that event."

"Dear me," exclaimed Mave, "he was a holy man afther all!"

"Undoubtedly he was," said the priest; "there are spots in the sun, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy—we are not all immaculate. There never was one sent into this world without less or more sin upon them. Even the saints themselves had venial touches about them, but nothing to signify."

"Docthor," said the uncle, pertinaciously adhering to the original question, "you have an opportunity of knowin' what a good parish might be worth to a smart, active priest? For the sake of a son of mine that I've some notion of——"

"By the by, I wonder Denis is not here before now," exclaimed his Reverence, lending a deaf ear to Mike O'Shaughnessy's interrogatory.

Old Denis's favorite topic had been started, and he accordingly launched out upon it with all the delight and ardor of a fond father.

"Now, Docthor dear, before us all—an' sure you know as well as I do, that we're all friends together—what's your downright opinion of Denis? Is he as bright as you tould me the other mornin' he was?"

"Really, Denis O'Shaughnessy," replied his Reverence, "it's not pleasant to me to be pressed so often to eulogize a young gintleman of whose talents I have so frequently expressed my opinion. Is not once sufficient for *me* to say what I've said concerning him? But, as we *are* all present, I now say and declare, that my opinion of Denis O'Shaughnessy, jun., is decidedly *peculiar*—decidedly.—Come, girsha, keep basting the mutton, and never heed my boots—turn it about and baste the back of it better."

"God be thanked," exclaimed the delighted father, "sure it's comfort to hear *that*, any how—afther all the pains and throuble we've taken wid him, to know it's not lost. Why, that boy was so smart, Docthor, that, may I never sin, when he went first to the Latin, but—an' this no lie, for I have it from his own lips—when he'd look upon his task two or three times over night, he'd waken wid every word of it, pat off the book the next mornin'. And how do you think he got it? Why, the crathur, you see, used to dhrame that he was readin' it off, and so he used to get it that way in his sleep!"

At this moment Darby Moran, Denis's old foe entered, and his reception was cordial, and, if the truth were known, almost magnanimous on the part of Denis.

"Darby Moran," said he, "not a man, barrin' his Reverence here, in the parish we sit in, that I'm prouder to see on my flure—give me your hand, man alive, and Mave and all of ye welcome him. Everything of what you know is buried between us, and you're bound to welcome him, if it was only in regard of the handsome way he spoke of our son this day—here's my own chair, Darby, and sit down."

"Throth," said Darby, after shaking hands with the priest and greeting the rest of the company, "the same boy no one could spake ill of; and, although we and his people were not upon the best footin', still the sarra one o' me but always gave *him* his due."

"Indeed, I believe you, Darby," said his father; "but are you comfortable? Draw your chair nearer the fire—the evenin's gettin' cowld."

"I'm very well, Denis, I thank you;—nearer the fire! Faix, except you want to have me roasted along wid that shoulder of mutton and goose, I think I can't go much nearer it."

"I'm sorry, you warn't in sooner, Darby, till you'd hear what Docthor Finnerty here—God spare him long among us—said of Denis a while ago. Docthor, if it wouldn't be makin' too free, maybe you'd oblage me wid repatin' it over again?"

"I can never have any hesitation," replied the priest, "in repeating anything to his advantage—I stated, Darby, that young Misther O'Shaughnessy was a youth of whom my opinion was decidedly *peculiar*—keep basting, child, you're forgetting the goose now; did you never see a priest's boots before?"

"An' nobody has a better right to know nor yourself, wherever larnin' and education's consarned," said the father.

"Why, it's not long since I examined him myself; I say it sitting here, and I believe every one that hears me is present; and during the course of the examination I was really astonished. The translations, and derivations, and conjugations, and ratiocinations, and variations, and investigations that he gave, were all the most remarkably original I ever heard. He would not be contented with the common sense of a passage; but he'd keep hunting, and hawking, and fishing about for something that was out of the ordinary course of reading, that I was truly struck with his eccentric turn of genius."

"You think he'll pass the Bishop with great credit, Docthor?"

"I'll tell you what I think, Denis—which is going further than I went yet—I think that if *he* were the Bishop, and the *Bishop* the candidate for Maynooth, that his lordship would have but a poor chance of passing. There's the pinnacle of my eulogium upon him; and now, to give my opinion on another important subject; I pronounce both the goose and mutton done to a turn. As it appears that Mrs. O'Shaughnessy has every other portion of the dinner ready, I move that we commence operations as soon as possible."

"But Denis, Docthor? it would be a pleasure to me to have him, poor fellow, wid *all* his throuble over, and his mind at ase; maybe if we wait a weeshy while longer, Docthor, that he'll come, and you know Father Molony too is to come yet, and some more of our friends."

"If the examination was a long one, I tell you that Mr. O'Shaughnessy may not be here this hour to come; and you may be sure, the Bishop, meeting such a bright boy, wouldn't make it a short one. As for Father Molony, he'll be here time enough, so I move again that we attack the citadel."

"Well, well, never say it again—the sarra one o' me will keep it back, myself bein' as

ripe as any of you, barrin' his Reverence, that we're not to take the foreway of in anything. Ha! ha! ha!"

Whilst Mave and her daughters were engaged in laying dinner, and in making all the other arrangements necessary for their comfort, the priest took Denis aside, and thus addressed him:—

"Denis, I need scarcely remark that this meeting of our friends is upon no common occasion; that it's neither a wedding, nor a Station, nor a christening, but a gathering of relations for a more honorable purpose than any of them, excepting the Station, which you know is a *religious rite*. I just mention this privately, lest you might not be properly on your guard, and to prevent any appearance of maneness; or—in short, I hope you have abundance of everything; I hope you have, and that, not for your own sake so much as for that of your son. Remember your boy, and what he's designed for, and don't let the dinner or its concomitants be discreditable to *him*; for, in fact, it's his dinner, observe, and not yours."

"I'm thankful, I'm deeply thankful, an' for ever oblaged to your Reverence for your kindness; although, widout at all makin' little of it, it wasn't wanted here; never fear, Docthor, there'll be lashings and lavins."

"Well, but make that clear, Denis; here now are near two dozen of us, and you say there are more to come, and all the provision I see for them is a shoulder of mutton, a goose, and something in that large pot on the fire, which I suppose is hung beef."

"Thrue for you, sir, but you don't know that we've got a tarin' fire down in the barn, where there's two geese more and two shouldhers of mutton to help what you seen—not to mintion a great big puddin', an' lots of other things. Sure you might notice Mave and the girls runnin' in an' out to attind the cookin' of it."

"Enough, Denis, that's sufficient; and now, between you and me, I say your son will be the load-star of Maynooth, which out-tops anything I said of him yet."

"There's a whole keg of whiskey, Docthor."

"I see nothing to prevent him from being a bishop; indeed, it's almost certain, for he can't be kept back."

"I only hope your Reverence will be livin' when he praches his first sarmon. I have the dam of the coult still, an' a wink's as good as a nod, please your Reverence."

"A strong letter in his favor to the President of Maynooth will do him no harm," said the priest.

They then joined their other friends, and in a few minutes an excellent dinner, plain and abundant, was spread out upon the table. It consisted of the usual materials which constitute an Irish feast in the house of a wealthy farmer, whose pride it is to compel every guest to eat so long as he can swallow a morsel. There were geese and fowl of all kinds—shoulders of mutton, laughing-potatoes, carrots, parsnips, and cabbage, together with an immense pudding, boiled in a clean sheet, and ingeniously kept together with long straws * drawn through it in all directions. A lord or duke might be senseless enough to look upon such a substantial, yeoman-like meal with a sneer; but with all their wealth and elegance, perhaps they might envy the health and appetite of those who partook of it. When Father Finnerty had given a short grace, and the operations of the table were commenced, Denis looked around him with a disappointed air, and exclaimed:

"Father Finnerty, there's only one thing, indeed I may say two, a wantin' to complate our happiness—I mean Denis and Father Molony! What on earth does your Reverence think can keep them?"

To this he received not a syllable of reply, nor did he consider it necessary to urge the question any further at present. Father Finnerty's powers of conversation seemed to have abandoned him; for, although there were some few expressions loosely dropped, yet the worthy priest maintained an obstinate silence.

At length, in due time, he began to let fall an occasional remark, impeded considerably by hiccups, and an odd *Deo Gratias*, or *Laus Deo*, uttered in that indecisive manner which indicates the position of a man who debates within himself whether he ought to rest satisfied or not.

At this moment the tramping of a horse was heard approaching the door, and immediately every one of Denis's family ran out to ascertain whether it was the young candidate. Loud and clamorous was their joy on finding that they were not mistaken; he was alone, and, on arriving at the door, dismounted slowly, and received their welcomes and congratulations with a philosophy which perplexed them not a little. The scene of confusion which followed his entrance into the house could scarcely be conceived: every hand was thrust out to welcome him, and every tongue loud in wishing him joy and happiness. The chairs and stools were overturned as they stood in the way of those

* This, about thirty years ago, was usual at weddings and other feasts, where everything went upon a large scale.

who wished to approach him; plates fell in the bustle, and wooden trenchers trundled along the ground; the dogs, on mingling with the crowd that surrounded him, were kicked angrily from among them by those who had not yet got shaking hands with Denis. Father Finnerty, during this commotion, kept his seat in the most dignified manner; but the moment it had subsided he stretched out his hand to Denis, exclaiming:

"Mr. O'Shaughnessy, I congratulate you upon the event of this auspicious day! I wish you joy and happiness!"

"So do we all, over and over agin!" they exclaimed; "a proud gintleman he may be this night!"

"I thank you, Father Finnerty," said Denis, "and I thank you all!"

"Denis, avourneen," said his mother, "sit down an' ate a hearty dinner; you must be both tired and hungry, so sit down, avick, and when you're done you can tell us all."

"*Bonum concilium, mi chare Dionysi*—the advice is good, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, and I myself will, in honor of this day, although I have already dined, just take another slice;" and as he spoke he helped himself. Anything to honor a friend," he continued; "but, by the by, before I commence, I will try your own prescription, Denis—a whetter of this poteen at intervals. Hoch, that's glorious stuff—pure as any one of the cardinal virtues, and strong as fortitude, which is the champion of them all."

Denis, during these pleasant observations of the priest, sat silent, with a countenance pale and apparently dejected. When his mother had filled his plate, he gently put it away from him; but poured out a little spirits and water, which he drank.

"I cannot eat a morsel," said he; "mother, don't press me, it's impossible. We are all assembled here—friends, neighbors, and relations—I'll not disguise the fact—but the truth is, I have been badly treated this day; I have been, in the most barefaced manner, rejected by the Bishop, and a nephew of Father Molony's elected in my place."

The effect which this disclosure produced upon the company present, especially upon his own family, utterly defies description. His father hastily laid down his glass, and his eyes opened to the utmost stretch of their lids; his mother let a plate fall which she was in the act of handing to one of her daughters, who was about to help a poor beggar at the door; all convivial enjoyment was suspended; the priest laid down his knife and fork, and fixed his large eyes upon Denis, with his mouth full; his young sister, Susan, flew over to his side, and looked intensely into his countenance for an explanation of what he meant, for she had not properly understood him.

"Rejected!" exclaimed the priest—"rejected! Young man, I am your spiritual superior, and I command you, on this occasion, to practise no jocularity whatsoever—I lay it upon you as a religious duty to be serious and candid, to speak truth, and inform us at once whether what you have advanced be true or not?"

"I wish," said Denis, "that it was only jocularity on my part; but I solemnly assure you all that it is not. The Bishop told me that I suffered myself to be misled as to my qualifications for entrance; he says it will take a year and a half's hard study to enable me to matriculate with a good grace. I told him that your Reverence examined me, and said I was well prepared; and he said to me, in reply, that your Reverence was very little of a judge as to my fitness."

"Very well," said the priest, "I thank his lordship; 'tis true, I deserved that from *him;* but it can't be helped. I see, at all events, how the land lies. Denis O'Shaughnessy, I pronounce you to be, in the first place, an extremely stultified and indiscreet young man; and, in the next place, as badly treated and as oppressed a candidate for Maynooth as entered it. I pronounce you, in the face of the world, right well prepared for it; but I see now who is the spy of the diocese—oh, oh, thank you, Mister Molony—I now remember, that he is related to his lordship through the beggarly clan of the M——'s. But wait a little; if I have failed here, thank Heaven I have interest in the next diocese, the Bishop of which is my cousin, and we will yet have a tug for it."

The mother and sisters of Denis were now drowned in tears; and the grief of his sister Susan was absolutely hysterical. Old Denis's brow became pale and sorrowful, his eye sunk, and his hand trembled. His friends all partook of this serious disappointment, and sat in silence and embarrassment around the table. Young Denis's distress was truly intense: he could not eat a morsel; his voice was tremulous with vexation; and, indeed, altogether the aspect of those present betokened the occurrence of some grievous affliction.

"Well," said Brian, Denis's elder brother, "I only say this, that it's a good story for him to tell that he *is* a Bishop, otherwise I'd think no more of puttin' a bullet through him from behind a hedge, than I would of shootin' a cur dog."

"Don't say that, Brian," said his mother; "bad as it is, he's one of our clargy, so don't spake disrespectful of him; sure a year is

not much to wait, an' the next time you go before him it won't be in his power to keep you back. As for Father Molony, we wish him well, but undher the roof of this house, except at a Station, or something else of the kind, he will never sit, barrin' I thought it was either dhry or hungry, that I wouldn't bring evil upon my substance by refusin' him."

"And that was his lordship's character of me?" inquired the priest once more with chagrin.

"If that was not, perhaps you will find it in this letter," replied Denis, handing him a written communication from the Bishop. Father Finnerty hastily broke open the seal, and read silently as follows:—

"*To the Rev. Father Finnerty, peace, and benediction.*

"REV. SIR,

"I feel deep indignation at hearing the disclosure made to me this day by the bearer, touching your negotiation with him and his family, concerning a horse, as the value paid by them to you for procuring the use of my influence in his favor; and I cannot sufficiently reprobate such a transaction, nor find terms strong enough in which to condemn the parties concerned in it. Sir, I repeat it, that such juggling is more reprehensible on your part than on theirs, and that it is doubly disrespectful to me, to suppose that I could be influenced by anything but merit in the candidates. I desire you will wait upon me to-morrow, when I hope you may be able to place the transaction in such a light as will raise you once more to the estimation in which I have always held you. There are three other candidates, one of whom is a relation of your excellent curate's; but I have as yet made *no* decision, so that the appointment is still open. In the meantime, I command you to send back the horse to his proper owner, as soon after the receipt of this as possible, for O'Shaughnessy must not be shackled by any such stipulations. I have now to ask your Christian forgiveness, for having, under the influence of temporary anger, spoken of you before this lad with disrespect. I hereby make restitution, and beg that you will forgive me, and remember me by name in your prayers, as I shall also name you in mine.

"I am, etc.,

"+James M."

When Father Finnerty read this letter, his countenance gradually assumed an expression of the most irresistible humor; nothing could be more truly comic than the significant look he directed toward each individual of the O'Shaughnessys, not omitting even the little boy who had basted the goose, whom he patted on the head with that mechanical abstraction resulting from the occurrence of something highly agreeable. The cast of his features was now the more ludicrous, when contrasted with the rueful visage he presented on hearing the manner in which his character had been delineated by the Bishop. At length he laid himself back in his chair, and putting his hands to his sides, fairly laughed out loudly for near five minutes.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "Dionysius, Dionysius, but you are the simple and unsophisticated youth! Oh, you *bocaun* of the wide earth, to come home with a long face upon you, telling us that you were rejected, and you *not* rejected."

"Not rejected!—not rejeect!—not rejeckset!—not raxjaxet!" they all exclaimed, attempting to pronounce the word as well as they could.

"For the sake of heaven above us, Docthor, don't keep us in doubt one minute longer," said old Denis.

"Follow me," said the priest, becoming instantly grave, "follow me, Dionysius; follow me Denis More, and Brian, all follow—follow *me*. *I* have news for you! My friends, we'll be back instantly."

They accordingly passed into another room, where they remained in close conference for about a quarter of an hour, after which they re-entered in the highest spirits.

"Come," said Denis, "Pether, go over, abouchal, to Andy Bradagh's for Larry Cassidy the piper—fly like a swallow, Pether, an' don't come without him. Mave, achora, all's right. Susy, you darlin', dhry your eyes, avourneen, all's right. Nabors, friends—fill, fill—I say all's right still. My son's not disgraced, nor he won't be disgraced whilst I have a house over my head, or a beast in my stable. Docthor, reverend Docthor, drink; may I never sin, but you must get merry an' dance a '*cut-along*' wid myself, when the music comes, and you must thrip the 'priest in his boots' wid Susy here afther. Excuse me, nabors—Docthor, you won't blame me, there's both joy and sorrow in these tears. I have had a good family of childhre, an' a faithful wife; an' Mave, achora, although time has laid his mark upon you as well as upon myself, and the locks are gray that wor once as black as a raven: yet, Mave, I seen the day, an' there's many livin' to prove it—ay, Mave, I seen the day when you wor worth lookin' at—the wild rose of Lisbuie she was called, Docthor. Well, Mave, I hope that my eyes may be closed by the hands I loved an' love so well—an' that's your own, agrah machree, an' Denis's."

"Whisht, Denis asthore," said Mave, wiping her eyes, "I hope I'll never see that day. Afther seein' Denis here, what we all hope him to be, the next thing I wish is, that I may never live to see my husband taken away from me, acushla; no, I hope God will take me to himself before *that* comes."

There is something touching in the burst of pathetic affection which springs strongly from the heart of a worthy couple, when, seated among their own family, the feelings of the husband and father, the wife and mother, overpower them. In this case, the feeling is always deep in proportion to the strength and purity of domestic affection; still it is checked by the melancholy satisfaction that our place is to be filled by those who are dear to us.

"But now," said the priest, "that the scent lies still warm, let me ask you, Dionysius, how the Bishop came to understand the *compactum?*"

"I really cannot undertake to say," replied Denis; "but if any man has an eye like a *basileus* he has. On finding, sir, that there was some defect in my responsive powers, he looked keenly at me, closing his piercing eyes a little, and inquired upon what ground I had presented myself as a candidate. I would have sunk the *compactum* altogether, but for the eye. I suspended and hesitated a little, and at length told him that there was an understanding—a—a—kind of—in short, he squeezed the whole secret out o' me gradationally. You know the result!"

"Ah, Dionysius, you are yet an unfledged bird; but it matters little. All will be rectified soon."

"Arrah, Dinis," inquired his mother, "was it only takin' a rise out of us you wor all the time? Throth, myself's not the betther of the fright you put me into."

"No," replied Denis, "the Bishop treated me harshly, I thought: he said I was not properly fit. 'You might pass,' said he, 'upon a particular occasion, or under peculiar circumstances; but it will take at least a year and a half's study to enable you to enter Maynooth *as I would wish you.* You may go home again,' said he; 'at present I have dismissed the subject.'

"After this, on meeting Father Molony, he told me that his cousin had passed, and that he would be soon sent up to Maynooth; so I concluded all hope was over with me; but I didn't then know what the letter to Father Finnerty contained. I now see that I may succeed still."

"You may and *shall*, Denis; but no thanks to Father Molony for that: however, I shall keep my eye upon the same curate, never fear. Well, let that pass, and now for harmony, conviviality, and friendship. Gentlemen, fill your glasses—I mean your respective vessels. Come, Denis More, let that porringer of yours be a brimmer. Ned Hanratty, charge your noggin. Darby, although your mug wants an ear, it can hold *the full* of it. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, that old family cruiskeen ought to be with your husband: but no matther—*non constat—Eh? Dionyse? Intelligisne?*"

"*Intelligo, domine.*"

"Here then is health, success, and prosperity to Mr. Dionysius O'Shaughnessy, jun.! May he soon be on the Retreat in the vivacious walls of that learned and sprightly seminary, Maynooth!* On the Retreat, I say, getting fat upon half a meal a day for the first week, fasting tightly against the grain, praying sincerely for a set-in at the king's mutton, and repenting thoroughly of his penitence!"

"Well, Doctbor, that is a toast. Denis, have you nothing to say to that? Won't you stand up an' thank his Reverence, anyhow?"

"I am really too much oppressed with relaxation," said Denis, "to return thanks in that florid style which would become my pretensions. I cannot, however, but thank Father Finnerty for his ingenious and learned toast, which does equal honor to his *head* and heart, and I might superadd, to his *intellects* also; for in drinking toasts, my friends, I always elaborate a distinction between strength of head and strength of intellect. I now thank you all for having in so liberal a manner drunk my health; and in grateful return, I request you will once more fill your utensils, and learnedly drink—long life and a mitre to the Reverend Father Finnerty, of the Society of St. Dominick, Doctor of Divinity and Parochial Priest of this excellent parish!—*Propino tibi salutem, Doctor doctissime, reverendissime, et sanctissime; nec non omnibus amicis hic congregatis!*"

The priest's eye, during this speech,

* This is a passage which I fear few general readers will understand without explanation; the meaning is this:—When a young man first enters Maynooth College he devotes himself for the space of eight days to fasting and prayer, separating himself as much as possible from all society. He must review his whole life, and ascertain, if he can, whether he has ever left any sin of importance unconfessed, either knowingly or by an omission that was culpably negligent. After this examination, which must be both severe and strict, he makes what is called a General Confession; that is, he confesses all the sins he ever committed as far back and as accurately as he can recollect them. This being over, he enters upon his allotted duties as a student, and in good sooth feels himself in admirable trim for "a set-in at the King's Mutton."

twinkled with humor; he saw clearly that Denis thoroughly understood the raillery of his toast, and that the compliment was well repaid. On this subject he did not wish, however, to proceed further, and his object now was, that the evening should pass off as agreeably as possible.

Next morning Father Finnerty paid Denis a timely visit, having first, as he had been directed, sent home the colt a little after day-break. They then took an early breakfast, and after about half an hour's further deliberation, the priest, old Denis, and his son—the last mounted upon the redoubtable colt—proceeded to the Bishop's residence. His lordship had nearly finished breakfast, which he took in his study; but as he was engaged with his brother, the barrister, who slept at his house the night before, in order to attend a public meeting on that day, he could not be seen for some time after they arrived. At length they were admitted. The Right Reverend Doctor was still seated at the breakfast table, dressed in a morning-gown of fine black stuff, such as the brothers of the Franciscan order of monks usually wear, to which order he belonged. He wore black silk stockings, gold knee-buckles to his small-clothes, a rich ruby ring upon his finger, and a small gold cross, set with brilliants, about his neck. This last was not usually visible; but as he had not yet dressed for the day, it hung over his vest. He sat, or rather lolled back in a stuffed easy chair, one leg thrown indolently over the other. Though not an old man, he wore powder, which gave him an air of greater reverence; and as his features were sharp and intelligent, his eye small but keen, and his manner altogether impressive and gentlemanly, if not dignified, it was not surprising that Father Finnerty's two companions felt awed and embarrassed before him. Nor was the priest himself wholly free from that humbling sensation which one naturally feels when in the presence of a superior mind in a superior station of life.

"Good morning to your lordship!" said the priest, "I am exceedingly happy to see you look so well. Counsellor, your most obedient; I hope, sir, you are in good health!"

To this both gentlemen replied in the usual commonplace terms.

"Doctor," continued the priest, "this is a worthy decent parishioner of mine, Denis O'Shaughnessy; and this is his son who has the honor to be already known to your lordship."

"Sit down, O'Shaughnessy," said the Bishop, "take a seat, young man."

"I humbly thank your lordship," replied Denis the elder, taking a chair as he spoke, and laying his hat beside him on the carpet.

The son, who trembled at the moment from head to foot, did not sit as he was asked, but the father, after giving him a pluck, said in a whisper, "Can't you sit, when his lordship bids you." He then took a seat, but appeared scarcely to know whether he sat or stood.

"By the by, Doctor, you have improved this place mightily," continued Father Finnerty, "since I had the pleasure of being here last. I thought I saw a green-house peeping over the garden-wall."

"Yes," replied the Bishop, "I am just beginning to make a collection of shrubs and flowers upon a small scale. I believe you are aware that tending and rearing flowers, Mr. Finnerty, is a favorite amusement with me."

"I believe I have a good right to know as much, Dr. M——," replied Mr. Finnerty. "If I don't mistake, I sent you some specimens for your garden that were not contemptible. And if I don't mistake again, I shall be able to send your lordship a shrub that would take the pearl off a man's eye only to look at it. And what's more, it's quite a new-comer; not two years in the country."

"Pray how is it called, Mr. Finnerty."

"Upon my credit, Doctor, with great respect, I will tell you nothing more about it at present. If you wish to see it, or to know its name, or to get a slip of it, you must first come and eat a dinner with me. And, Counsellor, if you, too, could appear on your own behalf, so much the better."

"I fear I cannot. Mr. Finnerty, but I dare say my brother will do himself the pleasure of dining with you."

"It cannot be for at least six weeks, Mr. Finnerty," said the Bishop. "You forget that the confirmations begin in ten days; but I shall have the pleasure of dining with you when I come to confirm in your parish."

"Phoo! Why, Doctor, that's a matter of course. Couldn't your lordship make it convenient to come during the week, and bring the Counsellor here with you? Don't say no, Counsellor; I'll have no demurring."

"Mr. Finnerty," said the Bishop, "it is impossible at present. My brother goes to Dublin to-morrow, and I must go on the following day to attend the consecration of a chapel in the metropolis."

"Then upon my credit, your lordship will get neither the name nor description of my *Facia*, until you earn it by eating a dinner, and drinking a glass of claret with the Rev. Father Finnerty. Are those hard terms, Counsellor?—Ha! ha! ha! I'm not the man to put off a thing, I assure you."

"Mr. Finnerty," said the Bishop, smiling at, but not noticing the worthy priest's blunder about the Fucia, "if possible, I shall dine with you soon; but at present it is out of my power to appoint a day."

"Well, well, Doctor, make your own time of it; and now for the purport of our journey. Denis O'Shaughnessy here, my lord, is a warm, respectable parishioner of mine—a man indeed for whom I have a great regard. He is reported to have inherited from his worthy father, two horns filled with guineas. His grandmother, as he could well inform your lordship, was born with a *lucky caul* upon her, which caul is still in the family. Isn't it so, Denis?"

"My lord, in dignity, it's truth," replied Denis, "and from the time it came into the family they always thruv, thanks be to goodness!"

The lawyer sat eyeing the priest and Denis alternately, evidently puzzled to comprehend what such a remarkable introduction could lead to.

The Bishop seemed not to be surprised, for his features betrayed no change whatsoever.

"Having, therefore, had the necessary means of educating a son for the church, he has accordingly prepared this young man with much anxiety and expense for Maynooth."

"Plase your lordship," said Denis, "Doctthor Finnerty is clothin' it betther than I could do. My heart is fixed upon seein' him what we all expect him to be, your lordship."

"Mr. Finnerty," observed the Bishop, "you seem to be intimately acquainted with O'Shaughnessy's circumstances; you appear to take a warm interest in the family, particularly in the success of his son."

"Undoubtedly my lord; I am particularly anxious for his success."

"You received my letter yesterday?"

"I am here to-day, my lord, in consequence of having received it. But, by the by, there was, under favor, a slight misconception on the part of your——"

"What misconception, sir!"

"Why, my lord—Counsellor, this is a—a—kind of charge his lordship is bringing against me, under a slight misconception. My lord, the fact is, that I didn't see what ecclesiastical right I had to prevent Denis here from disposing of his own property to——"

"I expect an apology from you, Mr. Finnerty, but neither a defence nor a justification. An attempt at either will not advance the interests of your young friend, believe me."

"Then I have only to say that the wish expressed in your lordship's letter has been complied with. But wait awhile, my lord," continued the priest, good-humoredly, "I shall soon turn the tables on yourself."

"How is that, pray?"

"Why, my lord, the horse is in your stable, and Denis declares he will not take him out of it."

"I have not the slightest objection to that," replied the Bishop, "upon the express condition that his son shall never enter Maynooth."

"For my part," observed Mr. Finnerty, "I leave the matter now between your lordship and O'Shaughnessy himself. You may act as you please, Doctor, and so may he."

"Mr. Finnerty, if I could suppose for a moment that the suggestion of thus influencing me originated with *you*, I would instantly deprive you of your parish, and make you assistant to your excellent curate, for whom I entertain a sincere regard. I have already expressed my opinion of the transaction alluded to in my letter. You have frequently offended me, Mr. Finnerty, by presuming too far upon my good temper, and by relying probably upon your own jocular disposition. Take care, sir, that you don't break down in some of your best jokes. I fear that under the guise of humor, you frequently avail yourself of the weakness, or ignorance, or simplicity of your parishioners. I hope, Mr. Finnerty, that while *you* laugh at the jest, *they* don't pay for it."

The priest here caught the Counsellor's eye, and gave him a dry wink, not unperceived, however, by the Bishop, who could scarcely repress a smile.

"You should have known me better, Mr Finnerty, than to suppose that any motive could influence me in deciding upon the claims of candidates for Maynooth, besides their own moral character and literary acquirements. So long as I live, this, and this alone, shall be the rule of my conduct, touching persons in the circumstances of young O'Shaughnessy."

"My gracious lord," said Denis, "don't be angry wid Mr. Finnerty. I'll bear it all, for it was my fau't. The horse is mine, and say what you will, out of your stable I'll never bring him. I think, wid great submission, a man may do what he pleases wid his own."

"Certainly," said the Bishop; "my consent to permit your son to go to Maynooth is my own. Now this consent I will not give if you press that mode of argument upon me."

"My Reverend Lord, as heaven's above me, I'd give all I'm worth to see the boy in Maynooth. If he doesn't go after all our hopes, I'd break my heart." He was so deeply

affected that the large tears rolled down his cheeks as he spoke.

"Will your Lordship *buy* the horse?" he added; "I don't want him, and you, maybe, do?"

"I do *not* want him," said the Bishop, "and if I did, I would not, under the present circumstances, purchase him from you."

"Then my boy won't get in, your lordship. And you'll neither buy the horse, nor take him as a present. My curse upon him for a horse! The first thing I'll do when I get home will be to put a bullet through him, for he has been an unlucky thief to us. Is my son aquil to the others, that came to pass your lordship?" asked Denis.

"There is none of them properly qualified," said the Bishop. "If there be any superiority among them your son has it. He is not without natural talent, Mr. Finnerty; his translations are strong and fluent, but ridiculously pedantic. That, however, is perhaps less his fault than the fault of those who instructed him."

"Are you anxious to dispose of the horse?" said the Counsellor.

"A single day, sir, he'll never pass in my stable," said Denis; "he has been an unlucky baste to me an' mine, an' to all that had anything to do wid him."

"Pray what age is he?"

"Risin' four, sir; 'deed I believe he's four all out, an' a purty devil's clip he is, as you'd wish to see."

"Come," said the Counsellor, rising, "let us have a look at him. Mr. Finnerty, you're an excellent judge; will you favor me with your opinion?"

The priest and he, accompanied by the two O'Shaughnessys, passed out to the stable yard, where their horses stood. As they went, Father Finnerty whispered to O'Shaughnessy:—

"Now, Denis, is your time. Strike while the iron is hot. Don't take a penny!—don't take a fraction! Get into a passion, and swear you'll shoot him unless he accepts him as a present. If he does, all's right; he can twine the Bishop round his finger."

"I see, sir," said Denis; "I see! Let me alone for managin' him."

The barrister was already engaged in examining the horse's mouth, as is usual, when the priest accosted him with—

"You are transgressing etiquette in this instance, Counsellor. You know the proverb — never look a gift horse in the mouth."

"How, Mr. Finnerty?—a gift horse!"

"His Reverence is right!" exclaimed Denis: "the sorra penny ever will cross my pocket for the same horse. You must take him as he stands, sir, barrin' the bridle an' saddle, that's not my own."

"He will take no money," said the priest.

"Nonsense, my dear sir! Why not take a fair price for him?"

"Divil the penny will cross my pocket for him, the unlucky thief!" replied the shrewd farmer.

"Then in that case the negotiation is ended," replied the barrister. "I certainly will not accept him as a present. Why should I? What claim have I on Mr. O'Shaughnessy?"

"I don't want you to take him," said Denis; "I want nobody to take him: but I know the dogs of the parish 'll be pickin' his bones afore night. You may as well have him, sir, as not."

"Is the man serious, Mr. Finnerty?"

"I never saw a man in my life having a more serious appearance, I assure you," said the priest.

"By Jove, it's a queer business," replied the other: "a most extraordinary affair as I ever witnessed! Why, it would be madness to destroy such a fine animal as that! The horse is an excellent one! However, I shall certainly *not* accept him, until I ascertain whether I can prevail upon the bishop to elect his son to this vacancy. If I can make the man no return for him, I shall let him go to the dogs."

"Go up and set to work," said the priest; "but remember that *tace* is Latin for a candle. Keep his lordship in the dark, otherwise this scion is ousted."

"True," said the other. "In the meantime bring them into the parlor, until I try what can be done."

"Take the Bishop upon the father's affection for him," said the priest.

"You are right. I am glad you mentioned it."

"The poor man will break his heart," said the priest.

"He will," responded the Counsellor smiling.

"So will the mother, too," said the priest, with an arch look.

"And the whole family," replied the Counsellor.

"Go up instantly," said the priest; "you have often got a worse fee."

"And, perhaps, with less prospect of success," said the other. "Gentlemen, have the goodness to walk into the parlor for a few minutes, while I endeavor to soften my brother a little, if I can, upon this untoward business."

When the priest and his two friends entered the parlor, which was elegantly furnished, they stood for a moment to survey it.

Old Denis, however, was too much engaged in the subject which by nearest his heart to take pleasure in anything else; at least until he should hear the priest's opinion upon the posture of affairs.

"What does your reverence think?" said Denis.

"Behave yourself," replied the pastor. "None of your nonsense! You know what I think as well as I do myself."

"But will Dionnisis pass?—Will he go to Maynooth?"

"Will you go to your dinner to-day, or to your bed to-night?"

"God be praised! Well, Docthor, wait till we see him off, then I'll be spakin' to you!"

"No," said the priest; "but wait till you take a toss upon this sofa, and then you will get a taste of ecclesiastical luxury."

"Ay," said Denis, "but would it be right o' me to sit in it? Maybe it's consecrated."

"Faith, you may swear that; but it is to the ease and comfort of his lordship! Come, man, sit down, till you see how you'll sink in it."

"Oh, murdher!" exclaimed Denis, "where am I at all? Docthor dear, am I in sight? Do you see the crown o' my head, good or bad? Oh, may I never sin, but that's great state!—Well, to be sure!"

"Ay," said the priest, "see what it is to be a bishop in any church! The moment a man becomes a bishop, he fastens tooth and nail upon luxury, as if a mitre was a dispensation for enjoying the world that they have sworn to renounce. Dionysius, look about you! Isn't this worth studying for?"

"Yes," replied the hitherto silent candidate, "if it was perusal on the part of his lordship that got it."

"Upon my credit, a shrewd observation! Ah, Dionysius, merit is overlooked in every church, and in every profession; or perhaps—hem!—ehem!—perhaps some of your reverend friends might be higher up! I mean nobody; but if sound learning, and wit, and humor, together with several other virtues which I decline enumerating, could secure a mitre, why mitres might be on other brows."

"This is surely great state," observed the candidate; "and if it be a thing that I matriculate"——

"And yet," said the priest, interrupting him, "this same bishop—who is, no doubt, a worthy man, but who has no natural ear for a jest—was once upon a time the priest of an indifferent good parish, like myself; ay, and a poor, cowardly, culprit-looking candidate, ready to sink into the earth, before his bishop, like you."

"Me cowardly!" said the candidate: "I decline the insinuation altogether. It was nothing but veneration and respect, which you know we should entertain for all our spiritual superiors."

"That's truth decidedly; though, at the same time, your nerves were certainly rather entangled, like a ravelled hank. But no matter, man; we have all felt the same in our time. Did you observe how I managed the bishop?"

"I can't say I did," replied the candidate, who felt hurt at the imputation of cowardice before his father; "but I saw, sir, that the bishop managed you."

"Pray for a longer vision, Dionysius. I tell you that no other priest in the diocese could have got both you and me out of the dilemma in which we stood but myself. He has taken to the study of weeds and plants in his old days; and I, who have a natural taste for botany, know it is his weak side. I tell you, he would give the right of filling a vacancy in Maynooth, any day in the year, for a rare plant or flower. So much for your knowledge of human nature. You'll grant I managed the Counsellor?"

"Between my father and you, sir, things look well. We have not, however, got a certificate of success yet."

"*Patientia fit lecior ferendo!*—Have patience, man. Wait till we see the Counsellor!"

He had scarcely uttered the last words when that gentleman entered.

"Well, Counsellor," said the priest, "is it a hit?"

"Pray what is your Christian name, Mr. O'Shaughnessy?" inquired the lawyer of young Denis.

"My Christian name, sir," replied Denis, "is Di-o-ny-si-us O'Shaughnessy. That, sir, is the name by which I am always appellated."

"That's quite sufficient," said the other, "I shall be with you again in a few minutes."

"But won't you give us a hint, my good sir, as to how the land lies?" said the priest, as the lawyer left the room.

"Presently, Mr. Finnerty, presently."

"*Intelligisne, Dionisi?*"

"*Vix, Domine. Quid sentis?*"

"*Quid sentis!* No, but it was good fortune sent us. Don't you persave, Dionysius, and you, Denis—don't you know, I say, that this letter of admission couldn't be written except the bishop knew his name in full? Unlucky! Faith if ever a horse was lucky this is he."

"I declare, Docthor," said the father, "I can neither sit nor stand, nor think of any one thing for a minute, I'm so much on the fidgets to know what the Bishop 'ill say."

"I also," said Dionysius, "am in a state of evaporation and uncertainty touching the

same point. However, this I can affirm with veracity, that if I am rejected, my mind is made up to pursue an antithetical course of life altogether. If he rejects me now, he will never reject me again."

"Musha, how—Denny—Dionnisis, avick? What do you mane?" said the father.

"I will give," said the son, "what is designated a loose translation of my meaning to Mr. Finnerty here, if I find that I am excluded on this occasion."

"And if you *do* succeed," said the priest, "I would advise you to hire a loose translator during the remainder of your residence among us; for upon my veracity, Dionysius, the King's English will perform hard duty until you enter Maynooth. Not a word under six feet will be brought into the ranks—grenadiers every one of them, not to mention the thumpers you will coin."

"Come, Doethor Finnerty," said our candidate, pulling up a little, "if the base Latin which you put into circulation were compared with my English thumpers, it would be found that of the two, I am more legitimate and etymological."

"I shall be happy to dispute that point with you another time," said the priest, "when we can—Silence, here comes the Counsellor."

"Mr. O'Shaughnessy," said the lawyer, addressing the candidate, "allow me to congratulate you on your success! Your business is accomplished. The Bishop is just finishing a letter for you to the President of Maynooth. I assure you, I feel great pleasure at your success."

"Accept my thanks, sir," said Denis, whose eye was instantly lit up with delight—"accept my most obsequious thanks to the very furthest extent of my gratitude."

The Barrister then shook hands with old Denis. "O'Shaughnessy," said he, "I am very happy that I have had it in my power to serve you and your son."

"Counsellor," said Denis, seizing his hand in both of his—"Counsellor, ahagur machree Counsellor, oh, what—what—can I say!—Is he—is it possible—is it thruth that my boy is to go to Maynewth this time? Oh, if you knew, *but* knew, the heavy, dead weight you tuck off o' my heart! Our son not cast aside—not disgraced!—for what else would the people think it? The horse!—a poor bit of a coult—a poor unsignified animal! To the devil wid him. What is he compared to the joy an' delight of this minute? Take him, sir; take him—an' if he was worth his weight in goold, I vow to Heaven above me, I'd not think him too good. Too good!—no, nor half good enough for you. God remimber this to you! an' he will, too. Little you know the happiness you have given us, Counsellor! Little you know it. But no matther! An' you, too, Father Finnerty, helped to bring this about. But sure you were ever an' always our friend! Well, no matther—no matther! God will reward you both."

"My brother wishes me to see Mr. Finnerty and your son," said the barrister; "I think they had better go up to him. He is anxious to get a slip of your shrub, Mr. Finnerty."

"Ah, I thought so," said the priest—"I thought as much."

The Bishop, on their reappearance, presented Denis with the long wished-for letter. He then gave him a suitable exhortation with reference to the serious and responsible duties for which he was about to prepare himself. After concluding his admonition, he addressed Father Finnerty as follows:

"Now Mr. Finnerty, this matter has ended in a manner satisfactory, not only to your young friend, but to yourself. You must promise me that there shall be no more horse-dealing. I do not think jockeying of that description either creditable or just. I am unwilling to use harsher language, but I could not conscientiously let it pass without reproof. In the next place, will you let me have a slip of that flowering shrub you boast of?"

"Doctor," said the priest, "is it possible you ask it of me? Why, I think your lordship ought to know that it's your own, as is every plant and flower in my garden that you fancy. Do you dine at home to-morrow, my lord?"

"I do," said the Bishop.

"Well, then, I shall come up with a slip or two of it, and dine with you. I know the situation in which it grows best; and knowing this, I will put it down with my own hands. But I protest, my lord, against you allowing me to be traced in the business of the shrub at all, otherwise I shall have the whole county on my back."

"Be under no apprehension of that, Mr. Finnerty. I shall be happy if you dine with me; but bring it with you. How did you come to get it so early after its appearance in this country?"

"I got it from headquarters, Doctor—from one of the best botanists in the three kingdoms; certainly from the best Irish botanist living—my friend, Mr Mackay, of the College Botanic Gardens. My lord, I wish you good morning; but before I go, accept my thanks for your kindness to my young friend. I assure you he will be a useful man; for he is even now no indifferent casuist."

"And I, my lord," said Denis, "return you my most grateful—hem—my most grateful—and—most supercilious thanks for the favor—the stupendous favor you have conferred upon me."

"God bless you, my dear child," returned the bishop; "but if you be advised by me, speak more intelligibly. Use plain words, and discard all difficult and pedantic expressions. God bless you! Farewell!"

On coming down, they found old Denis in the stable-yard in rather a ridiculous kind of harness. The saddle that had been on the colt was strapped about him with the bridle, for both had been borrowed from a neighbor.

"Dionnisis an' I must both ride the same horse," said he, "an' as we have two saddles, I must carry one of them."

An altercation then ensued as to which should ride foremost. The son, now in high glee, insisted on the father's taking the seat of honor; but the father would not hear of this. The lad was, in his opinion, at least semi-clerical, and to ride behind would be a degradation to so learned a youth. They mounted at length, the son foremost, and the father on the crupper, the saddle strapped about him, with the stirrups dangling by the horse's flanks. Father Finnerty, who accompanied them, could not, however, on turning from the bishop's grounds into the highway, get a word out of them. The truth is, both their hearts were full; both were, therefore, silent, and thought every minute an hour until they reached home.

This was but natural. A man may conceal calamity or distress even from his dearest friends; for who is there who wishes to be thrust back from his acknowledged position in life? Or who, when he is thrust back, will not veil his misfortunes or his errors with the guise of indifference or simulation? In good fortune we act differently. It is a step advanced; an elevation gained; there is nothing to fear, or to be ashamed of, and we are strongly prompted by vanity to proclaim it to the world, as we are by pride to ascribe its occurrence to our own talents or virtues. There are other and purer motives for this. The affections will not be still; they seek the hearts to which they tend; and having found them, the mutual interchange of *good* takes place. Father Finnerty—whose heart, though a kind one, had, probably, been too long out of practice to remember the influence and working of the domestic affections—could not comprehend the singular conduct of the two O'Shaughnessys.

"What the devil is the matter with you?" he inquired. "Have you lost the use of your speech?"

"Push an' avourneen," said the father to Denis—"push an; lay the spur to him. Isn't *your* spur on the right foot?"

"Most certainly," said Denis, now as pedantic as ever—"most certainly it is. You are not to be informed that our family spur is a right-foot spur."

"Well, then, Peter Gallagher's spur that I have an is a left-foot spur, for it's an my left foot."

"You are a bright pair," said the priest, somewhat nettled at their neglect of him—"you are a bright pair, and deeply learned in spurs. Can't you ride asier?"

"Never heed him," said the father, in a whisper; "do you give the mare the *right* spur, an' I'll give her the *left*. Push an! that's it."

They accordingly dashed forward, Denis plying one heel, and the father another, until the priest found himself gradually falling behind. In vain *he* plied *both* spurs; in vain he whipped, and wriggled on the saddle, and pressed forward his hack. Being a priest's horse, the animal had been accustomed for the last twelve years to a certain jog-trot-pace, beyond which it neither would nor could go. On finding all his efforts to overtake them unsuccessful, he at last shouted after them.

"Do you call that gratitude, my worthy friends? To have me creeping over the ups and downs of this villanous road without company?"

"Lay an, aroon," said the father. "Let us get home. Oh, how your poor mother will die with joy, an' Susy, an' Nanny, an' Brian, an' Michael, an' Dick, an' Lanty, an' all o' them. Glory be to Heaven! what a meetin' we'll have! An' the nabors, too! Push an', avick machree."

"My curse upon you, Friar Hennessy!" exclaimed the priest, in a soliloquy, "it was you who first taught this four-footed snail to go like a thief to the gallows. I wish to Heaven you had palmed him on some one else, for many a dinner I have lost by him in my time. Is that your gratitude, gentlemen? Do I deserve this?"

"What is he sayin'?" said the father.

"He is declaiming about gratitude," replied Denis.

"Lay an' her," said the father. "Poor Mave!"

"Such conduct does you credit," shouted the priest. "It's just the way of the world. You have got what you wanted out of me, an' now you throw me off. However, go on."

"What's that?" said the father again.

"He is desiring us to go on," replied the son.

"Then, in the name o' Goodness, do so, avourneen. Susy will die downright."

"Where am I to dine to-day?" shouted the priest, in a louder voice. "I say, where am I to come in for my dinner, for I'm not expected at home, and my curate dines out?"

"I can't hear him," said the father.

"He says the curate dines out; an' he wants to know if he's to dine with us."

"Throth, an' he won't; not that we begrudge it to him; but for this day the sara one we'll have but our own relations. Push an. An' Brian, too, poor fellow, that was always so proud of you!"

They had now reached the top of an ascent on the road, whilst the priest toiled up after them. In a few minutes they began to descend, and consequently were out of his sight.

No description of mine could give an adequate perception to the reader of what was felt by the family on hearing that the object of Denis's hopes, and their own proud ambition, was at length accomplished. The Bishop's letter was looked at, turned in every direction, and the seal inspected with a kind of wonderful curiosity, such as a superstitious person would manifest on seeing and touching some sacred relic. The period appointed for his departure now depended upon the despatch with which they could equip him for college. But until this event should arrive, his friends lost no opportunity of having him among them. Various were the treats he got in fair and markets. Proud were his relations when paying him the respect which he felt right sincere pleasure in receiving. The medium between dignity and humility which he hit off in these scenes, was worthy of being recorded; but, to do him justice, his forte lay in humility. He certainly condescended with a grace, and made them feel the honor done them by his vouchsafing to associate with such poor creatures as if he was one of themselves. To do *them also* justice, they appeared to feel his condescension; and, as a natural consequence, were ready to lick the very dust under his feet, considering him, as they did, a priest in everything but ordination.

Denis, besides his intercourse with humble relatives, was now asked to dine with the neighboring clergymen, and frequently made one at their parties. In the beginning, his high opinion and awe of the clerical character kept him remarkably dull and sheepish. Many an excellent joke was cracked at his expense; and often did he ask himself what Phadrick Murray, his father's family, or his acquaintances in general, would say, if they saw his learning and his logic so villanously degraded. In proportion, however, as conviviality developed among his reverend friends many defects, opinions, and failings, which he never suspected them to possess, so did he begin to gather courage and facility of expression. By degrees he proceeded modestly from the mild and timid effort at wit, to the steadier nerve of moderate confidence; another step brought him to the indifference of a man who can bear an unsuccessful attempt at pleasantry, without being discomposed; the third and last stage advanced him to downright assurance, which having reached, he stopped at nothing. From this forward he began to retort upon his clerical companions, who found that the sheepish youth whom they had often made ridiculous, possessed skill, when properly excited, to foil them at their own weapons. He observed many things in their convivial meetings. The holy man, whom his flock looked upon as a being of the highest sanctity, when lit up into fun and frolic, Denis learned to estimate at his just value. He thought, besides, that a person resolved to go to heaven, had as good a chance of being saved by the direct mercy of God, as through the ministration of men, whose only spiritual advantage over himself consisted in the mere fact of being in orders. To be sure, he saw the usual exceptions among them that are to be found among every other class; but he drew his conclusions from the general rule. All this, however, failed in removing that fundamental principle of honest superstition in which he had been trained. The clergymen whom he saw were only a few who constituted the great body of the church; but when the long and sanctified calendar of saints and miracles opened upon him, there still remained enough to throw a dim and solemn charm of shadowy pomp around the visions of a mind naturally imaginative.

Messengers were once more sent abroad, to inform their friends of his triumph, who, on ascertaining that his journey was fixed for an early day, lost no time in pouring in, each with some gift suited to their circumstances. Some of these were certainly original, the appropriateness having been in every case determined by the wealth or poverty, ignorance, or knowledge, of those who offered them. Some poor relation, for instance, brought him a shirt or two of materials so coarse, that to wear it in a college would be out of the question; others offered him a pair of brogues, much too vulgar for the society he was about to enter; others, again, would present him with books—for it is not at all uncommon to find in many illiterate Irish families half-a-dozen old volumes of whose contents they are ignorant, lying in a dusty corner, where they are kept till some young scion shall be sufficiently instructed to peruse them. The names of these were

singular enough. One presented him with "The Necessity of Penance;" another with "Laugh and be Fat;" a third with the "Key of Paradise;" a fourth with "Hell Open;" a fifth handed him a copy of the "Irish Rogues and Rapparees;" a sixth gave him "Butler's Lives of Saints;" a seventh "The Necessity of Fasting;" an eighth "The Epicure's *Vade Mecum*." The list ran on very ludicrously. Among them were the "Garden of Love and Royal Flower of Fidelity;" "An Essay on the Virtue of Celibacy;" and another "On the Increase of Population in Ireland." To these we may add "The Devil upon Two Sticks," and "The Life of St. Anthony."

"Take these, Misther Denis," said the worthy souls; "they're of no use to us at all at all; but they'll sarve you, of coorse, where you're goin', bekase when you want books in the college you can use them."

Honest Phadrick Murray, in lieu of a more valuable present, brought him his wife's largest and best shawl as a pocket handkerchief.

"Katty, sir, sent you this," said Phadrick, "as a pocket handkerchy; an' be gorra, Mither Denis, if you begin at this corner, an' take it out o' the face, it'll last you six months at a time, any how."

Another neighbor came with a *cool* of rendered lard, hoping it might be serviceable.

"Norah, sir," said the honest friend who brought it, "sent you a crock of her own lard. When you're makin' colcanon, sir, or *sthilk*;* in the college, if you slip in a lump of this, it'll save you the price of butther. The grace 'ill be useful to you, whether or not; an' they say there's a scarcity of it in the college."

A third brought him an oak sapling to keep in his hand about the purlieus of the establishment.

"We know," said he, "that you're given to arguin' an' to that thing you call logic, Misther Denis. Now, sir, if you're ever hard set in an argument or the like o' that, or if any o' the shthudjeents 'ud be throublesome or imperant, why give them a touch o' this—a lick of it, do you see; jist this a way. First come wid a back sthroke upon the left ear, if they want to be properly convinced; an' thin agin' afore they have time to recover, come down wid a visitation upon the kidney. My life for yours, they'll soon let you alone. Nothin' puzzles one in an argument more than it does."

"Ay," said Denis, "that is what they call in the books the *argumentum baculinum*. I accept your present, Roger; but I flatter myself I shall be a match for any of the collegians without having recourse to the *argumentum baculinum*."

A poor old widow, who was distantly related to them, came upwards of four miles with two or three score of eggs, together with a cock and hen; the eggs for his own use, and the latter for breeding in Maynooth.

"Avourneen, Misther O'Shaughnessy," said she, in broken English, "when you ate out all the eggs, maybe you could get a sonsy little corner about the collegian that you're goin' to larn to be a priest in, an' put them both into it;"—pointing at the same time to the cock and hen—"an' whishper," she continued, in a low friendly voice, "if you could get a weeshy wisp o' sthraw, an' slip it undher your own bed, it would make a nest for them, an' they'd lay an egg for your breakfast all days in the year. But, achora, don't let them be widout a nest egg; an' whishper—maybe you'd breed a clackin' out o' them, that you might sell. Sure they'd help to buy duds of cloes for you; or you might make presents of the crathurs to the blessed an' holy collegian himself. Wouldn't it be good to have him an your side?—He'd help to make a gintleman of you, any way. Faix, sure he does it for many, they say. An' whishper—the breed, avourneen, is good; an' I'm not afeard to say that there never was sich a chicken in the whole collegian, as the ould cock himself. He's the darlin' all out, an' can crow so stoutly, that it bates the world. Sure his comb's a beauty to look at, the darlin'; an' only it's to yourself, an' in regard of the blessed place he's goin' to, I wouldn't part wid him to nobody whatsomever, at all, good or bad."

The most original gift of all was a purse, formed of a small bladder, ingeniously covered with silk. It was given to him by his uncle, as a remembrance of him, in the first place; and secondly, for a more special purpose.

"This will sarve you, sir," said his uncle, "an' I'll tell you how: if you want to smuggle in a sup of good whiskey—as of coorse you will, plase goodness—why this houlds exactly a pint, an' is the very thing for it. The sorra one among them will ever think of searchin' your purse, at least for whiskey. Put it in your pocket, Misther Dionnisis; an' I'd take it as a great kindness if you'd write me a scrape or two of the pen, mentionin' what a good parish 'ud be worth·

* *Shilk* is made by bruising a quantity of boiled potatoes and beans together. The potatoes, however, having first been reduced to a pulpy state, the beans are but partially broken. It is then put into a dish, and a pound of butter or rendered lard thrust into the middle of it.

you'll soon be able to tell me, for I've some notion myself of puttin' Barny to Latin."

Denis was perfectly aware of the honest warmth of heart with which these simple tokens of esteem were presented to him; and young as he was, his knowledge of their habits and prejudices prevented him from disappointing them by a refusal. He consequently accepted everything offered him, appropriated to himself whatever was suitable to his wants, converted the remainder into pocket-money, and, of course, kept his conscience void of *offence* toward them all: a state of Christian virtue which his refusal of any one gift would have rendered difficult.

On the day before his departure the friends and relations of the family assembled to hold their farewell meeting. The same spirit which marked all their rustic *symposia* presided in this; if we except a feeling of sorrow natural to his family on being separated from one they loved so affectionately. Denis, who was never deficient in warmth of feeling, could not be insensible to the love and pride with which his family had always looked upon him. Ambition, as he approached it, lost much of its fictitious glitter. A sense of sorrow, if not of remorse, for the fastidious and overbearing spirit he had manifested to them, pressed upon his heart. Pride, in fact, was expelled: nature resumed her empire over him; he looked upon the last two months of his life as a man would be apt to do who had been all that time under the dominion of a feverish dream. We do not say, however, that either ambition or superstition was thoroughly expelled from his mind; for it is hard at all times to root them out of the system of man: but they ceased to govern him altogether. A passion, too, as obstinate as either of them, was determined to dispute their power. The domestic affections softened his heart; but love, which ambition left for dead, was only stunned; it rose again, and finding a favorable position, set its seal to his feelings.

Denis himself, some days before that appointed for his departure, became perfectly conscious that his affections were strongly fixed upon Susan Connor. The nature of their last interview filled him with shame; nay, more, it inspired him with pity for the fair, artless girl whom he had so unfeelingly insulted. The manner in which he had won her young affections; the many tender interviews that had passed between them; the sacred promises of unchangeable love they had made to each other: all crowded to his imagination with a power which reduced his spiritual ambition and ecclesiastical pride, at least to the possession only of a divided empire. He had, therefore, with his book in his hand as usual, taken many solitary walks for the preceding few days, with the expectation of meeting Susan. He heard that for the last month or six weeks she had looked ill, been in low spirits, and lost her health. The cause of this change, though a secret to the world, was known to him. He knew, indeed, that an interview between them was indispensable; but had it not been so, we question whether he would have been able to leave home without seeing her.

His evening strolls, however, up until the day before his setting out for college, were fruitless. Susan, who heretofore had been in the habit of walking in the evenings among the green dells around her father's house, was ever since their last meeting almost invisible. In the meantime, as the day before that of his leaving the neighborhood *had* arrived, and as an interview with her was, in a religious point of view, essentially necessary, he took his book in the course of the evening, and by a path slightly circuitous, descended the valley that ran between his father's house and hers. With solemn strides he perambulated it in every direction—north, south, east, and west; not a natural bower in the glen was unexplored; not a green, quiet nook unsearched; not a shady tree unexamined; but all to no purpose. Yet, although he failed in meeting herself, a thousand objects brought her to his heart. Every dell, natural bower, and shady tree, presented him with a history of their past affections. Here was the spot where, with beating heart and crimson cheek, she had first breathed out in broken music the acknowledgment of her love; there had another stolen meeting, a thousand times the sweeter for being stolen, taken place. Every spot, in fact, was dear to him, and every object associated itself with delightful emotions that kindled new life in a spirit from which their parent affections had not yet passed away.

Denis now sought the only other place where he had any likelihood of meeting her: this was at the well below her father's house. He walked down along the banks of the little stream that ran past it, until he reached a thorn bush that grew within a few yards of the spring. Under this he sat, anxiously hoping that Susan might come to fill her evening pail, as he knew she was wont to do. A thick flowery branch of the hawthorn, for it was the latter end of May, hung down from the trunk, and served as a screen through which he could observe her should she appear, without being visible himself.

It was now the hour of twilight; the evening was warm and balmy; the whitethorn under which he sat, and the profusion of

wild flowers that spangled the bosom of the green glen, breathed their fragrance around him, and steeped the emotions and remembrances which crowded thickly on him in deep and exquisite tenderness. Up in the air he heard the quavering hum of the snipe, as it rose and fell in undulating motion, and the creak of the rail in many directions around him. From an adjoining meadow in the distance, the merry voices of the village children came upon his ear, as they gathered the wild honey which dropped like dew from the soft clouds upon the long grassy stalks, and meadow-sweet, on whose leaves it lay like amber. He remembered when he and Susan, on meeting there for a similar purpose, felt the first mysterious pleasure in being together, and the unaccountable melancholy produced by separation and absence.

At length he heard a footstep; but he could not persuade himself that the slow and lingering tread of the person approaching him was that of Susan, so much did it differ from the buoyant and elastic step with which she used to trip along. On looking through the branches, however, he perceived her coming towards him, carrying the pitcher as usual in her hand. The blood was already careering at full speed through his veins, and the palpitations of his heart were loud enough to be heard by the ear.

Oh, beauty, beauty! *teterrima causa belli*, thou dost play the devil with the hearts of men! Who is there who doth not wish to look upon thee, from the saint to the sinner? —None. For thee worlds have been lost; nations swept off the earth; thrones overturned; and cities laid in ashes! Adam, David, Marc Antony, Abelard, and Denis O'Shaughnessy, exhibit histories of thy power never to be forgotten, but the greatest of these is Denis O'Shaughnessy.

Susan was about the middle size; her tresses, like those of the daughters of her country, were a fair brown, and abundant. Her features were not such, we admit, as mark regular and scientific perfection, and perhaps much of their power was owing to their not being altogether symmetrical. Her great charm consisted in a spirit of youthful innocence, so guileless that the very light of purity and truth seemed to break in radiance from her countenance. Her form was round, light, and flexible. When she smiled her face seemed to lose the character of its mortality—so seraphic and full of an indescribable spell were its lineaments; that is, the spell was felt by its thrilling influence upon the beholder, rather than by any extraordinary perception of her external beauty. The general expression of her countenance, however, was that of melancholy. No person could look upon her white forehead and dark flashing eyes, without perceiving that she was full of tenderness and enthusiasm; but let the light of cheerfulness fall upon her face, and you wished never to see it beam with any other spirit. In her met those extremes of character peculiar to her country. Her laughing lips expanded with the playful delicacy of mirth, or breathed forth, with untaught melody and deep pathos, her national songs of sorrow.

A little before she made her appearance, the moon had risen and softened with her dewy light the calm secluded scene around them. Denis, too, had an opportunity of seeing the lovely girl more distinctly. Her dress was simple but becoming. Her hair, except the side ringlets that fell to heighten the beauty of her neck, was bound up with a comb which Denis himself had presented to her. She wore a white dimity bedgown, that sat close to her well-formed person, descended below her knee, and opened before; the sleeves of it did not reach the elbow, but displayed an arm that could not be surpassed for whiteness and beauty. The bedgown was frilled about the shoulder, which it covered, leaving the neck only, and the upper part of her snowy bosom, visible. A dark ribbon, tied about her waist, threw her figure into exquisite outline, and gave her that simple elegance which at once bespeaks the harmony of due proportion.

On reaching the well she filled her vessel, and placed it on a small mound beside her; then sitting down, she mused for some time, and turning her eyes towards Denis's father's sighed deeply.

"It's the least," said the humble girl, "that I may look towards the house that the only one I ever loved, or ever will love, lives in. Little I thought when I loved him that I was standin' between him an' God. Loved him! I wish I could say it was *past*. I wish I could: for I am afeared that till my weak heart breaks it will love him still. God pity me! It would be well for me I had never seen him! But why he should go to Maynooth without givin' me back my promise I cannot tell."

Denis rose and appoached her. Susan, on seeing him, started, and her lover could perceive that she hastily wiped the tears from her eyes. A single glance, however, convinced her that it was he; and such was the guileless simplicity of her heart, joined to the force of habit, that her face beamed with one of her wonted smiles at his appearance. This soon passed away, and her features again resumed an expression of deep melancholy.

Our hero now forgot his learning; his polysyllables were laid aside, and his pedantry

utterly abandoned. His pride, too, was gone, and the petty pomp of artificial character flung aside like an unnecessary garment which only oppresses the wearer.

"Susan," said he, "I am sorry to see you look so pale and unhappy. I deeply regret it; and I could not permit this day to pass, without seeing and speaking to you. If I go to-morrow, Susan, may I now ask in what light will you remember me?"

"I'll remember you without anger, Denis; with sorrow will I remember you, but not, as I said, in anger; though God knows, and you know, the only token you have me to remember you by is a broken heart."

"Susan," said Denis, "it was an unhappy attachment, as circumstances have turned out; and I wish for both our sakes we had never loved one another. For some time past my heart has been torn different ways, and, to tell you the truth, I acknowledge that within the last three or four months I have been little less than a villain to you."

"You speak harshly of yourself, Denis; I hope, more so than you deserve."

"No, Susy. With my heart fixed upon other hopes, I continued to draw your affections closer and closer to me."

"Well, that was wrong, Denis; but you loved me long before that time, an' it's not so asy a thing to draw away the heart from what we love; that is, to draw it away *for ever*, Denis, even although greater things may rise up before us."

As she pronounced the last words, her voice, which she evidently strove to keep firm, became unsteady.

"That's true, Susan, I know it; but I will never forgive myself for acting a double part to you and to the world. There is not a pang you suffer but ought to fall as a curse upon my head, for leading you into greater confidence, at a time when I was not seriously resolved to fulfil my vows to you."

"Denis," said the unsuspecting girl, "you're imposin' on yourself—you never could do so bad, so treacherous an act as that. No, you never could, Denis; an', above all the world, to a heart that loved and trusted you as mine did. I won't believe it, even from your own lips. You surely loved me, Denis, and in that case you *couldn't* be desateful to me."

"I did love you; but I never loved you half so well as I ought, Susy; and I never was worthy of you. Susy, I tell you—I tell you—my heart is breaking for your sake. It would have been well for both of us we had never seen, or known, or loved each other; for I know by my own heart what you must suffer."

"Denis, don't be cast down on my account; before I ever thought of you, when I was runnin' about the glens here, a lonely little orphan, I was often sorry, without knowin' why. Sometimes I used to wonder at it, and search my mind to find out what occasioned it: but I never could. I suppose it was because I saw other girls, like myself, havin' their little brothers an' sisters to play with; or because I had no mother's voice to call me night or mornin', or her bosom to lay my head on, if I was sick or tired. I suppose it was this. Many a time, Denis, even then, I knew what sorrow was, and I often thought that, come what would to others, there was sorrow before *me*. I now find I was right; but for all that, Denis, it's betther that we should give up one another in time, than be unhappy by my bein' the means of turning you from the ways and duties of God."

The simple and touching picture which she drew of her orphan childhood, together with the tone of resignation and sorrow which ran through all she said, affected Denis deeply.

"Susan," he replied, "I am much changed of late. The prospect before me is a dark one—a mysterious one. It is not many months since my head was dizzy with the gloomy splendor which the pomps and ceremonies of the Church—soon, I trust, to be restored in this country to all her pride and power—presented to my imagination. But I have mingled with those on whom before this—that is, during my boyhood—I looked with awe, as on men who held vested in themselves some mysterious and spiritual power. I have mingled with them, Susan, and I find them neither better nor worse than those who still look upon them as I once did."

"Well, but, Denis, how does that bear upon your views?"

"It does, Susan. I said I have found them neither better nor worse than their fellow-creatures; but I believe they are not so happy. I think I could perceive a gloom, even in their mirth, that told of some particular thought or care that haunted them like a spirit. Some of them and not a few, in the moments of undisguised feeling, dissuaded me against ever entering the Church."

"I am sure they're happy," said Susan. "Some time ago, accordin' to your own words, you thought the same; but something has turned your heart from the good it was fixed upon. You're in a dangerous time, Denis; and it's not to be wondhered at, if the temptations of the devil should thry you *now*, in hopes to turn you from the service of God. This is a warnin' to me, too, Denis. May Heaven above forbid that *I* should be made the means of temptin' you from the duty that's before you!"

"No, Susan, dear, it's not temptation, but

the fear of temptation, that prevails with me."

"But, Denis, surely if you think yourself not worthy to enter that blessed state, you have time enough to avoid it."

"Ay, but, Susy, there is the difficulty. I am now so placed that I can hardly go back. First, the disgrace of refusing to enter the Church would lie upon me as if I had committed a crime. Again, I would break my father's and my mother's heart: and rather than do that, I could almost submit to be miserable for life. And finally, I could not live in the family, nor bear the indignation of my brothers and other relations. You know, Susan, as well as I do, the character attached to those who put their friends to the expense of educating them for the Church, who raise their hopes and their ambition, and afterwards disappoint them."

"I know it."

"This, Susan, dear, prevails with me. Besides, the Church now is likely to rise from her ruins. I believe that if a priest did his duty, he might possibly possess miraculous power. There is great pomp and splendor in her ceremonies, a sense of high and boundless authority in her pastors; there is rank in her orders sufficient even for ambition. Then the deference, the awe, and the humility with which they are approached by the people—ah! Susan, there is much still in the character of a priest for the human heart to covet. The power of saying mass, of forgiving sin, of relieving the departed spirits of the faithful in another world, and of mingling in our holy sacrifices, with the glorious worship of the cherubims, or angels, in heaven—all this is the privilege of a priest, and what earthly rank can be compared to it?"

"None at all, Denis—none at all. Oh, think this way still, and let no earthly temptation—no—don't let—even me—what am *I?*—a poor humble girl—oh! no, let nothing keep you back from this."

The tears burst from her eyes, however, as she spoke.

"But, Denis," she added, "there is one thing that turns my brain. I fear that, even *after* your ordination, I couldn't look upon you as I would upon another man. Oh, my heart would break if one improper thought of it was fixed upon you *then*."

"Susy, hear me. I could give up all, but you. I could bear to disappoint father, mother, and all; but the thought of giving you up for ever is terrible. I have been latterly in a kind of dream. I have been among friends and relatives until my brain was turned; but now I am restored to myself, and I find I cannot part with you. I would gladly do it; but I cannot. Oh, no, Susan, dear, my love for you was dimmed by other passions; but it was not extinguished. It now burns stronger and purer in my heart than ever. It does—it does. And, Susan, I always loved you."

Susan paused for some time, and unconsciously plucked a wild flower which grew beside her: she surveyed it a moment, and exclaimed:—

"Do you see this flower, Denis? it's a faded primrose. I'm like that flower in one sense; *I'm* faded; my heart's broke."

"No, my beloved Susan, don't say so; you're only low-spirited. Why should your heart be broke, and you in the very bloom of youth and beauty?"

"Do you remember our last meetin', Denis? Oh, how could you be so cruel then as to bid me think of marryin' another, as if I had loved you for anything but yourself? I'm but a simple girl, Denis, and know but little of the world; but if I was to live a thousand years, you would always see the sorrow that your words made me feel visible upon my countenance. I'm not angry with you, Denis; but I'm telling you the truth."

"Susan, my darling, this is either weakness of mind or ill health. I will see you as beautiful and happy as ever. For my part I now tell you, that no power on earth can separate us! Yes, my beloved Susan, I will see you as happy and happier than I have ever seen you. That will be when you are my own young and guileless wife."

"Ah, no, Denis! My mind is made up: I can never be your wife. Do you think that I would bring the anger of God upon myself, by temptin' you back from the holy office you're entering into? Think of it yourself, Denis. Your feelings are melted now by our discoorse, and, maybe, because I'm near you; but when time passes, you'll be glad that in the moment of weakness you didn't give way to them. I know it's natural for you to love me now. You're lavin' me—you're lavin' the place where I am—the little river and the glen where we so often met, and where we often spent many a happy hour together. That has an effect upon you; for why should I deny it?—you see it—it is hard—very hard—even upon myself."

She neither sobbed nor cried so as to be heard, but the tears gushed down her cheeks in torrents.

"Susan," said Denis, in an unsteady voice, "you speak in vain. Every word you say tells me that I cannot live without you; and I will not."

"Don't say that, Denis. Suppose we should be married, think of what I would suffer if I saw you in poverty or distress,

brought on because you married *me!* Why, my heart would sink entirely under it. Then your friends would never give me a warm heart. *Me!* they would never give *yourself* a warm heart; and I would rather be dead than see you brought to shame, or ill-treatment, or poverty, on my account. Pray to God, Denis, to grant you grace to overcome whatever you feel for me. *I* have prayed both for you and myself. Oh, pray to him, Denis, sincerely, that he may enable you to forget that such a girl—such an unhappy girl—as Susan Connor ever lived!"

Poor Denis was so much overcome that he could not restrain his tears. He gazed upon the melancholy countenance of the fair girl, in a delirium of love and admiration; but in a few minutes he replied:—

"Susan, your words are lost: I am determined. Oh! great heavens! what a treasure was I near losing! Susan, hear me: I will bear all that this world can inflict; I will bear shame, ill-treatment, anger, scorn, and every harsh word that may be uttered against me; I will renounce church, spiritual power, rank, honor; I will give up father and family—all—all that this world could flatter me with: yes, I will renounce each and all for your sake! Do not dissuade me; my mind is fixed, and no power on earth can change it."

"Yes, Denis," she replied calmly, "there is a power, and a weak power, too, that will change it; for *I* will change it. Don't think, Denis, that in arguin' with you, against the feelin's of my own heart, I am doin' it without sufferin'. Oh, no, indeed! You know, Denis, I am a lonely girl; that I have neither brother, nor sister, nor mother to direct me. Sufferin'!—Oh, I wish you knew it! Denis, you must forget me. I'm hopeless now: my heart, as I said, is broke, and I'm strivin' to fix it upon a happier world! Oh! if I had a mother or a sister, that I could, when my breast is likely to burst, throw myself in their arms, and cry and confess all I feel! But I'm alone, and must bear all my own sorrows. Oh, Denis! I'm not without knowin' how hard the task is that I have set to myself. Is it nothing to give up all that the heart is fixed upon? Is it nothing to walk about this glen, and the green fields, to have one's eyes upon them, and to remember what happiness one has had in them, knowin', at the same time, that it's all blasted? Oh, is it nothing to look upon the green earth itself, and all its beauty—to hear the happy songs and the joyful voices of all that are about us—the birds singing sweetly, the music of the river flowin'—to see the sun shinin', and to hear the rustlin' of the trees in the warm winds of summer—to see and hear all this, and to feel that a young heart is brakin', or already broken within us—that we are goin' to leave it all—all we loved—and to go down into the clay under us? Oh, Denis, this is hard;—bitter is it to me, I confess it; for something tells me it will be my fate soon!"

"But, Susan"——

"Hear me out. I have now repeated what I know I must suffer—what I know I must lose. This is my lot, and I must bear it. Now, Denis, will you grant your own Susan one request?"

"If it was that my life should save yours, I would grant it."

"It's the last and only one I will ever ask of you. My health has been ill, Denis; my strength is gone, and I feel I am gettin' worse every day: now when you hear that I am—that I am—*gone*,—will you offer up the first mass you say for my pace and rest in another world? I say the *first*, for you know there's more virtue in a first mass than in any other. Your Susan will be then in the dust, and you may feel sorrow, but not love for her."

"Never, Susan! For God's sake, forbear! You will drive me distracted. As I hope to meet judgment, I think I never loved you till now; and by the same oath, I will not change my purpose in making you mine."

"Then you *do* love me still, Denis? And you would give up *all* for your Susan? Answer me truly, for the ear of God is open to our words and thoughts."

"Then, before God, I love you too strongly for words to express; and I would and will give up all for your sake!"

Susan turned her eyes upon vacancy; and Denis observed that a sudden and wild light broke from them, which alarmed him exceedingly. She put her open hand upon her forehead, as if she felt pain, and remained glancing fearfully around her for a few minutes; her countenance, which became instantly like a sheet of paper, lost all its intelligence, except, perhaps, what might be gleaned from a smile of the most ghastly and desolating misery.

"Gracious heaven! Susan, dear, what's the matter? Oh, my God! your face is like marble! Dearest Susan, speak to me!—Oh, speak to me, or I will go distracted!"

She looked upon him long and steadily; but he perceived with delight that her consciousness was gradually returning. At length she drew a deep sigh, and requested him to listen.

"Denis," said she, "you must now be a man. We can never be married. I AM PROMISED TO ANOTHER!"

"Promised to another! Your brain is

turned, Susy. Collect yourself, dearest, and think of what you say."

"I know what I say—I know it too well! What did I say? Why—why," she added, with an unsettled look, "that I'm promised to another! It is true—true as God's in heaven. Oh, Denis! why did you lave me so long without seein' me? I said my heart was broke, and you will soon know that it has bitter, bitter rason to be so. See here."

She had, during her reply, taken from her bosom a small piece of brown cloth, of a square shape, marked with the letters I. M. I. the initials of the names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. She kissed it fervently as she spoke, and desired Denis to look upon it and hear her.

"When you saw me last," she continued, "I left you in anger, because I thought you no louger loved me. Many a scaldin' tear I shed that nobody witnessed; many a wringin' my heart felt since that time. I got low, and, as I said, my health left me. I began to think of what I ought to do; and bein' so much alone, my thoughts were never off it. At last I remembered the Virgin Mother of God, as bein' once a woman, and the likelier to pity one of her own kind in sorrow. I then thought of a scapular; and made a promise to myself, that if you didn't come within a certain time, I would dedicate myself to her for ever. I saw that you neglected me, and I heard so much of the way you spent your time, how you were pleasant and merry while my heart was breakin', that I made a vow to remain a spotless virgin all my life. I got a scapular, too, that I might be strengthened to keep my holy promise; for you didn't come to me within the time. This is it in my hand. It is now on me. THE VOW IS MADE AND I AM MISERABLE FOR EVER!"

Denis sobbed and wrung his hands, whilst tears, intensely bitter, fell from his eyes.

"Oh, Susan!" he exclaimed, "what have you done? Miserable! Oh you have ruined *me* utterly! You have rendered *us both* for ever miserable!"

"Miserable!" she exclaimed with flashing eyes. "Who talks of misery?" But again she put her hand to her forehead, and endeavored to recollect herself. "Denis," she added, "Denis, my brain *is* turning! Oh, I have no friend! Oh, mother, that I never seen, but as if it was in a dream; mother, *daughter of your daughter's heart*, look down from heaven, and pity your orphan child in her sore trouble and affliction! Oh, how often did I miss you, mother darlin', durin' all my life! In sickness I had not your tender hands about me; in sorrow I could not hear your voice; and in joy and happiness you were never with me to share them! I had not your advice, my blessed mother, to guide and direct me, to tache me what was right and what was wrong! Oh, if you will not hear your own poor lonely orphan, who will you hear? if you will not assist her, who ought you to assist? for, as sure as I stand here this night, you are a blessed saint in heaven. But let me not forget the Virgin Queen of Heaven, that I am bound to. *I kneel to you*, Hope of the Afflicted! To you let them go that have a broken heart, as I have! Queen of Glory, pity me!—Star of the Sea—Comfort of the Hopeless—Refuge of Sinners, hear me, strengthen and support me! And you will, too. Who did you ever cast away, mild and beautiful Virgin of Heaven? 'As the lily among thorns, so are you among the daughters of Adam!'* Yes, Denis, she will support me—she *will* support me! I feel her power on me now! I see the angels of heaven about her, and her mild countenance smilin' sweetly upon the broken flower! Yes, Denis, her glory is upon me!"

The last words were uttered with her eyes flashing wildly as before, and her whole person and countenance evidently under the influence of a highly excited enthusiasm, or perhaps a touch of momentary insanity.

Poor Denis stood with streaming eyes, incapable of checking or interrupting her. He had always known that her education and understanding were above the common; but he never anticipated from her such capacity for deep feeling, united to so much vivacity of imagination as she then displayed. Perhaps he had not philosophy enough, at that period of his youth, to understand the effects of a solitary life upon a creature full of imagination and sensibility. The scenery about her father's house was wild, and the glens singularly beautiful; Susan lived among them alone, so that she became in a manner enamored of solitude; which, probably more than anything else, gives tenderness to feeling and force to the imaginative faculties. Soon after she had pronounced the last words, however, her good sense came to her aid.

"Denis," said she, "you have seen my weakness; but you must now see my strength. You know we have a trial to go through before we part for ever."

"Oh! Susy, don't say 'for ever.' You know that the vow you made was a rash vow. It may be set aside."

"It was *not* a rash vow, Denis. I made it with a firm intention of keepin' it, and keep it I will. The Mother of God is not to be

* The form of the Service of the Virgin, from which most of the above expressions are taken is certainly replete with beauty and poetry.

mocked, because I am weak, or choose to prefer my own will to hers."

"But, Susy, the Church can dissolve it. You know she has power to bind and to loose. Oh, for God's sake, Susy, if you ever loved me, don't attempt to take back your promise."

"I love you too well to destroy you, Denis. I will never stand between you and God, for that would be my crime. I will never bring disgrace, or shame, or poverty, upon you; for surely these things would fall upon you as a punishment for desartin' him. If you were another—if you weren't intended to be the servant of God, I could beg with you—starve with you—die with you. But when I am gone, remember, that I gave up all my hopes, that you might succeed in yours. I'm sure *that* is love. Now, Denis, we must return our promises, the time is passin', and we'll both be missed from home."

"Susan, for the sake of my happiness, both in this world and in the next, don't take away all hope. Make me not miserable and wretched; send me not into the church a hypocrite. If you do, I will charge you with my guilt; I will charge you with the crimes of a man who will care but little what he does."

"You will have friends, Denis; pious men, who will direct you and guide you and wean your heart from me and the world. You will soon bless me for this. Denis, she added, with a smile of unutterable misery, "my mind *is* made up. I belong now to the Virgin Mother of God. I never will be so wicked as to forsake her for a mortal. If I was to marry you with a broken vow upon me, I could not prosper. The curse of God and of his Blessed Mother would follow us both."

Denis felt perfectly aware of the view entertained by Susan, respecting such a vow as she had taken. To reason with her, was only to attack a prejudice which scorned reason. Besides this, he was not himself altogether free from the impression of its being a vow too solemn to be broken without the sanction of the Church.

"Let us go," said Susan, "to the same spot where we first promised. It was under this tree, in this month, last year. Let us give it back there."

The hand-promise in Ireland between the marriageable young of both sexes, is considered the most solemn and binding of all obligations. Few would rely upon the word or oath of any man who had been known to break a hand-promise. And, perhaps, few of the country girls would marry or countenance the addresses of a young person known to have violated such a pledge. The vow is a solemn one, and of course, given by mutual consent, by mutual consent, also, must it be withdrawn, otherwise, it is considered still binding. Whenever death removes one of the parties, without the other having had an opportunity of "giving it back," the surviving party comes, and in the presence of witnesses, first grasping the hand of the deceased, repeats the form of words usual in withdrawing it. Some of these scenes are very touching and impressive, particularly one which the author had an opportunity of witnessing. It is supposed that in cases of death, if the promise be not thus dissolved, the spirit of the departed returns and haunts the survivor until it be cancelled.

When Denis and Susan had reached the hawthorn, they both knelt down. So exhausted, however, had Susan been by the agitation of her feelings, that Denis was under the necessity of assisting her to the place. He could perceive, too, that, amid the workings of her religious enthusiasm, she trembled like an aspen leaf.

"Now," said she, "you are stronger than I am, begin and repeat the words; I will repeat them with you."

"No," replied Denis, "I will never begin. I will never be the first to seal both your misery and mine."

"I am scarcely able," said she; "dear Denis, don't ask me to do what I have not strength for. But it's useless," she added; "you will never begin unless *I* do."

They then blessed themselves after the form of their church, and as they extended their right hands to each other, the tears fell fast from the eyes of both. The words they repeated were the same, with the difference of the name only.

"I, Susan Connor, in the presence of God, do release you, Denis O'Shaughnessy, from your promise of marriage to me, and from all promises of marriage that you ever made me. I now give you back that promise of marriage, and all promises of marriage you ever made me. To which I call God to witness."

Denis repeated the same words, substituting the name of Susan Connor.

The sobs of Susan were loud and incessant, even before she had concluded the words; their eyes were fixed upon each other with a hopeless and agonizing expression: but no sooner were they uttered, than a strong hysteric sense of suffocation rose to her throat; she panted rapidly for breath; Denis opened his arms, and she fell, or rather threw herself, over in a swoon upon his bosom. To press his lips to hers, and carry her to the brink of the well, was but the work of a moment. There he laid her, and after having

sprinkled her face with water, proceeded to slap the palms of her hands, exclaiming,—

"Susan, my beloved, will you not hear me? Oh, look upon me, my heart's dearest treasure, and tell me that you're living. Gracious God! her heart is broken—she is dead! This—this—is the severest blow of all! I have killed her!"

She opened her eyes as he spoke, and Denis, in stooping to assist her, weeping at the same time like a child, received—a bang from a cudgel that made his head ring.

"Your sowl to the divil, you larned vagabone," said her father, for it was he, "is this the way you're preparin' yourself for the church? Comin' over that innocent colleen of a daughter o' mine before you set out," he added, taking Denis a second thwack across the shoulders—"before you set out for Maynewth!!"

"Why, you miserable vulgarian," said Denis, "I scorn you from the head to the heel. Desist, I say," for the father was about to lay in another swinger upon his kidney—"desist, I say, and don't approximate, or I will entangle the ribs of you!"

"My sowl to glory," said the father, "if ever I had a greater mind to ate my dinner, than I have to anoint you wid this cudgel, you black-coated skamer!"

"Get out, you barbarian," replied Denis, "how dare you talk about unction in connection with a cudgel? Desist, I say, for I will retaliate, if you approximate an inch. Desist, or I will baptize you in the well as Philip did the Ethiopian, without a sponsor. No man but a miserable barbarian would have had the vulgarity to interrupt us in the manner you did. Look at your daughter's situation!"

"The hussy," replied the father, "it's the supper she ought to have ready, instead of coortin' wid sich a larned vag——Heavens above me! What ails my child? Susy! Susy. alanna dhas! what's over you? Oh, I see how it is," he continued—"I see how it is! This accounts for her low spirits an' bad health for some time past! Susy, rouse yourself, avourneen! Sure I'm not angry wid you! My sowl to glory, Denis Shaughnessy, but you have broke my child's heart, I doubt!"

"Owen," said Denis, "your indecorous interruption has stamped you with the signature of genuine ignorance and vulgarity; still, I say, we must have some conversation on that subject immediately. Yes, I love your daughter a thousand times better than my own life."

"Faith, I'll take care that we'll have discoorse about it," replied the father. "If you have been a villain to the innocent girl—if you have, Denny, why you'll meet your God sooner than you think. Mark my words. I have but one life, and I'll lose it for her sake, if she has come to ill."

"Here," said Denis, "let me sprinkle her face with this cool water, that we may recover her, if possible. Your anger and your outrage, Owen, overcame the timid creature Speak kindly to her, she is recovering. Thank God, she is recovering."

"Susy, avourneen," said the father, "rouse yourself, ma colleen; rouse yourself, an' don't thrimble that way. The sorra one o' me's angry wid you, at all at all."

"Oh, bring me home," said the poor girl. "Father, dear, have no bad opinion of me. I done nothing, an' I hope I never will do anything, that would bring the blush of shame to your face."

"That's as true as that God's in heaven," observed Denis. "The angels in his presence be not purer than she is."

"I take her own word for it," said the father; "a lie, to the best of my knowledge, never came from her lips."

"Let us assist her home," said Denis. "I told you that we must have some serious conversation about her. I'll take one arm, and do you take the other."

"Do so," said the father, "an', Denny, as you're the youngest and the strongest, jist take up that pitcher o' wather in your hand, an' carry it to the house above."

Denis, who was dressed in his best black from top to toe, made a wry face or two at this proposal. He was able, however, for Susan's sake, to compromise his dignity: so looking about him, to be certain that there was no other person observing them, he seized the pitcher in one hand, gave Susan his arm, and in this unheroic manner assisted to conduct her home.

In about half an hour or better after this, Denis and Owen Connor proceeded in close and earnest conversation towards old Shaughnessy's. On entering, Denis requested to speak with his father and brothers in private.

"Father," said he, "this night is pregnant—that is, *vulgariter*, in the family way—with my fate."

"Throth, it is, avick. Glory be to Goodness!"

"Here is Owen Connor, an honest, decent neighbor——"

"Throth, he is an honest, decent man," said the father, interrupting him.

"Yes," replied the son, "I agree with you. Well, he has a certain disclosure or proposal to make, which you will be pleased to take into your most serious consideration. I, for my part, cannot help being endowed with my own gifts, and if I happen to possess a

magnet to attract feminine sensibility, it is to heaven I owe it, and not to myself."

"It is," said the father, "glory be to his name!"

"Don't be alarmed, or surprised, or angry, at anything Owen Connor may say to you. I speak *significantly*. There are perplexities in all human events, and the cardinal hinge of fate is for ever turning. Now I must withdraw; but in the meantime I will be found taking a serenade behind the garden, if I am wanted."

"Brian," said the father, "get the bottle; we can't on this night, any way, talk to Owen Connor, or to anybody else, wid dhry lips."

The bottle was accordingly got, and Owen, with no very agreeable anticipations, found himself compelled to introduce a very hazardous topic.

Denis, as he said, continued to walk to and fro behind the garden. He thought over the incidents of the evening, but had no hope that Owen Connor's proposal would be accepted. He knew his father and family too well for that. With respect to Susan's vow, he felt certain that any change of opinion on her part was equally improbable. It was clear, then, that he had no pretext for avoiding Maynooth; and as the shame, affliction, and indignation of the family would, he knew, be terrible, he resolved to conform himself to his circumstances, trusting to absence for that diminution of affection which it often produces. Having settled these points in his mind, he began to grope that part of his head which had come in contact with Owen Connor's cudgel. He had strong surmises that a bump existed, and on examining, he found that a powerful organ of self-esteem had been created.

At this moment he saw Owen Connor running past him at full speed, pursued by his father and brothers, the father brandishing a cudgel in his hand. The son, who understood all, intercepted the pursuers, commanding them, in a loud voice to stop. With his brothers he succeeded; but the father's wrath was not to be appeased so easily. Nothing now remained but to stand in his way, and arrest him by friendly violence; Denis, therefore, seized him, and, by assuming all his authority, at length prevailed upon him to give over the chase.

"Only think of him," exclaimed the father, breathless—"only think of him havin' the assurance to propose a match between *you* an' his baby-faced daughter! Ho! *Dher manhim*, Owen Connor," he shouted, shaking the staff at Owen as he spoke—"*Dher manhim!* if I was near you, I'd put your bones through other, for darin' to mintion sich a thing!"

Owen Connor, on finding that he was no longer pursued, stood to reconnoitre the enemy:—

"Denis Oge," he shouted back, "be off to Maynooth as fast as possible, except you wish to have my poor child left fatherless entirely. Go way, an' my blessin' be along wid you; but let there be never another word about *that* business while you live."

"Father," said Denis, "I'm scandalized at your conduct on this dignified occasion. I am also angry with Brian and the rest of you. Did you not observe that the decent man was advanced in liquor? I would have told you so at once, were it not that he was present while I spoke. Did I not give you as strong a hint as possible? Did I not tell you that 'I spoke *significantly?*' Now hear me. Take the first opportunity of being reconciled to Owen Connor. Be civil to him; for I assure you he esteems *me* very highly. Be also kind to his daughter, who is an excellent girl; but I repeat it, her father *esteems me* highly."

"Does he think highly of *you*, Denis?"

"I have said so," he replied.

"Then, throth, we're sorry for what has happened, poor man. But the never a one o' me, Denis, saw the laste sign of liquor about him. Throth, we will make it up wid him, thin. An' we'll be kind to his daughter, too, Denis."

"Then as a proof that you will follow my advice, I lay it on you as a duty, to let me know how they are, whenever you write to me."

"Throth, we will, Denis;—indeed will we: Come in now, dear; this is the last night you're to be wid us, an' they're all missin' you in the house."

On that night no person slept in Denis O'Shaughnessy's, except our hero, and his mother and sisters. As morning approached a heaviness of spirits prevailed among the family, which of course was not felt by any except his immediate relations. The more distant friends, who remained with them for the night, sang and plied the bottle with a steadiness which prevented them from feeling the want of rest. About six o'clock, breakfast was ready, Denis dressed, and every arrangement made for his immediate departure. His parents—his brothers, and his sisters were all in tears, and he himself could master his emotions with great difficulty. At length the hour to which the family of our candidate had long looked forward, arrived, and Denis rose to depart for Maynooth. Except by the sobs and weeping, the silence was unbroken when he stood up to bid them farewell.

The first he embraced was his eldest

brother, Brian: "Brian," said he, but he could not proceed—his voice failed him: he then extended his hand, but Brian clasped him in his arms—kissed his beloved brother, and wept with strong grief; even then there was not a dry eye in the house. The parting with his other brothers was equally tender—they wept loudly and bitterly, and Denis joined in their grief. Then came his sisters, who, one by one, hung upon him, and sobbed as if he had been dead. The grief of his youngest sister, Susan, was excessive. She threw her arms about his neck, and said she would not let him go; Denis pressed her to his heart, and the grief which he felt, seemed to penetrate his very soul.

"Susan," said he, "Susan, may the blessing of God rest upon you till I see you again!"—and the affectionate girl was literally torn from his arms.

But now came the most affecting part of the ceremony. His parents had stood apart—their hands locked in each other, both in tears, whilst he took leave of the rest. He now approached his mother, and reverently kneeling down, implored in words scarcely intelligible, her blessing and forgiveness; he extended both his hands—"Mother," he added, "I ask—humbly and penitently, I ask your blessing; it will be sweet to me from your beloved lips, dear mother;—pardon me if I ever—as I feel I often did—caused you a pang of sorrow by my disobedience and folly. Oh, pardon me—pardon me for all now! Bless your son, kindest of mothers, with your best and tenderest blessing!"

She threw herself in his arms, and locking him in her embrace, imprinted every part of his face with kisses. "Oh, Denis," she exclaimed, "there is but one more who will miss you more nor I will—Oh, my darlin' son—our pride—our pride—our heart's pride—our honor, and our credit! Sure, *anim machree*, I have nothin' to forgive you for, my heart's life; but may the blessin' of God and of a happy mother light on you! And, Denis asthore, wasn't it you that made me happy, and that made us all happy. May my blessin' and the blessin' of God rest upon you—keep you from every evil, and in every good, till my eyes will be made glad by lookin' on you agin!"

A grief more deep, and a happiness more full, than had yet been felt, were now to come forth. Denis turned to his father—his companion in many a pastime, and in many a walk about their native fields. In fair—in market—at mass—and at every rustic amusement within their reach—had he been ever at the side of that indulgent father, whose heart and soul were placed in him.

Denis could not utter a word, but kept his streaming eyes fixed upon the old man, with that yearning expression of the heart which is felt when it desires to be mingled with the very existence of the object that it loves. Old Denis advanced, under powerful struggles, to suppress his grief; he knelt, and, as the tears ran in silence down his cheeks, thus addressed himself to God:—

"I kneel down before you, oh, my God! a poor sinner! I kneel here in your blessed presence, with a heart—with a happy heart—this day, to return you thanks in the name of myself and the beloved partner you have given me through the cares and trials of this world, to give you our heart's best thanks for graciously permittin' us *to see this day!* It is to you we owe it, good Father of Heaven! It is to you we owe this—an' him—my heart's own son, that kneels before me to be blessed by my lips! Yes—yes, he is—he *is* the pride of our lives!—He is the mornin' star among us! he was ever a good son; and you know that from the day he was born to this minute, he never gave me a sore heart! Take him under your own protection! Oh, bless him as we wish, if it be your holy will to do so!—Bless him and guard him, for my heart's in him: it is—he knows it—everybody knows it;—and if anything was to happen him——"

He could proceed no further: the idea of losing his son, even in imagination, overpowered him;—he rose, locked him to his breast, and for many minutes the grief of both was loud and vehement.

Denis's uncle now interposed: "The horses," said he, "are at the door, an' time's passin'."

"Och, thrue for you, Barny," said old Denis; "come, acushla, an' let me help you on your horse. We will go on quickly, as we're to meet Father Finnerty at the crass-roads."

Denis then shook hands with them all, not forgetting honest Phadrick Murray, who exclaimed, as he bid him farewell, "Arrah! Misther Denis, aroon, won't you be thinkin' of me now an' thin in the College? Faix, if you always argue as bravely wid the Collegians as you did the day you proved me to be an ass, you'll soon be at the head of them!"

"Denis," said the uncle, "your father excuses me in regard of havin' to attend my cattle in the fair to-day. You won't be angry wid me, dear, for lavin' you now, as my road lies this other way. May the blessin' of God and his holy mother keep you till I see you agin! an', Denis, if you'd send me a scrape or two, lettin' me know what a good parish 'ud be worth; for I intend next spring to go wid little Barny to the Latin!"

This Denis promised to do; and after bidding him farewell, he and his friends—some on horseback and numbers on foot—set out on their journey; and as they proceeded through their own neighborhood, many a crowd was collected to get a sight of *Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth.*

* * * * * * *

It was one day in autumn, after a lapse of about two years, that the following conversation took place between a wealthy grazier from the neighboring parish, and one of our hero's most intimate acquaintances. It is valuable only as it throws light upon Denis's ultimate situation in life, which, after all, was not what our readers might be inclined to expect.

"Why, then, honest man," said Denis's friend, "that's a murdherin' fine dhrove o' bullocks you're bringin' to the fair?"

"Ay!" replied the grazier, "you may say that. I'm thinkin' it wouldn't be asay to aquil them."

"Faix, sure enough. Where wor they fed, wid simmission?"

"Up in Teernahusshogue. Arrah, will you tell me what weddin' was that that passed awhile agone?"

"A son of ould Denis O'Shaughnessy's, God be merciful to his sowl!"

"Denis O'Shaughnessy! Is it him they called the 'Pigeon-house?' An' is it possible he's dead?"

"He's dead, nabor, an', in throth, an honest man's dead!"

"As ever broke the world's bread. The Lord make his bed in heaven this day! Hasn't he a son larnin' to be a priest in Maynewth?"

"Ah! *Fahreer gairh!* That's all over."

"Why, is *he* dead, too?"

"Be Gorra, no—but the conthrairy to that. 'Twas *his* weddin' you seen passin' a minute agone.'

"Is it the young sogarth's? Musha, bad end to you, man alive, an' spake out. Tell us how that happened. Sowl it's a quare business, an' him was in Maynewth!"

"Faith, he was so; an' they say there wasn't a man in Maynewth able to tache him. But, passin' that over—you see, the father, ould Denis—an' be Gorra, he was very bright, too, till the son *grewn* up, an' drownded him wid the languidges—the father, you see, ould Denis himself, tuck a faver whin the son was near a year in the college, an' it proved too many for him. He died; an' whin young Dinny hard of it, the divil a one of him would stay any longer in Maynewth. He came home like a scarecrow, said he lost his health in it, an' refused to go back. Faith, it was a lucky thing that his father died beforehand, for it would brake his heart. As it was, they had terrible work about it. But ould Denis is never dead while young Denis is livin'. Faix, he was as stiff as they wor stout, an' wouldn't give in; so, afther ever so much wranglin', he got the upper hand by tellin' them that he wasn't able to bear the college at all; an' that if he'd go back to it he'd soon folly his father."

"An' what turned him against the college? Was that thrue?"

"Thrue!—thrue indeed! The same youth was never at a loss for a piece of invintion whin it sarved him. No, the sarra word of thruth at all was in it. He soodered an' palavered a daughther of Owen Connor's, Susy—all the daughther he has, indeed—before he wint to Maynewth at all, they say. She herself wasn't for marryin' him, in regard of a vow she had: but there's no doubt but he made her fond of him, for he has a tongue that 'ud make black white, or white black, for that matther. So, be Gorra, he got the vow taken off of her by the bishop; she soon recovered her health, for she was dyin' for love of him, an'—you seen their weddin'. It 'ud be worth your while to go a day's journey to get a sight of her—she's allowed to be the purtiest girl that ever was in this part o' the counthry."

"Well! well! It's a quare world. An' is the family all agreeable to it now?"

"Hut! where was the use of houldin' out aginst him? I tell you, he'd make them agreeable to any thing, wanst he tuck it into his head. Indeed, it's he that has the great larnin' all out! Why, now, you'd hardly b'lieve me, when I tell you that he'd prove you to be an ass in three minutes; make it as plain as the sun. He would; an' often made an ass o' myself."

"Why, now that I look at you—aren't you Dan Murray's nephew?"

"Phadrick Murray, an' divil a one else, sure enough."

"How is your family, Phadrick? Why, man, you don't know your friends—my name's Cahill."

"Is it Andy Cahill of Phuldhu? Why, thin, death alive, Andy, how is every bit of you? Andy, I'm regulatin' everything at this weddin', an' you must turn over your horse till we have a dhrop for ould times. Bless my sowl! sure, I'd know your brother round a corner; an' yourself, too, I ought to know, only that I didn't see you since you wor a slip of a gorsoon. Come away, man, sure thim men o' yours can take care o' the cattle. You'll asily overtake thim."

"Throth, I don't care if I have a glass wid

an ould friend. But, I hope your whiskey won't overtake me, Phadrick?"

"The never a fear of it, your father's son has too good a head for that. Ough! man alive, if you could stay for the weddin'! Divil a sich a let out ever was seen in the county widin the mimory of the ouldest man in it, as it'll be. Denis is the boy that 'ud have the dacent thing or nothin'.

The grazier and Phadrick Murray then bent their steps to Owen Connor's house, where the wedding was held. It is unnecessary to say that Phadrick plied his new acquaintance to some purpose. Ere two hours passed the latter had forgotten his bullocks as completely as if he had never seen them, and his drovers were left to their own discretion in effecting their sale. As for Andy Cahill, like many another sapient Irishman, he preferred his pleasure to his business, got drunk, and danced, and sung at Denis O'Shaughnessy's wedding, which we are bound to say was the longest, the most hospitable, and most frolicsome that ever has been remembered in the parish from that day to the present.

PHELIM O'TOOLE'S COURTSHIP.

Phelim O'Toole, who had the honor of being that interesting personage, an only son, was heir to a snug estate of half an acre, which had been the family patrimony since the time of his grandfather, Tyrrell O'Toole, who won it from the *Sassenah* at the point of his reaping-hook, during a descent once made upon England by a body of "spalpeens," in the month of August. This resolute little band was led on by Tyrrell, who, having secured about eight guineas by the excursion, returned to his own country, with a coarse linen travelling-bag slung across his shoulder, a new hat in one hand, and a staff in the other. On reaching once more his native village of Teernarogarah, he immediately took half an acre, for which he paid a moderate rent in the shape of daily labor as a cotter. On this he resided until death, after which event he was succeeded by his son, Larry O'Toole, the father of the "purty boy" who is about to shine in the following pages.

Phelim's father and mother had been married near seven years without the happiness of a family. This to both was a great affliction. Sheelah O'Toole was melancholy from night to morning, and Larry was melancholy from morning to night. Their cottage was silent and solitary; the floor and furniture had not the appearance of any cottage in which Irish children are wont to amuse themselves. When they rose in the morning, a miserable stillness prevailed around them; young voices were not heard—laughing eyes turned not on their parents—the melody of angry squabbles, as the urchins, in their parents' fancy, cuffed and scratched each other—half, or wholly naked among the ashes in the morning, soothed not the yearning hearts of Larry and his wife. No, no; there was none of this. Morning passed in a quietness hard to be borne: noon arrived, but the dismal, dreary sense of childlessness hung upon the house and their hearts; night again returned, only to add its darkness to that which overshadowed the sorrowful spirits of this disconsolate couple.

For the first two or three years, they bore this privation with a strong confidence that it would not last. The heart, however, sometimes becomes tired of hoping, or unable to bear the burthen of expectation, which time only renders heavier. They first began to fret and pine, then to murmur, and finally to recriminate.

Sheelah wished for children, "to have the crathurs to spake to," she said, "and comfort us when we'd get ould an' helpless."

Larry cared not, provided they had a son to inherit the "half acre." This was the burthen of his wishes, for in all their altercations, his closing observation usually was—"well, but what's to become of the half acre?"

"What's to become of the half acre? Arrah what do I care for the half acre? It's not that you ought to be thinkin' of, but the dismal poor house we have, wid not the laugh or schreech of a single *pastiah** in it from year's end to year's end."

"Well, Sheelah?"

"Well, yourself, Larry? To the *diouol* I pitch your half acre, man."

"To the *diouol* you pitch—What do you fly at me for?"

"Who's flyin' at you? They'd have little tow on their rock that 'ud fly at *you*."

"You are flyin' at me; an' only you have a hard face, you wouldn't do it."

"A hard face! Indeed it's well come over

* A child.

wid us, to be tould that by the likes o' you! ha!"

"No matther for that! You had betther keep a soft tongue in your head, an' a civil one, in the mane time. Why did the divil tempt you to take a fancy to me at all?"

"That's it. Throw the *grah* an' love I *once* had for you in my teeth, now. It's a manly thing for you to do, an' you may be proud of it. Dear knows, it would be bether for me I had fell in consate wid any face but yours."

"I wish to goodness you had! I wouldn't be as I am to-day. There's that half acre—"

"To the *diowl*, I say, I pitch yourself an' your half acre! Why do you be comin' acrass me wid your half acre? Eh?—why do you?"

"Come now; don't be puttin' your hands agin your sides, an waggin' your impty head at me, like a rockin' stone."

"An' why do you be aggravatin' at me wid your half acre?"

"Bekase I have a good right to do it. What'll become of it when I d—"

"—— That for you an' it, you poor excuse!"

"When I di——"

"—— That for you an' it, I say! That for you an' it, you atomy!"

"What'll become of my half acre when I die? Did you hear *that?*"

"You ought to think of what'll become of yourself, when you die; that's what you ought to think of; but little it throubles you, you sinful reprobate! Sure the neighbors despises you."

"That's falsity; but they know the life I lade wid *you*. The edge of your tongue's well known. They pity me, for bein' joined to the likes of you. Your bad tongue's all you're good for."

"Aren't you afeard to be flyin' in the face o' Providence the way you are? An' to be ladin' me sich a heart-scalded life for no rason?"

"It's your own story you're tellin'. Sure I haven't a day's pace wid you, or ever had these three years. But wait till next harvest, an' if I'm spared, I'll go to England. Whin I do, I've a consate in my head, that you'll never see my face agin."

"Oh, you know that's an' ould story wid you. Many a time you threatened us wid that afore. Who knows but you'd be dhrowned on your way, an' thin we'd get another husband."

"An' be these blessed tongs, I'll do it afore I'm much oulder!"

"An' live me here to starve an' shruggle by myself! Desart me like a villain, to poverty an' hardship! Marciful Mother of Heaven, look down upon me this day! but I'm the ill-thrated, an' ill-used poor crathur, by a man that I don't, an' never did, desarve it from! An' all in regard that that 'hail acre' must go to strangers! Och! oh!"

"Ay! now take to the cryin', do; rock yourself over the ashes, an' wipe your eyes wid the corner of your apron; but, I say agin, *what's to become of the half acre?*"

"Oh, God forgive you, Larry! That's the worst I say to you, you poor half-dead blaguard!"

"Why do you massacray me wid your tongue as you do?"

"Go an—go an. I won't make you an answer, you atomy! That's what I'll do. The heavens above turn your heart this day, and give me strinth to bear my throubles an' heart burnin', sweet Queen o' Consolation! Or take me into the arms of Parodies, sooner nor be as I am, wid a poor baste of a villain, that I never turn my tongue on, barrin' to tell him the kind of a man he is, the blaguard!"

"You're betther than you desarve to be!"

To this, Sheelah made no further reply; on the contrary, she sat smoking her pipe with a significant silence, that was only broken by an occasional groan, an ejaculation, or a singularly devout upturning of the eyes to heaven, accompanied by a shake of the head, at once condemnatory and philosophical; indicative of her dissent from what he said, as well as of her patience in bearing it.

Larry, however, usually proceeded to combat all her gestures by *vica voce* argument; for every shake of her head he had an appropriate answer: but without being able to move her from the obstinate silence she maintained. Having thus the field to himself, and feeling rather annoyed by the want of an antagonist, he argued on in the same form of dispute, whilst she, after first calming her own spirit by the composing effects of the pipe, usually cut him short with——

"Here, take a blast o' this, maybe it'll settle you."

This was received in silence. The good man smoked on, and every puff appeared as an evaporation of his anger. In due time he was as placid as herself, drew his breath in a grave composed manner, laid his pipe quietly on the hob, and went about his business as if nothing had occurred between them.

These bickerings were strictly private, with the exception of some disclosures made to Sheelah's mother and sisters. Even these were thrown out rather as insinuations that all was not right, than as direct asser-

tions that they lived unhappily. Before strangers they were perfect turtles.

Larry, according to the notices of his life furnished by Sheelah, was "as good a husband as ever broke the world's bread;" and Sheelah "was as good a poor man's wife as ever threw a gown over her shoulders." Notwithstanding all this caution, their little quarrels took wind; their unhappiness became known. Larry, in consequence of a failing he had, was the cause of this. He happened to be one of those men who can conceal nothing when in a state of intoxication. Whenever he indulged in liquor too freely, the veil which discretion had drawn over their recriminations was put aside, and a dolorous history of their weaknesses, doubts, hopes, and wishes, most unscrupulously given to every person on whom the complainant could fasten. When sober, he had no recollection of this, so that many a conversation of cross-purposes took place between him and his neighbors, with reference to the state of his own domestic inquietude, and their want of children.

One day a poor mendicant came in at dinner hour, and stood as if to solicit alms. It is customary in Ireland, when any person of that description appears during meal times, to make him wait until the meal is over, after which he is supplied with the fragments. No sooner had the *boccagh*—as a certain class of beggars is termed—advanced past the jamb, than he was desired to sit until the dinner should be concluded. In the mean time, with the tact of an adept in his calling, he began to ingratiate himself with Larry and his wife; and after sounding the simple couple upon their private history, he discovered that want of children was the occasion of their unhappiness.

"Well good people," said the pilgrim, after listening to a dismal story on the subject, "don't be cast down, sure, whether or not. There's a Holy Well that I can direct yez to in the county ——. Any one, wid trust in the Saint that's over it, wo'll make a pilgrimage to it on the Patthern day, won't be the worse for it. When you go there," he added, "jist turn to a Lucky Stone that's at the side of the well, say a Rosary before it, and at the end of every dicken (decade) kiss it once, ache of you. Then you're to go round the well nine times, upon your bare knees, sayin' your Pathers and Avers all the time. When that's over, lave a ribbon or a bit of your dress behind you, or somethin' by way of an offerin', thin go into a tent an' refresh yourselves, an' for that matther, take a dance or two; come home, live happily, an' trust to the holy saint for the rest."

A gleam of newly awakened hope might be discovered lurking in the eyes of this simple pair, who felt that natural yearning of the heart incident to such as are without offspring.

They looked forward with deep anxiety to the anniversary of the Patron Saint: and when it arrived, none certainly who attended it, felt a more absorbing interest in the success of the pilgrimage than they did.

The days on which these pilgrimages are performed at such places are called Pattern or Patron days. The journey to holy wells or holy lakes is termed a Pilgrimage, or more commonly a Station. It is sometimes enjoined by the priest, as an act of penance; and sometimes undertaken voluntarily, as a devotional work of great merit in the sight of God. The crowds in many places amount to from five hundred to a thousand, and often to two, three, four, or five thousand people.

These Stations have, for the most part, been placed in situations remarkable for wild and savage grandeur, or for soft, exquisite, and generally solitary beauty. They may be found on the high and rugged mountain top; or sunk in the bottom of some still and lonely glen, far removed from the ceaseless din of the world. Immediately beside them, or close in their vicinity, stand the ruins of probably a picturesque old abbey, or perhaps a modern chapel. The appearance of these gray, ivy-covered walls is strongly calculated to stir up in the minds of the people the memory of bygone times, when their religion, with its imposing solemnities, was the religion of the land. It is for this reason, probably, that patrons are countenanced; for if there be not a political object in keeping them up, it is beyond human ingenuity to conceive how either religion or morals can be improved by debauchery, drunkenness, and bloodshed.

Let the reader, in order to understand the situation of the place we are describing, imagine to himself a stupendous cliff overhanging a green glen, into which tumbles a silver stream down a height of two or three hundred feet. At the bottom of this rock, a few yards from the basin formed by the cascade, in a sunless nook, was a well of cool, delicious water. This was the "Holy Well," out of which issued a slender stream, that joined the rivulet formed by the cascade. On the shrubs which grew out of the crag-cliffs around it, might be seen innumerable rags bleached by the weather out of their original color, small wooden crosses, locks of human hair, buttons, and other substitutes for property; poverty allowing the people to offer it only by fictitious emblems. Lower down in the glen, on the river's bank, was a smooth green, admirably adapted for the dance,

which, notwithstanding the religious rites, is the heart and soul of a Patron.

On that morning a vast influx of persons, male and female, old and young, married and single, crowded eagerly towards the well. Among them might be noticed the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and such as were afflicted with various other diseases; nor were those good men and their wives who had no offspring to be omitted. The mendicant, the pilgrim, the boccagh, together with every other description of impostors, remarkable for attending such places, were the first on the ground, all busy in their respective vocations. The highways, the fields, and the *boreens*, or bridle-roads, were filled with living streams of people pressing forward to this great scene of fun and religion. The devotees could in general be distinguished from the country folks by their Pharisaical and penitential visages, as well as by their not wearing shoes; for the Stations to such places were formerly made with bare feet: most persons now, however, content themselves with stripping off their shoes and stockings on coming within the precincts of the holy ground. Human beings are not the only description of animals that perform pilgrimages to holy wells and blessed lakes. Cows, horses, and sheep are made to go through their duties, either by way of prevention, or cure, of the diseases incident to them. This is not to be wondered at, when it is known that in their religion every domestic animal has its patron saint, to whom its owner may at any time pray on its behalf.

When the crowd was collected, nothing in the shape of an assembly could surpass it in the originality of its appearance. In the glen were constructed a number of tents, where whiskey and refreshments might be had in adundance. Every tent had a fiddler or a piper; many two of them. From the top of the pole that ran up from the roof of each tent, was suspended the symbol by which the owner of it was known by his friends and acquaintances. Here swung a salt herring or a turf; there a shillelah; in a third place a shoe, in a fourth place a whisp of hay, in a fifth an old hat, and so on with the rest.

The tents stood at a short distance from the scene of devotion at the well, but not so far as to prevent the spectator from both seeing and hearing what went on in each. Around the well, on bare knees, moved a body of people thickly wedged together, some praying, some screaming, some excoriating their neighbors' shins, and others dragging them out of their way by the hair of the head. Exclamations of pain from the sick or lame, thumping oaths in Irish, recriminations in broken English, and prayers in bog Latin, all rose at once to the ears of the patron saint, who, we are inclined to think—could he have heard or seen his worshippers—would have disclaimed them altogether.

"For the sake of the Holy Virgin, keep your sharp elbows out o' my ribs."

"My blessin' an' you, young man, an' don't be lanin' an me, i' you plase!"

"*Damnho sherry orth a rogarah ruah!** what do you mane? Is it my back you're brakin'?"

"Hell pershue you, you ould sinner, can't you keep the *spike* of your crutch out o' my *stomach!* If you love me tell me so; but, by the livin' farmer, I'll take no such hints as *that!*"

"*I'm* a pilgrim, an' don't brake my leg upon the rock. an' my blessin' an you!"

"Oh, murdher sheery! my poor child'll be smothered!"

"My heart's curse an you! is it the ould cripple you're trampin' over?"

"Here, Barny, blood alive, give this purty young girl a lift, your sowl, or she'll soon be undhermost!"

> "'Och, 'twas on a Christmas mornin'
> That Jerroosillim was born in
> The Holy Land'——

Oh, my neck's broke!—the curse——Oh! I'm kilt fairly, so I am! The curse o' Cromwell an you, an' hould away—

> 'The Holy Land adornin'
> All by the Baltic Say.
> The angels on a Station,
> Wor takin' raycraytion,
> All in deep meditation,
> All by the'——

contints o' the book if you don't hould away, I say agin, an' let me go on wid my *rann* it'll be worse force for you!—

> 'Wor takin' raycraytion,
> All by the Baltic Say!"

"Help the ould woman there."

"Queen o' Patriots pray for us!—St. Abraham——go to the divil, you bosthoon; is it crushin' my sore leg you are?—St. Abraham pray for us! St. Isinglass, pray for us! St. Jonathan,——musha, I wisht you wor in America, honest man, instid o' twistin' my arm like a *gad?*—St. Jonathan, pray for us; Holy Nineveh, look down upon us wid compression an' resolution this day. Blessed Jerooslim, throw down compuncture an' meditation upon us Chrystyeens assembled here afore you to offer up our sins! Oh, grant us, blessed Catasthrophy, the holy virtues of Timptation an' Solitude, through the im-

* Eternal perdition on you, you red rogue.

provement an' accommodation of St. Kolumbkill! To him I offer up this button, a bit o' the waistband o' my own breeches, an' a taste of my wife's petticoat, in remimbrance of us having made this holy Station; an' may they rise up in glory to prove it for us at the last day! Amin!"

Such was the character of the prayers and ejaculations which issued from the lips of the motley group that scrambled, and crushed, and screamed, on their knees around the well. In the midst of this ignorance and absurdity, there were visible, however, many instances of piety, goodness of heart, and simplicity of character. From such you could hear neither oath nor exclamation. They complied with the usages of the place modestly and attentively: though not insensible, at the same time, to the strong disgust which the general conduct of those who were both superstitious and wicked was calculated to excite. A little from the well, just where its waters mingled with those of the cascade, men and women might be seen washing the blood off their knees, and dipping such parts of their body as were afflicted with local complaints into the stream. This part of the ceremony was anything but agreeable to the eye. Most of those who went round the well drank its waters; and several of them filled flasks and bottles with it, which they brought home for the benefit of such members of the family as could not attend in person.

Whilst all this went forward at the well, scenes of a different kind were enacted lower down among the tents. No sooner had the penitents got the difficult rites of the Station over, than they were off to the whiskey; and decidedly, after the grinding of their bare knees upon the hard rock—after the pushing, crushing, and exhaustion of bodily strength which they had been forced to undergo—we say, that the comforts and refreshments to be had in the tents were very seasonable. Here the dancing, shouting, singing, courting, drinking, and fighting, formed one wild uproar of noise, that was perfectly astounding. The leading boys and the prettiest girls of the parish were all present, partaking in the rustic revelry. Tipsy men were staggering in every direction; fiddles were playing, pipes were squeaking, men were rushing in detached bodies to some fight, women were doctoring the heads of such as had been beaten, and factions were collecting their friends for a fresh battle. Here you might see a grove of shillelahs up, and hear the crash of the onset; and in another place, the heads of the dancing parties bobbing up and down in brisk motion among the crowd that surrounded them. The pilgrim, having now gone through his Station, stood hemmed in by a circle of those who wanted to purchase his beads or his scapulars. The ballad-singer had his own mob from among whom his voice might be heard rising in its purest tones to the praise of—

> "Brave O'Connell, the Liberathur,
> An' great Salvathur of Ireland's Isle!"

As evening approached, the whiskey brought out the senseless prejudices of parties and factions in a manner quite consonant to the habits of the people. Those who, in deciding their private quarrels, had in the early part of the day beat and abused each other, now united as the subordinate branches of a greater party, for the purpose of opposing in one general body some other hostile faction. These fights are usually commenced by a challenge from one party to another, in which a person from the opposite side is simply, and often very good-humoredly, invited to assert, that "black is the white of his enemy's eye;" or to touch the old coat which he is pleased to trail after him between the two opposing powers. This characteristic challenge is soon accepted; the knocking down and yelling are heard; stones fly, and every available weapon is pressed into the service on both sides. In this manner the battle proceeds, until, probably, a life or two is lost. Bones, too, are savagely broken, and blood copiously spilled, by men who scarcely know the remote cause of the enmity between the parties.

Such is a hasty sketch of the Pattern, as it is called in Ireland, at which Larry and Sheelah duly performed their station. We, for our parts, should be sorry to see the innocent pastimes of a people abolished; but, surely, customs which perpetuate scenes of profligacy and crime should not be suffered to stain the pure and holy character of religion.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that Larry O'Toole and Sheelah complied with every rite of the Station. To kiss the "Lucky Stone," however, was their principal duty. Larry gave it a particularly honest smack, and Sheelah impressed it with all the ardor of a devotee. Having refreshed themselves in the tent, they returned home, and, in somewhat less than a year from that period, found themselves the happy parents of an heir to the half-acre, no less a personage than young Phelim, who was called after St. Phelim, the *patron* of the "*Lucky Stone.*"

The reader perceives that Phelim was born under particularly auspicious influence. His face was the herald of affection everywhere

From the moment of his birth, Larry and Sheelah were seldom known to have a dispute. Their whole future life was, with few exceptions, one unchanging honeymoon. Had Phelim been deficient in comeliness, it would have mattered not a *crona baun*. Phelim, on the contrary, promised to be a beauty; both his parents thought it, felt it, asserted it; and who had a better right to be acquainted, as Larry said, "wid the outs an' ins, the ups an' downs of his face, the darlin' swaddy!"

For the first ten years of his life Phelim could not be said to owe the tailor much; nor could the covering which he wore be, without more antiquarian lore than we can give to it, exactly classed under any particular term by which the various parts of human dress are known. He himself, like some of our great poets, was externally well acquainted with the elements. The sun and he were particularly intimate; wind and rain were his brothers, and frost also distantly related to him. With mud he was hand and glove, and not a bog in the parish, or a quagmire in the neighborhood, but sprung up under Phelim's tread, and threw him forward with the brisk vibration of an old acquaintance. Touching his dress, however, in the early part of his life, if he was clothed with nothing else, he was clothed with mystery. Some assert that a cast-off pair of his father's nether garments might be seen upon him each Sunday, the wrong side foremost, in accommodation with some economy of his mother's, who thought it safest, in consequence of his habits, to join them in this inverted way to a cape which he wore on his shoulders. We ourselves have seen one, who saw another, who saw Phelim in a pair of stockings which covered him from his kneepans to his haunches, where, in the absence of waistbands, they made a pause—a breach existing from that to the small of his back. The person who saw all this affirmed, at the same time, that there was a dearth of cloth about the skirts of the integument which stood him instead of a coat. He bore no bad resemblance, he said, to a moulting fowl, with scanty feathers, running before a gale in the farm yard.

Phelim's want of dress in his merely boyish years being, in a great measure, the national costume of some hundred thousand young Hiberuians in his rank of life, deserves a still more particular notice. His infancy we pass over; but from the period at which he did *not* enter into small clothes, he might be seen every Sunday morning, or on some important festival, issuing from his father's mansion, with a piece of old cloth tied about him from the middle to the knees, leaving a pair of legs visible, that were mottled over with characters which would, if found on an Egyptian pillar, put an antiquary to the necessity of constructing a new alphabet to decipher them. This, or the inverted breeches, with his father's flannel waistcoat, or an old coat that swept the ground at least two feet behind him, constituted his state dress. On week days he threw off this finery, and contented himself, if the season were summer, with appearing in a dun-colored shirt, which resembled a noun-substantive, for it could stand alone. The absence of soap and water is sometimes used as a substitute for milling linen among the lower Irish; and so effectually had Phelim's single change been milled in this manner, that, when disenshirting at night, he usually laid it standing at his bedside where it reminded one of frosted linen in everything but whiteness.

This, with but little variation, was Phelim's dress until his tenth year. Long before that, however, he evinced those powers of attraction which constituted so remarkable a feature in his character. He won all hearts; the chickens and ducks were devotedly attached to him; the cow, which the family always *intended* to buy, was in the habit of licking Phelim in his dreams; the two goats which they actually did buy, treated him like one of themselves. Among the first and last he spent a great deal of his early life; for as the floor of his father's house was but a continuation of the dunghill, or the dunghill a continuation of the floor, we know not rightly which, he had a larger scope, and a more unsavory pool than usual, for amusement. Their dunghill, indeed, was the finest of its size and kind to be seen; quite a tasteful thing, and so convenient, that he could lay himself down at the hearth, and roll out to its foot, after which he ascended it on his legs, with all the elasticity of a young poet triumphantly climbing Parnassus.

One of the greatest wants which Phelim experienced in his young days, was the want of a capacious pocket. We insinuate nothing; because with respect to his agility in climbing fruit-trees, it was only a species of exercise to which he was addicted—the eating and carrying away of the fruit being merely incidental, or, probably, the result of abstraction, which, as every one knows, proves what is termed "the Absence of Genius." In these ambitious exploits, however, there is no denying that he bitterly regretted the want of a pocket; and in connection with this we have only to add, that most of his solitary walks were taken about orchards and gardens, the contents of which he has been often seen to contemplate with deep interest. This, to be sure, might proceed from a provi-

dent regard to health, for it is a well-known fact that he has frequently returned home in the evenings, distended like a Boa-Constrictor after a gorge; yet no person was ever able to come at the cause of his inflation. There were, to be sure, suspicions abroad, and it was mostly found that depredations in some neighboring orchard or garden had been committed a little before the periods in which it was supposed the distention took place. We mention these things after the example of those "d——d good-natured" biographers who write great men's lives of late, only for the purpose of showing that there could be no truth in such suspicions. Phelim, we assure an enlightened public, was voraciously fond of fruit; he was frequently inflated, too, after the manner of those who indulge therein to excess; fruit was always missed immediately after the periods of his distention, so that it was impossible *he* could have been concerned in the depredations then made upon the neighboring orchards. In addition to this, we would beg modestly to add, that the pomonian temperament is incompatible with the other qualities for which he was famous. His parents were too ignorant of those little eccentricities which, had they known them, would have opened up a correct view of the splendid materials for village greatness which he possessed, and which, probably, were nipped in their bud for the want of a pocket to his breeches, or rather by the want of a breeches to his pocket; for such was the wayward energy of his disposition, that he ultimately succeeded in getting the latter, though it certainly often failed him to procure the breeches. In fact, it was a misfortune to him that he was the son of his father and mother at all. Had he been a second Melchizedec, and got into breeches in time, the virtues which circumstances suppressed in his heart might have flourished like cauliflowers, though the world would have lost all the advantages arising from the splendor of his talents at going naked.

Another fact, in justice to his character, must not be omitted. His *penchant* for fruit was generally known; but few persons, at the period we are describing, were at all aware that a love of whiskey lurked as a predominant trait in his character, to be brought out at a future era in his life.

Before Phelim reached his tenth year, he and his parents had commenced hostilities. Many were their efforts to subdue some peculiarities of his temper which then began to appear. Phelim, however, being an only son, possessed high vantage ground. Along with other small matters which he was in the habit of picking up, might be reckoned a readiness at swearing. Several other things also made their appearance in his parents' cottage, for whose presence there, except through his instrumentality, they found it rather difficult to account. Spades, shovels, rakes, tubs, frying-pans, and many other articles of domestic use, were transferred, as if by magic, to Larry's cabin.

As Larry and his wife were both honest, these things were, of course, restored to their owners, the moment they could be ascertained. Still, although this honest couple's integrity was known, there were many significant looks turned upon Phelim, and many spirited prophecies uttered with especial reference to him, all of which hinted at the probability of his dying something in the shape of a perpendicular death. This habit, then, of adding to their furniture, was one cause of the hostility between him and his parents; we say one, for there were at least, a good round dozen besides. His touch, for instance, was fatal to crockery; he stripped his father's Sunday clothes of their buttons, with great secrecy and skill; he was a dead shot at the panes of his neighbors' windows; a perfect necromancer at sucking eggs through pin-holes; took great delight in calling home the neighboring farmers' workingmen to dinner an hour before it was ready; and was in fact a perfect master in many other ingenious manifestations of character, ere he reached his twelfth year.

Now, it was about this period that the small-pox made its appearance in the village. Indescribable was the dismay of Phelim's parents, lest he among others might become a victim to it. Vaccination had not then surmounted the prejudices with which every discovery beneficial to mankind is at first met; and the people were left principally to the imposture of quacks, or the cunning of certain persons called "fairy men" or "sonsie women." Nothing remained now but that this formidable disease should be met by all the power and resources of superstition. The first thing the mother did was to get a gospel consecrated by the priest, for the purpose of guarding Phelim against evil. What is termed a Gospel, and worn as a kind of charm about the person, is simply a slip of paper, on which are written by the priest the few first verses of the Gospel of St. John. This, however, being worn for no specific purpose, was incapable of satisfying the honest woman. Superstition had its own peculiar remedy for the small-pox, and Sheelah was resolved to apply it. Accordingly she borrowed a neighbor's ass, drove it home with Phelim, however, on its back, took the interesting youth by the nape of the neck, and, in the name of the Trinity,

shoved him three times under it, and three times over it. She then put a bit of bread into its mouth, until the ass had mumbled it a little, after which she gave the savory morsel to Phelim, as a *bonne bouche*. This was one preventive against the small-pox; but another was to be tried.

She next clipped off the extremities of Phelim's elf locks, tied them in linen that was never bleached, and hung them beside the Gospel about his neck. This was her second cure; but there was still a third to be applied. She got the largest onion possible, which, having cut into nine parts, she hung from the roof tree of the cabin, having first put the separated parts together. It is supposed that this has the power of drawing infection of any kind to itself. It is permitted to remain untouched, until the disease has passed from the neighborhood, when it is buried as far down in the earth as a single man can dig. This was a third cure; but there was still a fourth. She borrowed ten asses' halters from her neighbors, who, on hearing that they were for Phelim's use, felt particular pleasure in obliging her. Having procured these, she pointed them one by one at Phelim's neck, until the number nine was completed. The tenth she put on him, and with the end of it in her hand, led him like an ass, nine mornings, before sunrise, to a south-running stream, which he was obliged to cross. On doing this, two conditions were to be fulfilled on the part of Phelim; he was bound, in the first place, to keep his mouth filled, during the ceremony, with a certain fluid which must be nameless: in the next, to be silent from the moment he left home until his return.

Sheelah having satisfied herself that everything calculated to save her darling from the small-pox was done, felt considerably relieved, and hoped that whoever might be infected, Phelim would escape. On the morning when the last journey to the river had been completed, she despatched him home with the halters. Phelim, however, wended his way to a little hazel copse, below the house, where he deliberately twined the halters together, and erected a swing-swang, with which he amused himself till hunger brought him to his dinner.

"Phelim, you idle thief, what kep you away till now?"

"Oh, mudher, mudher, gi' me a piece o' *arran?* (bread.)

"Why, here's the praties done for your dinner. What kep you?"

"Oh, be gorra, it's well you ever seen me at all, so it is!"

"Why," said his father, "what happened you?"

"Oh, bedad, a terrible thing all out. As I was crassin' Dunroe Hill, I thramped on *hungry grass*. First, I didn't know what kem over me, I got so wake; an' every step I wint, 'twas waker an' waker I was growin', till at long last, down I dhrops, an' couldn't move hand or fut. I dunna how long I lay there, so I don't; but anyhow, who should be *sthreelin'* acrass the hill, but an old *baccagh*.

"'My *bouchaleen dhas*,' says he—'my beautiful boy,' says he—'you're in a bad state I find. You've thramped upon Dunroe *hungry grass*, an' only for somethin' it's a *prabeen* you'd be, afore ever you'd see home. Can you spake at all?' says he.

"'Oh, murdher,' says I, 'I b'lieve not.'

"'Well here,' says the *baccagh*, 'open your purty *gub*, an' take in a thrifle of this male, an' you'll soon be stout enough.' Well, to be sure, it bates the world! I had hardly tasted the male, whin I found myself as well as ever; bekase you know, mudher, that's the cure for it. 'Now,' says the *baccagh*, 'this is the spot the fairies planted their hungry grass, an' so you'll know it agin when you see it. What's your name?' says he.

"'Phelim O'Toole,' says I.

"'Well, says he, 'go home an' tell your father an' mother to offer up a prayer to St. Phelim, your namesake, in regard that only for him you'd be a *corp* before any relief would a come near you; or, at any rate, wid the fairies.'"

The father and mother, although with a thousand proofs before them that Phelim, so long as he could at all contrive a lie, would never speak truth, yet were so blind to his well-known propensity, that they always believed the lie to be truth, until they discovered it to be a falsehood. When he related a story, for instance, which carried not only improbability, but impossibility on the face of it, they never questioned his veracity. The neighbors, to be sure, were vexed and nettled at the obstinacy of their credulity; especially on reflecting that they were as sceptical in giving credence to the narrative of any other person, as all rational people ought to be. The manner of training up Phelim, and Phelim's method of governing them, had become a by-word in the village. "Take a sthraw to him, like Sheelah O'Toole," was often ironically said to mothers remarkable for mischievous indulgence to their children.

The following day proved that no charm could protect Phelim from the small-pox. Every symptom of that disease became quite evident; and the grief of his doting parents amounted to distraction. Neither of them

could be declared perfectly sane; they knew not how to proceed—what regimen to adopt for him, nor what remedies to use. A week elapsed, but each succeeding day found him in a more dangerous state. At length, by the advice of some of the neighbors, an old crone, called "Sonsy Mary," was called in to administer relief through the medium of certain powers which were thought to be derived from something holy and also supernatural. She brought a mysterious bottle, of which he was to take every third spoonful, three times a day; it was to be administered by the hand of a young girl of virgin innocence, who was also to breathe three times down his throat, holding his nostrils closed with her fingers. The father and mother were to repeat a certain number of prayers; to promise against swearing, and to kiss the hearth-stone nine times—the one turned north, and the other south. All these ceremonies were performed with care, but Phelim's malady appeared to set them at defiance; and the old crone would have lost her character in consequence, were it not that Larry, on the day of the cure, after having promised not to swear, let fly an oath at a hen, whose cackling disturbed Phelim. This saved her character, and threw Larry and Sheelah into fresh despair.

They had nothing now for it but the "fairy man," to whom, despite the awful mystery of his character, they resolved to apply rather than see their only son taken from them for ever. Larry proceeded without delay to the wise man's residence, after putting a small phial of holy water in his pocket to protect himself from fairy influence. The house in which this person lived was admirably in accordance with his mysterious character. One gable of it was formed by the mound of a fairy Rath, against the cabin, which stood endwise; within a mile there was no other building; the country around it was a sheep-walk, green, and beautifully interspersed with two or three solitary glens, in one of which might be seen a cave that was said to communicate under ground with the rath. A ridge of high-peaked mountains ran above it, whose evening shadow, in consequence of their form, fell down on each side of the rath, without obscuring its precincts. It lay south; and, such was the power of superstition, that during summer, the district in which it stood was thought to be covered with a light decidedly supernatural. In spring, it was the first to be in verdure, and in autumn the last. Nay, in winter itself, the rath and the adjoining valleys never ceased to be green. These circumstances were not attributed to the nature of the soil, to its southern situation, nor to the fact of its being pasture land; but simply to the power of the fairies, who were supposed to keep its verdure fresh for their own revels.

When Larry entered the house, which had an air of comfort and snugness beyond the common, a tall thin pike of a man, about sixty years of age, stood before him. He wore a brown great-coat that fell far short of his knees; his small-clothes were closely fitted to thighs not thicker than hand telescopes; on his legs were drawn gray woollen stockings, rolled up about six inches over his small-clothes; his head was covered by a bay bob-wig, on which was a little round hat, with the edge of the leaf turned up in every direction. His face was short and sallow; his chin peaked; his nose small and turned up. If we add to this, a pair of skeleton-like hands and arms projecting about eight inches beyond the sleeves of his coat; two fiery ferret-eyes; and a long small holly wand, higher than himself, we have the outline of this singular figure.

"God save you, nabor," said Larry.

"Save you, save you, neighbor," he replied, without pronouncing the name of the deity.

"This is a thryin' time," said Larry, "to them that has childhre."

The fairy-man fastened his red glittering eyes upon him, with a sinister glance that occasioned Larry to feel rather uncomfortable.

"So you venthured to come to the fairy-man?"

"It is about our son, an' he all we ha—"

"Whisht!" said the man, waving his hand with a commanding air. "Whisht; I wish you wor out o' this, for it's a bad time to be here. Listen! Listen! Do you hear nothing?"

Larry changed color. "I do," he replied—"The Lord protect me: Is that *them?*"

"What did you hear?" said the man.

"Why," returned the other, "I heard the bushes of the rath all movin', jist as if a blast o' wind came among them!"

"Whisht," said the fairy-man, "they're here; you mustn't open your lips while you're in the house. I know what you want, an' will see your son. Do you hear anything more? If you do, lay your forefinger along your nose; but don't spake."

Larry heard with astonishment, the music of a pair of bagpipes. The tune played was one which, according to a popular legend, was first played by Satan; it is called: "Go to the Devil and shake yourself." To our own knowledge, the peasantry in certain parts of Ireland refuse to sing it for the above reason. The mystery of the music was heightened too by the fact of its being played, as Larry thought, behind the gable

of the cabin, which stood against the side of the rath, out of which, indeed, it seemed to proceed.

Larry laid his finger along his nose, as he had been desired; and this appearing to satisfy the fairy-man, he waved his hand to the door, thus intimating that his visitor should depart; which he did immediately, but not without observing that this wild-looking being closed and bolted the door after him.

It is unnecessary to say that he was rather anxious to get off the premises of the good people; he therefore lost little time until he arrived at his own cabin; but judge of his wonder when, on entering it, he found the long-legged spectre awaiting his return.

"*Banaght dhea orrin!*" he exclaimed, starting back; "the blessing of God be upon us! Is it here before me you are?"

"Hould your tongue, man," said the other, with a smile of mysterious triumph. "Is it that you wondher at? Ha, ha! That's little cf it!"

"But how did you know my name? or who I was? or where I lived at all? Heaven protect us! it's beyant belief, clane out."

"Hould your tongue," replied the man; "don't be axin' me any thing o' the kind. Clear out, both of ye, till I begin my *pisthrogues* wid the sick child. Clear out, I say."

With some degree of apprehension, Larry and Sheelah left the house as they had been ordered, and the Fairy-man having pulled out a flask of poteen, administered a dose of it to Phelim; and never yet did patient receive his medicine with such a relish. He licked his lips, and fixed his eye upon it with a longing look.

"Be Gorra," said he, "that's fine stuff entirely. Will you lave me the bottle?"

"No," said the Fairy-man, "but I'll call an' give you a little of it wanst a day."

"Ay do," replied Phelim; "the divil a fear o' me, if I get enough of it. I hope I'll see you often."

The Fairy-man kept his word; so that what with his bottle, a hardy constitution, and light bed-clothes, Phelim got the upper hand of his malady. In a month he was again on his legs; but, alas! his complexion though not changed to deformity, was wofully out of joint. His principal blemish, in addition to the usual marks left by his complaint, consisted in a drooping of his left eye-lid, which gave to his whole face a cast highly ludicrous.

When Phelim felt thoroughly recovered, he claimed a pair of "leather crackers," * a hare-skin cap, and a coat, with a pertinacity which kept the worthy couple in a state of inquietude, until they complied with his importunity. Henceforth he began to have everything his own way. His parents, sufficiently thankful that he was spared to them, resolved to thwart him no more.

"It's well we have him at all," said his mother; "sure if we hadn't him, we'd be breakin' our hearts, and sayin' if it 'ud plase God to send him back to us, that we'd be happy even wid givin' him his own way."

"They say it breaks their strinth, too," replied his father, "to be crubbin' them in too much, an' snappin' at thim for every hand's turn, an' I'm sure it does too."

"Doesn't he become the pock-marks well, the crathur?" said the mother.

"Become!" said the father; "but doesn't the droop in his eye set him off all to pieces!"

"Ay," observed the mother, "an' how the crathur went round among all the neighbors to show them the 'leather crackers!' To see his little pride out o' the hare-skin cap, too, wid the hare's ears stickin' out of his temples. That an' the droopin' eye undher them makes him look so cunnin' an' ginteel, that one can't help havin' their heart fixed upon him."

"He'd look betther still if that ould coat wasn't sweepin' the ground behind him; an' what 'ud you think to put a pair o' *martyeens* on his legs to hide the mazles! He might go anywhere thin."

"Throth he might; but Larry, what in the world wide could be in the Fairy-man's bottle that Phelim took sich a likin' for it. He tould me this mornin' that he'd suffer to have the pock agin, set in case he was cured wid the same bottle."

"Well, the Heaven be praised, any how, that we have a son for the half-acre, Sheelah."

"Amin! An' let us take good care of him, now that he's spared to us."

Phelim's appetite, after his recovery, was anything but a joke to his father. He was now seldom at home, except during meal times; for wherever fun or novelty was to be found, Phelim was present. He became a regular attendant upon all the sportsmen. To such he made himself very useful by his correct knowledge of the best covers for game, and the best pools for fish. He was acquainted with every rood of land in the parish; knew with astonishing accuracy where coveys were to be sprung, and hares started. No hunt was without him; such was his wind and speed of foot, that to follow a chase and keep up with the horsemen was to him only a matter of sport. When daylight passed, night presented him with amusements suitable to itself. No wake, for

* Breeches made of sheep's skin, so called from the noise they make in walking or running.

instance, could escape him; a dance without young Phelim O'Toole would have been a thing worthy to be remembered. He was zealously devoted to cock-fighting; on Shrove-Tuesday he shouted loudest among the crowd that attended the sport of throwing at cocks tied to a stake; foot-ball and hurling never occurred without him. Bull-baiting—for it was common in his youth—was luxury to him; and, ere he reached fourteen, every one knew Phelim O'Toole as an adept at card-playing. Wherever a sheep, a leg of mutton, a dozen of bread, or a bottle of whiskey was put up in a shebeen house, to be played for by the country gamblers at the five and ten, or spoil'd five, Phelim always took a hand and was generally successful. On these occasions he was frequently charged with an over-refined dexterity; but Phelim usually swore, in vindication of his own innocence, until he got black in the face, as the phrase among such characters goes.

The reader is to consider him now about fifteen—a stout, overgrown, unwashed cub. His parents' anxiety that he should grow strong, prevented them from training him to any kind of employment. He was eternally going about in quest of diversion; and wherever a knot of idlers was to be found, there was Phelim. He had, up to this period, never worn a shoe, nor a single article of dress that had been made for himself, with the exception of one or two pair of sheep-skin small-clothes. In this way he passed his time, bare-legged, without shoes, clothed in an old coat much too large for him, his neck open, and his sooty locks covered with the hare-skin cap, the ears as usual sticking out above his brows. Much of his time was spent in setting the idle boys of the village to fight; and in carrying lying challenges from one to another. He himself was seldom without a broken head or a black eye; for in Ireland, he who is known to be fond of quarrelling, as the people say, usually "gets enough an' lavins of it." Larry and Sheelah, thinking it now high time that something should be done with Phelim, thought it necessary to give him some share of education. Phelim opposed this bitterly as an unjustifiable encroachment upon his personal liberty; but, by bribing him with the first and only suit of clothes he had yet got, they at length succeeded in prevailing on him to go.

The school to which he was sent happened to be kept in what is called an Inside Kiln. This kind of kiln is usually—but less so now than formerly—annexed to respectable farmers' outhouses, to which, in agricultural districts, it forms a very necessary appendage. It also serves at the same time as a barn, the kiln-pot being sunk in the shape of an inverted cone at one end, but divided from the barn floor by a wall about three feet high. From this wall beams run across the kiln-pot, over which, in a transverse direction, are laid a number of rafters like the joists of a loft, but not fastened. These ribs are covered with straw, over which again is spread a winnow-cloth to keep the grain from being lost. The fire is sunk on a level with the bottom of the kiln-pot, that is, about eight or ten feet below the floor of the barn. The descent to it is by stairs formed at the side wall. We have been thus minute in describing it, because, as the reader will presently perceive, the feats of Phelim render it necessary.

On the first day of his entering the school he presented himself with a black eye; and as his character was well known to both master and scholars, the former felt no hesitation in giving him a wholesome lecture upon the subject of his future conduct. For at least a year before this time, he had gained the nick-name of "Blessed Phelim," and "Bouncing," epithets bestowed on him by an ironical allusion to his patron saint, and his own habits.

"So, Blessed Phelim," said the master, "you are comin' to school! ! ! Well, well! I only say that miracles will never cease. Arrah, Phelim, will you tell us candidly—ah—I beg your pardon; I mean, will you tell us the best lie you can coin upon the cause of your coming to imbibe moral and literary knowledge? Silence, boys, till we hear Blessed Phelim's lie,"

"You must hear it, masther," said Phelim. "I'm comin' to larn to read an' write."

"Bravo! By the bones of Prosodius, I expected a lie, but not such a thumper as that. And you're comin' wid a black eye to prove it! A black eye, Phelim, is the blackguard's coat of arms; and to do you justice, you are seldom widout your crest."

For a few days Phelim attended the school, but learned not a letter. The master usually sent him to be taught by the youngest lads, with a hope of being able to excite a proper spirit of pride and emulation in a mind that required some extraordinary impulse. One day he called him up to ascertain what progress he had actually made; the unsuspecting teacher sat at the time upon the wall which separated the barn-floor from the kiln-pot, with his legs dangling at some distance from the ground. It was summer, and rafters used in drying the grain had been removed. On finding that Blessed Phelim, notwithstanding all the lessons he had received, was still in a state of the purest ignorance, he lost his temper, and brought him over between his knees, that he might give

him an occasional cuff for his idleness. The lesson went on, and the master's thumps were thickening about Phelim's ears, much to the worthy youth's displeasure.

"Phelim," said the master, "I'll invert you a scarecrow for dunces. I'll lay you against the wall, with your head down and your heels up like a forked carrot."

"But how will you manage that?" said Phelim. "What 'ud *I* be doin' in the mane time?"

"I'll find a way to manage it," said the master.

"To put my head down an' my heels up, is it?" inquired Phelim.

"You've said it, my worthy," returned his teacher.

"If you don't know the way," replied the pupil, "I'll show you;" getting his shoulder under the master's leg, and pitching him heels over his head into the kiln-pot. He instantly seized his cap, and ran out of the school, highly delighted at his feat; leaving the scholars to render the master whatever assistance was necessary. The poor man was dangerously hurt, for in addition to a broken arm, he received half a dozen severe contusions on the head, and in different parts of the body.

This closed Phelim's education; for no persuasion could ever induce him to enter a school afterwards; nor could any temptation prevail on the neighboring teachers to admit him as a pupil.

Phelim now shot up rapidly to the stature of a young man; and a graceful slip was he. From the period of fifteen until nineteen, he was industriously employed in idleness. About sixteen he began to look after the girls, and to carry a cudgel. The father in vain attempted to inoculate him with a love of labor; but Phelim would not receive the infection. His life was a pleasanter one. Sometimes, indeed, when he wanted money to treat the girls at fairs and markets, he would prevail on himself to labor a week or fortnight with some neighboring farmer; but the moment he had earned as much as he deemed sufficient, the spade was thrown aside. Phelim knew all the fiddlers and pipers in the barony; was master of the ceremonies at every wake and dance that occurred within several miles of him. He was a crack dancer, and never attended a dance without performing a horn-pipe on a door or a table; no man could shuffle, or treble, or cut, or spring, or caper with him. Indeed it was said that he could dance "Moll Roe" upon the end of a five-gallon keg, and snuff a mould candle with his heels, yet never lose the time. The father and mother were exceedingly proud of Phelim. The former, when he found him grown up, and associating with young men, began to feel a kind of ambition in being permitted to join Phelim and his companions, and to look upon the society of his own son as a privilege. With the girls Phelim was a beauty without paint. They thought every wake truly a scene of sorrow, if he did not happen to be present. Every dance was doleful without him. Phelim wore his hat on one side, with a knowing but careless air; he carried his cudgel with a good-humored, dashing spirit, precisely in accordance with the character of a man who did not care *a traneen* whether he drank with you as a friend or fought with you as a foe. Never were such songs heard as Phelim could sing, nor such a voice as that with which he sang them. His attitudes and action were inimitable. The droop in his eye was a standing wink at the girls; and when he sang his funny songs, with what practised ease he gave the darlings a roguish chuck under the chin! Then his jokes! "Why, faix," as the fair ones often said of him, "before Phelim speaks at all, one laughs at what he says." This was fact. His very appearance at a wake, dance, or drinking match, was hailed by a peal of mirth. This heightened his humor exceedingly; for say what you will, laughter is to wit what air is to fire—the one dies without the other.

Let no one talk of beauty being on the surface. This is a popular error, and no one but a superficial fellow would defend it. Among ten thousand you could not get a more unfavorable surface than Phelim's. His face resembled the rough side of a cullender, or, as he was often told in raillery, "you might grate potatoes on it." The lid of his left eye, as the reader knows, was like the lid of a salt-box, always closed; and when he risked a wink with the right, it certainly gave him the look of a man shutting out the world, and retiring into himself for the purpose of self-examination. No, no; beauty is in the mind; in the soul; otherwise Phelim never could have been such a prodigy of comeliness among the girls. This was the distinction the fair sex drew in his favor. "Phelim," they would say, "is not purty, but he's very comely." "Bad end to the one of him but would stale a pig off a tether, wid his winnin' ways." And so he would, too, without much hesitation, for it was not the first time he had stolen his father's.

From nineteen until the close of his minority, Phelim became a distinguished man in fairs and markets. He was, in fact, the hero of the parish; but, unfortunately, he seldom knew on the morning of the fair

day the name of the party or faction on whose side he was to fight. This was merely a matter of priority; for whoever happened to give him the first treat uniformly secured him. The reason of this pliability on his part was, that Phelim being every person's friend, by his good nature, was nobody's foe, except for the day. He fought for fun and for whiskey. When he happened to drub some companion or acquaintance on the opposite side, he was ever ready to express his regret at the circumstance, and abused them heartily for not having treated him first.

Phelim was also a great Ribbonman; and from the time he became initiated into the system, his eyes were wonderfully opened to the oppressions of the country. Sessions, decrees, and warrants he looked upon as gross abuses; assizes, too, by which so many of his friends were put to some inconvenience, he considered as the result of Protestant Ascendancy—cancers that ought to be cut out of the constitution. Bailiffs, drivers, tithe-proctors, tax-gatherers, policemen, and parsons, he thought were vermin that ought to be compelled to emigrate to a much *warmer* country than Ireland.

There was no such hand in the county as Phelim at an *alibi*. Just give him the outline—a few leading particulars of the fact—and he would work wonders. One would think, indeed, that he had been born for that especial purpose; for, as he was never known to utter a syllable of truth but once, when he had a design in not being believed, so there was no risk of a lawyer getting truth out of him. No man was ever afflicted with such convenient maladies as Phelim; even his sprains, tooth-aches, and colics seemed to have entered into the Whiteboy system. But, indeed, the very diseases in Ireland are seditious. Many a time has a tooth-ache come in to aid Paddy in obstructing the course of justice; and a colic been guilty of misprision of treason. Irish deaths, too, are very disloyal, and frequently at variance with the laws: nor are our births much better; for although more legitimate than those of our English neighbors, yet they are in general more illegal. Phelim, in proving his *alibis*, proved all these positions. On one occasion, "he slep at the prisoner's house, and couldn't close his eye with a thief of a tooth-ache that pursecuted him the whole night;" so, that in consequence of having the tooth-ache, it was impossible that the prisoner could leave the house without his knowledge.

Again, the prisoner at the bar could not possibly have shot the deceased, "bekase Mickey slept that very night at Phelim's, an' Phelim, bein' ill o' the colic, never slep at all durin' the whole night; an', by the vartue of his oath, the poor boy couldn't go out o' the house unknownst to him. If he had, Phelim would a seen him, sure."

Again, "Paddy Cummisky's wife tuck ill of a young one, an' Phelim was sent for to bring the midwife; but afore he kem to Paddy's, or hard o' the thing at all, the prisoner, airly in the night, comin' to sit awhile wid Paddy, went for the midwife instead o' Phelim, an' thin they sot up an' had a sup in regard of the 'casion; an' the prisoner never left them at all that night until the next mornin'. An' by the same token, he remimbered Paddy Cummisky barrin' the door, an' shuttin' the windies, bekase it's not lucky to have them open, for fraid that the fairies 'ud throw their *pishthrogues* upon the young one, an' it not christened."

Phelim was certainly an accomplished youth. As an alibist, however, his career was, like that of all alibists, a short one. The fact was, that his face soon became familiar to the court and the lawyers, so that his name and appearance were ultimately rather hazardous to the cause of his friends.

Phelim, on other occasions, when summoned as evidence against his well-wishers or brother Ribbonmen, usually forgot his English, and gave his testimony by an interpreter. Nothing could equal his ignorance and want of common capacity during these trials. His face was as free from every visible trace of meaning as if he had been born an idiot. No block was ever more impenetrable than he.

"What is the noble gintleman sayin'?" he would ask in Irish; and on having that explained, he would inquire, "what is that?" then demand a fresh explanation of the last one, and so on successively, until he was given up in despair.

Sometimes, in cases of a capital nature, Phelim, with the consent of his friends, would come forward and make disclosures, in order to have them put upon their trial and acquitted; lest a real approver, or some one earnestly disposed to prosecute, might appear against them. Now the *alibi* and its usual accompaniments are all of old standing in Ireland; but the master-stroke to which we have alluded is a modern invention. Phelim would bear evidence against them; and whilst the government—for it was mostly in government prosecutions he adventured this—believed they had ample grounds for conviction in his disclosures, it little suspected that the whole matter was a plan to defeat itself. In accordance with his design, he gave such evidence upon the table as ren-

dered conviction hopeless. His great object was to damn his own character as a witness, and to make such blunders, premeditated slips, and admissions, as just left him within an inch of a prosecution for perjury. Having succeeded in acquitting his friends, he was content to withdraw amid a volley of pretended execrations, leaving the Attorney-General, with all his legal knowledge, outwitted and foiled.

All Phelim's accomplishments, however, were nothing when compared to his gallantry. With personal disadvantages which would condemn any other man to old bachelorship, he was nevertheless the whiteheaded boy among the girls. He himself was conscious of this, and made his attacks upon their hearts indiscriminately. If he met an unmarried female only for five minutes, be she old or ugly, young or handsome, he devoted at least four minutes and three-quarters to the tender passion; made love to her with an earnestness that would deceive a saint; backed all his protestations with a superfluity of round oaths; and drew such a picture of her beauty as might suit the Houries of Mahomet's paradise.

Phelim and his father were great associates. No two agreed better. They went to fairs and markets together; got drunk together; and returned home with their arms about each other's neck in the most loving and affectionate manner. Larry, as if Phelim were too modest to speak for himself, seldom met a young girl without laying siege to her for the son. He descanted upon his good qualities, glossed over his defects, and drew deeply upon invention in his behalf. Sheelah, on the other hand, was an eloquent advocate for him. She had her eye upon half a dozen of the village girls, to every one of whom she found something to say in Phelim's favor.

But it is time the *action* of our story should commence. When Phelim had reached his twenty-fifth year, the father thought it was high time for him to marry. The good man had, of course, his own motives for this. In the first place, Phelim, with all his gallantry and cleverness, had never contributed a shilling, either toward his own support or that of the family. In the second place, he was never likely to do so. In the third place, the father found him a bad companion; for, in good truth, he had corrupted the good man's morals so evidently, that his character was now little better than that of his son. In the fourth place, he never thought of Phelim, that he did not see a gallows in the distance; and matrimony, he thought, might save him from hanging, as one poison neutralizes another. In the fifth place, the half-acre was but a shabby patch to meet the exigencies of the family, since Phelim grew up. "Bouncing Phelim," as he was called for more reasons than one, had the gift of a good digestion, along with his other accomplishments; and with such energy was it exercised, that the "half-acre" was frequently in hazard of leaving the family altogether. The father, therefore, felt quite willing, if Phelim married, to leave him the inheritance, and seek a new settlement for himself. Or, if Phelim preferred leaving him, he agreed to give him one-half of it, together with an equal division of all his earthly goods; to wit—two goats, of which Phelim was to get one; six hens and a cock, of which Phelim was to get three hens, and the chance of a toss-up for the cock; four stools, of which Phelim was to get two; two pots—a large one and a small one—the former to go with Phelim; three horn spoons, of which Phelim was to get one, and the chance of a toss-up for a third. Phelim was to bring his own bed, provided he did not prefer getting a bottle of fresh straw as a connubial luxury. The blanket was a tender subject; for having been fourteen years in employment, it entangled the father and Phelim, touching the prudence of the latter claiming it all. The son was at length compelled to give it up, at least in the character of an appendage to his marriage property. He feared that the wife, should he not be able to replace it by a new one, or should she herself not be able to bring him one, as part of her dowry, would find the honeymoon rather lively. Phelim's bedstead admitted of no dispute, the floor of the cabin having served him in that capacity ever since he began to sleep in a separate bed. His pillow was his small clothes, and his quilt his own coat, under which he slept snugly enough.

The father having proposed, and the son acceded to these arrangements, the next thing to be done was to pitch upon a proper girl as his wife. This being a more important matter, was thus discussed by the father and son, one evening, at their own fireside, in the presence of Sheelah.

"Now, Phelim," said the father, "look about you, an' tell us what girl in the neighborhood you'd like to be married to."

"Why," replied Phelim, "I'll lave that to you; jist point out the girl you'd *like* for your daughter-in-law, an' be she rich, poor, ould, or ugly, *I'll* delude her. That's the chat."

"Ah, Phelim, if you could put your comedher an Gracey Dalton, you'd be a made boy. She has the full of a rabbit-skin o' guineas."

"A made boy! Faith, they say I'm that

as it is, you know. But would you *wish* me to put my comedher on Gracey Dalton? Spake out."

"To be sure I would,"

"Ay," observed the mother, "or what 'ud you think of Miss Patterson? That 'ud be the girl. She has a fine farm, an' five hundre pounds. She's a Protestant, but Phelim could make a Christian of her."

"To be sure I could," said Phelim, "have her thumpin' her breast, and countin' her *Padareens* in no time. Would you wish me to have *her*, mudher?"

"Throth an' I would, avick."

"That 'ud never do," observed the father. "Sure you don't think she'd ever think of the likes o' Phelim?"

"Don't make a goose of yourself, ould man," observed Phelim. "Do you think if I set about it, that I'd not manufacture her senses as asy as I'd peel a piatee?"

"Well, well," replied the father, "in the name o' Goodness make up to her. Faith it ud' be somethin' to have a jauntin' car in the family!"

"Ay, but what the sorra will I do for a suit o' clo'es?" observed Phelim. "I could never go near her in these breeches. My elbows, too, are out o' this ould coat, bad luck to it! An' as for a waistcoat, why, I dunna but it's a sin to call what I'm wearin' a waistcoat at all. Thin agin—why, blood alive, sure I can't go to her barefooted, an' I dunna but it 'ud be dacenter to do that same, than to step out in sich excuses for brogues as these. An' in regard o' the stockins', why, I've pulled them down, strivin' to look dacent, till one 'ud think the balls o' my legs is at my heels."

"The sorra word's in that but thruth, any how," observed the father; "but what's to be done? For *we* have no way of gettin' them."

"Faith, I don't know that," said Phelim. "What if we'd borry? I could get the loan of a pair of breeches from Dudley Dwire, an' a coat from Sam Appleton. We might thry Billy Brady for a waistcoat, an' a pair of stockings. Barny Buckram-back, the pinsioner, 'ud lend me his pumps; an' we want nothing now but a hat."

"Nothin' under a Caroline 'ud do, goin' there," observed the father.

"I think Father O'Hara 'ud oblige me wid the loan o' one for a day or two;" said Phelim; "he has two or three o' them, all as good as ever."

"But, Phelim,' said the father, "before we go to all this trouble, are you sure you *could* put your comedher on Miss Patterson?"

"None o' your nonsense," said Phelim," "don't you know I could? I hate a man to be puttin' questions to me, when he knows them himself. It's a fashion *you* have got, an' you ought to dhrop it."

"Well thin," said the father, "let us set about it to-morrow. If we can borry the clo'es, thry your luck."

Phelim and the father, the next morning, set out each in a different direction, to see how far they could succeed on the borrowing system. The father was to make a descent on Dudley Dwire for the breeches, and appeal to the generosity of Sam Appleton for the coat. Phelim himself was to lay his case before the priest, and to assail Buckram-back, the pensioner, on his way home, for the brognes.

When Phelim arrived at the priest's house, he found none of the family up but the housekeeper. After bidding her good morrow, and being desired to sit down, he entered into conversation with the good woman, who felt anxious to know the scandal of the whole parish.

"Aren't you a son of Larry Toole's, young man?"

"I am, indeed, Mrs. Doran. I'm Phelim O'Toole, my mother says."

"I hope you're comin' to spake to the priest about your duty."

"Why, then, be gorra, I'm glad you axed me, so I am—for only you seen the pinance in my face, you'd never suppose sich a thing. I want to make my confishion to him, wid the help o' Goodness."

"Is there any news goin', Phelim?"

"Divil a much, barrin' what you hard yourself, I suppose, about Frank Fogarty, that went mad yesterday, for risin' the meal on the poor, an' ate the ears off himself afore anybody could see him."

"*Vick na hoiah*, Phelim; do you tell me so?"

"Why man o' Moses, is it possible you did not hear it, ma'am?"

"Oh, worra, man alive, not a syllable! Ate the ears off of himself! Phelim, acushla, see what it is to be hard an the poor!"

"Oh, he was ever an' always the biggest nagar livin', ma'am. Ay, an' when he was tied up, till a blessed priest 'ud be brought to *malivogue* the divil out of him, he got a scythe an' cut his own two hands off."

"No thin, Phelim!"

"Faitha, ma'am, sure enough. I suppose, ma'am, you hard about Biddy Duignan?"

"Who is she, Phelim?"

"Why, the misfortunate crathur's a daughter of her father's, ould Mick Duignan, of Tavenimore."

"An' what about her, Phelim? What happened her?"

"Faix, ma'am, a bit of a mistake she met wid; but, anyhow, ould Harry Connolly's to stand in the chapel nine Sundays, an' to make three Stations to Lough Dergh for it. Bedad, they say it's as purty a crathur as you'd see in a day's thravellin'."

"Harry Connolly! Why, I know Harry, but I never heard of Biddy Duignan, or her father at all. Harry Connolly! Is it a man that's bent over his staff for the last twenty years! Hut, tut, Phelim, don't say sich a thing."

"Why, ma'am, sure he takes wid it himself; he doesn't deny it at all, the ould sinner."

"Oh, that I mayn't sin, Phelim, if one knows who to thrust in this world, so they don't. Why the desateful ould—hut, Phelim, I can't give into it."

"Faix, ma'am, no wondher; but sure when he confesses it himself! Bedad, Mrs. Doran, I never seen you look so well. Upon my sowl, you'd take the shine out o' the youngest o' thim!"

"Is it me, Phelim? Why, you're beside yourself."

"Beside myself, am I? Faith, an' if I am, what I said's thruth, anyhow. I'd give more nor I'll name, to have so red a pair of cheeks as you have. Sowl, they're thumpers."

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, that I mayn't sin, but that's a good joke! An ould woman near sixty!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, that's nonsense, an' nothing else. Near sixty! Oh, by my purty, that's runnin' away wid the story entirely—No, nor thirty. Faith, I know them that's not more nor five or six-an'-twenty, that 'ud be glad to borry the loan of your face for a while. Divil a word o' lie in that."

"No, no, Phelim, aroon, I seen the day; but that's past. I remimber when the people *did* say I was worth lookin' at. Won't you sit near the fire? You're in the dhraft there."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am; faith, you have the name, far an' near, for bein' the civilest woman alive this day. But, upon my sowl, if you wor ten times as civil, an' say that you're not aquil to any young girl in the parish, I'd dispute it wid you; an' say it was nothin' else than a bounce."

"Arrah, Phelim, darlin, how can you palaver me that way? I hope your dacent father's well, Phelim, an' your honest mother."

"Divil a fear o' them. Now, I'd hould nine to one that the purtiest o' them hasn't a sweeter mout' than you have. By dad, you have a pair o' lips, God bless them that—well, well—"

Phelim here ogled her with looks particularly wistful.

"Phelim, you're losin' the little sense you had."

"Faix, an' it's you that's taken them out o' me, then. A purty woman always makes a fool o' me. Divil a word o' lie in it. Faix, Mrs. Doran, ma'am, you have a chin o' your own! Well, well! Oh, be Gorra, I wish I I hadn't come out this mornin' any how!"

"Arrah, why, Phelim? In throth, it's you that's the quare Phelim!"

"Why, ma'am—Oh bedad it's a folly to talk. I can't go widout tastin' them. Sich a pair o' timptations as your lips, barrin' your eyes, I didn't see this many a day."

"Tastin' what, you mad crathur?"

"Why, I'll show you what I'd like to be after tastin'. Oh! bedad, I'll have norefusin'; a purty woman always makes a foo——"

"Keep away, Phelim; keep off; bad end to you; what do you mane? Don't you see Fool Art lyin' in the corner there undher the sacks? I don't think he's asleep."

"Fool Art! why, the misfortunate idiot, what about him? Sure he hasn't sinse to know the right hand from the left. Bedad, ma'am the truth is, that a purty woman always makes a——"

"Throth an' you won't," said she struggling.

"Throth an' I will, thin, taste the same lips, or we'll see whose strongest!"

A good-humored struggle took place between the housekeeper and Phelim, who found her, in point of personal strength, very near a match for him. She laughed heartily, but Phelim attempted to salute her with a face of mock gravity as nearly resembling that of a serious man as he could assume. In the meantime, chairs were overturned, and wooden dishes trundled about; a crash was heard here, and another there. Phelim drove her to the hob, and from the hob they both bounced into the fire, the embers and ashes of which were kicked up into a cloud about them.

"Phelim, spare your strinth," said the funny housekeeper, "it won't do. Be asy now, or I'll get angry. The priest, too, will hear the noise, and so will Fool Art."

"To the divil wid Fool Art an' the priest, too," said Phelim, "who cares a buckey about the priest when a purty woman like you is consarn——"

"What's this?" said the priest, stepping down from the parlor—"What's the matter? Oh, ho, upon my word, Mrs. Doran! Very good, indeed! Under my own roof, too! An' pray, ma'am, who is the gallant? Turn round young man. Yes, I see! Why, better and better! Bouncing Phelim O'Toole, that never spoke truth! I think, Mr. O'Toole, that when you come a courting, you ought to

consider it worth your while to appear somewhat more smooth in your habiliments. I simply venture to give that as my opinion."

"Why sure enough," replied Phelim, without a moment's hesitation; "your Reverence has *found us out.*"

"*Found you out!* Why, is that the tone you speak in?"

"Faith, sir, thruth's best. I wanted her to tell it to you long ago, but she wouldn't. Howsomever, it's still time enough.—Hem! The thruth, sir, is, that Mrs. Doran an' I is goin' to get the words said as soon as we can; so, sir, wid the help o' Goodness, I came to see if your Reverence 'ud call us next Sunday wid a blessin'."

Mrs. Doran had, for at least a dozen round years before this, been in a state of hopelessness upon the subject of matrimony; nothing in the shape of a proposal having in the course of that period come in her way. Now we have Addison's authority for affirming, that an old woman who permits the thoughts of love to get into her head, becomes a very odd kind of animal. Mrs. Doran, to do her justice, had not thought of it for nearly three lustres, for this reason, that she had so far overcome her vanity as to deem it possible that a proposal could be ever made to her. It is difficult, however, to know what a day may bring forth. Here was an offer, dropping like a ripe plum into her mouth. She turned the matter over in her mind with a quickness equal to that of Phelim himself. One leading thought struck her forcibly: if she refused to close with this offer, she would never get another.

"Is it come to this, Mrs. Doran?" inquired the priest.

"Oh, bedad, sir, she knows it is," replied Phelim, giving her a wink with the safe eye.

Now, Mrs. Doran began to have her suspicions. The wink she considered as decidedly ominous. Phelim, she concluded with all the sagacity of a woman thinking upon *that* subject, had winked at her to assent only for the purpose of getting themselves out of the scrape *for the present.* She feared that Phelim would be apt to break off the match, and take some opportunity, before Sunday should arrive, of preventing the priest from calling them. Her decision, however, was soon made. She resolved, if possible to pin down Phelim to his own proposal.

"Is this true, Mrs. Doran?" inquired the priest, a second time.

Mrs. Doran could not, with any regard to the delicacy of her sex, give an assent without proper emotion. She accordingly applied her apron to her eyes, and shed a few natural tears in reply to the affecting query of the pastor.

Phelim, in the meantime, began to feel mystified. Whether Mrs. Doran's tears were a proof that she was disposed to take the matter seriously, or whether they were tears of shame and vexation for having been caught in the character of a romping old hoyden, he could not then exactly decide. He had, however, awful misgivings upon the subject.

"Then," said the priest, "it is to be understood that I'm to call you both on Sunday."

"There's no use in keepin' it back from you," replied Mrs. Doran. "I know it's foolish of me; but we have all our failins, and to be fond of Phelim there, is mine. Your Reverence *is* to call us next Sunday, as Phelim tould you. I am sure I can't tell you how he deluded me at all, the desaver o' the world!"

Phelim's face during this acknowledgment was, like Goldsmith's Haunch of Venison, "a subject for painters to study." His eyes projected like a hare's until nothing could be seen but the balls. Even the drooping lid raised itself up, as if it were never to droop again.

"Well," said the priest, "I shall certainly not use a single argument to prevent you. Your choice, I must say, does you credit, particularly when it is remembered that you have come at least to years of discretion. Indeed, many persons might affirm that you have gone beyond them; but I say nothing. In the meantime your wishes must be complied with. I will certainly call Phelim O'Toole and Bridget Doran on Sunday next; and one thing I know, that we shall have a very merry congregation."

Phelim's eyes turned upon the priest and the old woman alternately, with an air of bewilderment which, had the priest been a man of much observation, might have attracted his attention.

"Oh murdher alive, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, "how am I to do for clo'es? Faith, I'd like to appear *decent* in the thing, anyhow."

"True," said the priest. "Have you made no provision for smoothing the externals of your admirer? Is he to appear in this trim?"

"Bedad, sir," said Phelim, "we never thought o' that. All the world knows, your Reverence, that I might carry my purse in my eye, an' never feel a mote in it. But the thruth is, sir, she was so lively on the subject—in a kind of a pleasant, coaxin' hurry of her own—an' indeed I was so myself, too. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Be gorra, sir, she put her comedher an me entirely, so she did. Well, be my sowl, I'll be the flower of a husband to her anyhow. I hope your Reverence 'll come to the christ'nin'? But about the clo'es;—bad luck saize the tack I have

to put to my back, but what you see an me, if we wor to be married to-morrow."

"Well, Phelim, aroon," said Mrs. Doran, "his Reverence here has my little pences o' money in his hands, an' the best way is for you to get the price of a suit from him. You must get clo'es, an' good ones, too, Phelim, sooner nor any stop should be put to our marriage."

"Augh, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, ogling her from the safe eye, with a tender suavity of manner that did honor to his heart; be gorra, ma'am, you've played the puck entirely wid me. Faith, I'm gettin' fonder an' fonder of her every minute, your Reverence."

He set his eye, as he uttered this, so sweetly and significantly upon the old housekeeper, that the priest thought it a transgression of decorum in his presence.

"I think," said he, "you had better keep your melting looks to yourself, Phelim. Restrain your gallantry, if you please, at least until I withdraw."

"Why, blood alive! sir, when people's fond of one another, it's hard to keep the love down. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Faith, you've rendhered my heart like a lump o' tallow."

"Follow me to the parlor," said the priest, "and let me know, Bridget, what sum I am to give to this melting gallant of yours."

"I may as well get what'll do the weddin' at wanst," observed Phelim. "It'll save throuble, in the first place; an' sackinly, it'll save time; for, plase Goodness, I'll have everything ready for houldin' the weddin' the Monday after the last call. By the hole o' my coat, the minute I get the clo'es we'll be spliced, an' thin for the honeymoon!"

"How much money shall I give him?" said the priest.

"Indeed, sir, I think you ought to know that; I'm ignorant o' what 'ud make a dacent weddin'. We don't intend to get marrid undher a hedge; we've frinds an both sides, an' of course, we must have them about us, plase Goodness."

"Be gorra, sir, it's no wondher I'm fond of her, the darlin'? Bad win to you, Mrs. Doran, how did you come over me at all?"

"Bridget," said the priest, "I have asked you a simple question, to which I expect a plain answer. What money am I to give this tallow-hearted swain of yours?"

"Why, your Reverence, whatsomever you think may be enough for full, an' plinty, an' dacency, at the weddin'."

"Not forgetting the *thatch* for me, in the mane time," said Phelim. "Nothin' less will sarve us, plase your Reverence. Maybe, sir, you'd think 'of comin' to the weddin' yourself?"

"There are in my hands," observed the priest, "one hundred and twenty-two guineas of your money, Bridget. Here, Phelim, are ten for your wedding suit and wedding expenses. Go to *your* wedding! No! don't suppose for a moment that I countenance this transaction in the slightest degree. I comply with your wishes, because I heartily despise you both; but certainly this foolish old woman most. Give me an acknowledgment for this, Phelim."

"God bless you, sir!" said Phelim, as if he had paid them a compliment. "In regard o' the acknowledgment, sir, I acknowledge it wid all my heart; but bad luck to the scrape at all I can write."

"Well, no matter. You admit, Bridget, that I give this money to this blessed youth by your authority and consent."

"Surely, your Reverence; I'll never go back of it."

"Now, Phelim," said the priest, "you have the money; pray get married as soon as possible."

"I'll give you my oath," said Phelim; "an' be the blessed iron tongs in the grate there, I'll not lose a day in gettin' myself spliced. Isn't she the tendher-hearted sowl, your Reverence? Augh, Mrs. Doran!"

"Leave my place," said the priest. "I cannot forget the old proverb, that one fool makes many, but an old fool is worse than any. So it is with this old woman."

"Ould woman! Oh, thin, I'm sure I don't desarve this from your Reverence!" exclaimed the housekeeper, wiping her eyes; if I'm a little seasoned now, you know I wasn't always so. If ever there was a faithful sarvant, I was that, an' managed your house and place as honestly as I'll manage my own, plase Goodness."

As they left the parlor, Phelim became the consoler.

"Whisht, you darlin'!" he exclaimed. "Sure you'll have Bounciu' Phelim to comfort you. But now that he has shut the door, what—hem—I'd take it as a piece o' civility if you'd open my eyes a little; I mane—hem—was it—is this doin' *him*, or how? Are you—hem—do you *undherstand* me, Mrs. Doran?"

"What is it you want to know, Phelim? I think everything is very plain."

"Oh, the divil a plainer, I suppose. But in the mane time, might one axe, out o' mere curiosity, if you're *in airnest?*"

"In airnest! Arrah, what did I give you my money for, Phelim? Well, now that everything is settled, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me."

"A bad *what?*"

"I say, God forgive you if you make a bad

husband to me. I'm afeard, Phelim, that I'll be too foolish about you—that I'll be too fond of you."

Phelim looked at her in solemn silence, and then replied—"Let us trust in God that you may be enabled to overcome the weakness. Pray to Him to avoid all folly, an' above everything, to give you a dacent stock of discration, for it's a mighty fine thing for a woman of your yea—hem—a mighty fine thing it is, indeed, for a sasoned woman, as you say you are."

"When will the weddin' take place, Phelim?"

"The *what?*" said Phelim, opening his brisk eye with a fresh stare of dismay,

"Why, the weddin', acushla. When will it take place? I think the Monday afther the last call 'nd be the best time. We wouldn't lose a day thin. Throth, I long to hear my last call over, Phelim, jewel."

Phelim gave her another look.

"The last call! Thin, by the vestment, you don't long half as much for your *last* call as I do."

"Arrah, Phelim, did you take the—the—what you wor wantin' awhile agone? Throth, myself disremimbers."

"Ay, a round dozen o' them. How can you forget it?"

The idiot in the corner here gave a loud snore, but composed himself to sleep, as if insensible to all that passed.

"Throth, an' I do forget it. Now, Phelim, you'll not go till you take a cup o' tay wid myself. Throth, I do forget it, Phelim darlin', jewel."

Phelim's face now assumed a very queer expression. He twisted his features into all possible directions; brought his mouth first round to one ear and then to the other; put his hand, as if in great pain, on the pit of his stomach; lifted one knee up till it almost touched his chin, then let it down, and instantly brought up the other in a similar manner.

"Phelim, darlin', what ails you?" inquired the tender old nymph. "Wurrah, man alive, aren't you well?"

"Oh, be the vestment," said Phelim, "what's this at all? Murdher, sheery, what'll I do! Oh, I'm very bad! At death's door, so I am! Be gorra, Mrs. Doran, I must be off."

"Wurrah, Phelim dear, won't you stop till we settle everything?"

"Oh, purshuin' to the ha'p'orth I can settle till I recover o' this murdherin' colic! All's asthray wid me in the inside. I'll see you—I'll see you—*Havim an dioul!* what's this?—I must be off like a shot—oh, murdher sheery?—but—but—I'll see you to-morrow. In the mane time, I'm—I'm—for ever oblaged to you for—for—lendin' me the—loan of—oh, by the vestments, I'm a gone man!—for lendin' me the *loan* of the ten guineas—Oh, I'm gone!"

Phelim disappeared on uttering these words, and his strides on passing out of the house were certainly more rapid and vigorous than those of a man laboring under pain. In fact, he never looked behind him until one-half the distance between the priest's house and his father's cabin had been fairly traversed.

Some misgivings occurred to the old housekeeper, but her vanity, having been revived by Phelim's blarney, would not permit her to listen to them. She had, besides, other motive to fortify her faith in his attachment. First, there was her money, a much larger sum than ever Phelim could expect with any *other* woman, young 'or old; again, they were to be called on the following Sunday, and she knew that when a marriage affair proceeds so far, obstruction or disappointment is not to be apprehended.

When Phelim reached home, he found the father returned after having borrowed a full suit of clothes for him. Sam Appleton on hearing from Larry that Bouncing Phelim was about to get a "Great Match," * generously lent him coat, waistcoat, hat, and small-clothes.

When Phelim presented himself at home, he scarcely replied to the queries put to him by his father and mother concerning his interview with the priest. He sat down, rubbed his hands, scratched his head, rose up, and walked to and fro, in a mood of mind so evidently between mirth and chagrin, that his worthy parents knew not whether to be merry or miserable.

"Phelim," said the mother, "did you take anything while you wor away?"

"Did I take anything! is it? Arrah, be asy, ould woman! Did I take anything! Faith you may say that!"

"Let us know, anyhow, what's the matther wid you?" asked the father.

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed the son, "what is this for, at all at all? It's too killin' I am, so it is."

"You're not lookin' at Sam Appleton's clo'es," said the father, "that he lent you the loan of, hat an' all?"

"Do you want to put an affront upon me, ould man? To the divil wid himself an' his clo'es! When I wants clo'es I'll buy them wid my own money!"

* When a country girl is said to have a large fortune, the peasantry, when speaking of her in reference to matrimony, say she's a "Great Match."

"Larry," observed the mother, "there's yourself all over—as proud as a paycock when the sup's in your head, an' 'ud spake as big widout the sign o' money in your pocket, as if you had the rint of an estate."

"What do you say about the sign o' money?" exclaimed Phelim, with a swagger. "Maybe you'll call *that* the sign o' money!" he added, producing the ten guineas in gold.

The father and mother looked at it for a considerable time, then at each other, and shook their heads.

"Phelim!" said the father, solemnly.

"Phelim!" said the mother, awfully; and both shook their heads again.

"You wor never over-scrupulous," the father proceeded, "an' you know you have many little things to answer for, in the way of pickin' up what didn't belong to yourself. I think, too, you're not the same boy you wor afore you tuck to swearin' the alibies.

"Faith, an' I doubt I'll have to get some one to swear an alibi for myself soon," Phelim replied.

"Why, blessed hour!" said Larry, "didn't I often tell you never to join the boys in anything that might turn out a hangin' matther?"

"If this is not a hangin' matther," said Phelim, "it's something nearly as bad: it's a marryin' matther. Sure I deluded another since you seen me last. Divil a word o' lie in it. I was clane fell in love wid this mornin' about seven o'clock."

"But how did you get the money, Phelim?"

"Why, from the youthful sprig that fell in love wid me. Sure we're to be 'called' in the Chapel on Sunday next."

"Why thin now, Phelim! An' who is the young crathur? for in throth she must be young to go to give the money beforehand!"

"Murdher!" exclaimed Phelim, "what's this for! Was ever any one *done* as I am? Who is she! Why she's—oh, murdher, oh!—she's no other than—hem—divil a one else than Father O'Hara's housekeeper, ould Biddy Doran!"

The mirth of the old couple was excessive. The father laughed till he fell off his stool, and the mother till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Death alive, ould man! but you're very merry," said Phelim. "If you wor my age, an' in such an' amplush, you'd laugh on the wrong side o' your mouth. Maybe you'll turn your tune when you hear that she has a hundhre and twenty guineas."

"An' you'll be rich, too," said the father. "The sprig an' you will be rich!—ha, ha, ha!"

"An' the family they'll have!" said the mother, in convulsions.

"Why, in regard o' that," said Phelim, rather nettled, "if all fails us, sure we can do as my father and you did: kiss the Lucky Stone, an' make a Station."

"Phelim, aroon," said the mother, seriously, "put it out o' your head. Sure you wouldn't go to bring me a daughter-in-law oulder nor myself?"

"I'd as soon *go over*,"* said Phelim; "or *swing* itself, before I'd marry sich a piece o' desate. Hard feelin' to her! how she did me to my face!"

Phelim then entered into a long-visaged detail of the scene at Father O'Hara's, dwelling bitterly on the alacrity with which the old housekeeper ensnared him in his own mesh.

"However," he concluded, "she'd be a sharp one if she'd *do* me altogether. We're not married yet; an' I've a consate of my own, that *she's* done for the ten guineas, any how!"

A family council was immediately held upon Phelim's matrimonial prospects. On coming close to the speculation of Miss Patterson, it was somehow voted, notwithstanding Phelim's powers of attraction, to be rather a discouraging one. Gracey Dalton was also given up. The matter was now serious, the time short, and Phelim's bounces touching his own fascinations with the sex in general, were considerably abated. It was therefore resolved that he ought to avail himself of Sam Appleton's clothes, until his own could be made. Sam, he said, would not press him for them immediately, inasmuch as he was under obligations to Phelim's silence upon some midnight excursions that he had made.

"Not," added Phelim, "but I'm as much, an' maybe more in his power, than he is in mine."

When breakfast was over, Phelim and the father, after having determined to "drink a bottle" that night in the family of an humble young woman, named Donovan, who, they all agreed, would make an excellent wife for him, rested upon their oars until evening. In the meantime, Phelim sauntered about the village, as he was in the habit of doing, whilst the father kept the day as a holiday. We have never told our readers that Phelim was in love, because in fact we know not whether he was or not. Be this as it may, we simply inform them, that in a little shed in the lower end of the village, lived a person with whom Phelim was very intimate, called Foodle Flattery. He was, indeed, a man after Phelim's own heart, and Phelim was a boy after his. He maintained himself by riding country races; by handing, breed-

* A familiar term for "Transportation."

ing, and feeding cocks; by fishing, poaching, and serving processes; and finally, by his knowledge as a cow-doctor and farrier—into the two last of which he had given Phelim some insight. We say the two last, for in most of the other accomplishments Phelim was fully his equal. Phelim frequently envied him his life. It was an idle, amusing, vagabond kind of existence, just such a one as he felt a relish for. This man had a daughter, rather well-looking; and it so happened, that he and Phelim had frequently spent whole nights out together, no one knew on what employment. Into Flattery's house did Phelim saunter with something like an inclination to lay the events of the day before him, and to ask his advice upon his future prospects. On entering the cabin he was much surprised to find the daughter in a very melancholy mood; a circumstance which puzzled him not a little, as he knew that they lived very harmoniously together. Sally had been very useful to her father; and, if fame did not belie her, was sometimes worthy Foodle's assistant in his nocturnal exploits. She was certainly reputed to be "light-handed;" an imputation which caused the young men of her acquaintance to avoid, in their casual conversations with her, any allusion to matrimony.

"Sally, achora," said Phelim, when he saw her in distress, "what's the fun? Where's your father?"

"Oh, Phelim," she replied, bursting into tears, "long runs the fox, but he's cotch at last. My father's in gaol."

Phelim's jaw dropped. "In gaol! *Chorp an diowol*, no!"

"It's thruth, Phelim. Curse upon this Whiteboy business, I wish it never had come into the counthry at all."

"Sally, I must see him; you know I must. But tell me how it happened? Was it at home he was taken?"

"No; he was taken this mornin' in the market. I was wid him sellin' some chickens. What'll you and Sam Appleton do, Phelim?"

"Uz! Why, what danger is there to either Sam or me, you darlin'?"

"I'm sure, Phelim, I don't know; but he tould me, that if I was provided for, he'd be firm, an' take chance of his thrial. But, he says, poor man, that it 'ud break his heart to be transported, lavin' me behind him wid nobody to take care o' me. He says, too, if anything 'ud make him *stag*, it's fear of the thrial goin' against himself; for, as he said to me, what 'ud become of you, Sally, if anything happened me?"

A fresh flood of tears followed this disclosure, and Phelim's face, which was certainly destined to undergo on that day many variations of aspect, became remarkably blank.

"Sally, you insinivator, I'll bould a thousand guineas you'd never guess what brought me here to-day?"

"Arrah, how could I, Phelim? To plan somethin' wid my father, maybe."

"No, but to plan somethin' wid yourself, you coaxin' jewel you. Now tell me this—Would you marry a certain gay, roguish, well-built young fellow, they call Bouncin' Phelim?"

"Phelim, don't be gettin' an wid your fun now, an' me in affliction. Sure, I know well you wouldn't throw yourself away upon a poor girl like me, that has nothin' but a good pair of hands to live by."

"Be me sowl, an' you live by them. Well, but set in case—supposin'—that same Bouncin' Phelim was willing to make you mistress of the Half Acre, what 'ud you be sayin'?"

"Phelim, if a body thought you worn't jokin' them—oh, the dickens go wid you, Phelim—this is more o' your thricks—but if it was thruth you wor spakin', Phelim?"

"It is thruth," said Phelim; "be the vestment, it's nothin' else. Now, say yes or no; for if it's a thing that it's to be a match, you must go an' tell him that I'll marry you, an' he must be as firm as a rock. But see, Sally, by thim five crasses it's not bekase your father's *in* I'm marryin' you at all. Sure I'm in love wid you, acushla! Divil a lie in it. Now, yes or no?"

"Well—throth—to be sure—the sorra one, Phelim, but you have quare ways wid you. Now are you downright in airnest?"

"Be the stool I'm sittin' on!"

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, I'll go to my father, an' let him know it. Poor man, it'll take the fear out of his heart. Now can he depind on you, Phelim?"

"Why, all I can say is, that we'll get ourselves called on Sunday next. Let himself, sure, send some one to autorise the priest to call us. 'An' now that's all settled, don't I desarve somethin'? Oh, be gorra, surely."

"Behave, Phelim—oh—oh—Phelim, now—there you've tuck it—och, the curse o' the crows on you, see the way you have my hair down! There now, you broke my comb, too. Troth, you're a wild slip, Phelim. I hope you won't be goin' on this way wid the girls, when you get married."

"Is it me, you coaxer? No, faith, I'll wear a pair of winkers, for fraid o' lookin' at them at all. Oh, be gorra, no, Sally, I'll lave that to the great people. Sure, they say, the divil a differ *they* make at all."

"Go off now, Phelim, till I get ready, an' set out to my father. But, Phelim, never

breathe a word about him bein' in goal. No one knows it but ourselves—that is, none o' the neighbors."

"I'll sing dumb," said Phelim. "Well, *bmaght lath, a rogarah!* * Tell him the thruth—to be *game*, an' he'll find you an' me sweeled together whin he comes out, plase Goodness."

Phelim was but a few minutes gone, when the old military cap of Fool Art projected from the little bed-room, which a wicker wall, plastered with mud, divided from the other part of the cabin.

"Is he gone?" said Art.

"You may come out, Art," said she, "he's gone."

"Ha!" said Art, triumphantly, "I often tould him, when he vexed me an' pelted me wid snow-balls, that I'd come along sides wid him yet. An' it's not over aither. Fool Art can snore when he's not asleep, an' see wid his eyes shut. Wherroo for Art!"

"But, Art, maybe he intinds to marry the housekeeper afther all?"

> "Hi the colic, the colic!
> An' ho the colic for Phelim!"

"Then you think he won't, Art?"

> "Hi the colic, the colic!
> An' ho the colic for Phelim!"

"Now, Art, don't say a word about my father *not* bein' in gaol. He's to be back from my grandfather's in a short time, an' if we manage well, you'll see what you'll get, Art—a brave new shirt, Art."

"Art has the luae for Phelim, but it's not the long one wid no turn in it. Wherroo for Art!"

Phelim, on his return home, felt queer; here was a second matrimonial predicament, considerably worse than the first, into which he was hooked decidedly against his will. The worst feature in this case was the danger to be apprehended from Foodle Flattery's disclosures, should he take it into his head to 'peach upon his brother Whiteboys. Indeed, Phelim began to consider it a calamity that he ever entered into their system at all; for, on running over his exploits along with them, he felt that he was liable to be taken up any morning of the week, and lodged in one of his majesty's boarding-houses. The only security he had was the honesty of his confederates; and experience took the liberty of pointing out to him many cases in which those who considered themselves quite secure, upon the same grounds, either dangled or crossed the water. He remembered, too, some prophecies that had been uttered concerning him with reference both to hanging and matrimony. Touching the former it was often said, that "he'd die where the bird flies"—between heaven and earth; on matrimony, that there seldom was a swaggerer among the girls but came to the ground at last.

Now Phelim had a memory of his own, and in turning over his situation, and the prophecies that had been so confidently pronounced concerning him, he felt, as we said, rather queer. He found his father and mother in excellent spirits when he got home. The good man had got a gallon of whiskey on credit; for it had been agreed on not to break the ten golden guineas until they should have ascertained how the match-making would terminate that night at Donovan's.

"Phelim," said the father, "strip yourself, an' put on Sam's clo'es: you must send him down yours for a day or two; he says it's the least he may have the wearin' o' them, so long as you have his."

"Right enough," said Phelim; "Wid all my heart; I'm ready to make a fair swap wid him any day, for that matther."

"I sent word to the Donovans that we're to go to coort there to night," said Larry; "so that they'll be prepared for us; an' as it would be shabby not to have a friend, I asked Sam Appleton himself. He's to folly us."

"I see," said Phelim, "I see. Well, the best boy in Europe Sam is, for such a spree. Now, Father, you must lie like the ould *diouol* to night. Back everything I say, an' there's no fear of us. But about what she's to get, you must hould out for that. I'm to despise it, you know. I'll abuse you for spakin' about fortune, but don't budge an inch."

"It's not the first time I've done that for you, Phelim; but in regard o' these ten guineas, why you must put them in your pocket for fraid they be wantin' to get off wid layin' down guinea for guinea. You see, they don't think *we* have a rap; an' if they propose it we'll be up to them."

"Larry," observed Sheelah, "don't make a match except they give that pig they have. Hould out for that by all means."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed Phelim, "am I goin' to take the counthry out o' the face? By the vestments, I'm a purty boy! Do you know the fresh news I have for yez?"

"Not ten guineas more, Phelim?" replied the father.

"Maybe you soodhered another ould woman," said the mother.

"Be asy," replied Phelim. "No, but by

* My blessing be with you, you rogue!

the five crasses, I deluded a young one since I went out!"

The old couple were once more disposed to be mirthful; but Phelim confirmed his assertion with such a multiplicity of oaths, that they believed him. Nothing, however, could wring the secret of her name out of him. He had reasons for concealing it which he did not wish to divulge. In fact, he could never endure ridicule, and the name of Sally Flattery, as the person whom he had "deluded," would constitute, on his part, a triumph quite as sorry as that which he had achieved in Father O'Hara's. In Ireland no man ever thinks of marrying a female thief —which Sally was strongly suspected to be —except some worthy fellow, who happens to be gifted with the same propensity.

When the proper hour arrived, honest Phelim, after having already made arrangements to be called on the following Sunday, as the intended husband of two females, now proceeded with great coolness to make, if possible, a similar engagement with a third.

There is something, however, to be said for Phelim. His conquest over the housekeeper was considerably out of the common course of love affairs. He had drawn upon his invention, only to bring himself and the old woman out of the ridiculous predicament in which the priest found them. He had, moreover, intended to prevail on her to lend him the hat, in case the priest himself had refused him. He was consequently not prepared for the vigorous manner in which Mrs. Doran fastened upon the subject of matrimony. On suspecting that she was inclined to be serious, he pleaded his want of proper apparel; but here again the liberality of the housekeeper silenced him, whilst, at the same time, it opened an excellent prospect of procuring that which he most required—a decent suit of clothes. This induced him to act a part that he did not feel. He saw the old woman was resolved to outwit him, and he resolved to overreach the old woman.

His marriage with Sally Flattery was to be merely a matter of chance. If he married her at all, he knew it must be in self-defence. He felt that her father had him in his power, and that he was anything but a man to be depended on. He also thought that his being called with her, on the Sunday following, would neutralize his call with the housekeeper; just as positive and negative quantities in algebra cancel each other. But he was quite ignorant that the story of Flattery's imprisonment was merely a plan of the daughter's to induce him to marry her.

With respect to Peggy Donovan, he intended, should he succeed in extricating himself from the meshes which the other two had thrown around him, that she should be the elected one to whom he was anxious to unite himself. As to the confusion produced by being called to three at once, he knew that, however laughable in itself, it would be precisely something like what the parish would expect from *him*. Bouncing Phelim was no common man, and to be called to three on the same Sunday, would be a corroboration of his influence with the sex. It certainly chagrined him not a little that one of them was an old woman, and the other of indifferent morals; but still it exhibited the claim of three women upon one man, and that satisfied him. His mode of proceeding with Peggy Donovan was regular, and according to the usages of the country. The notice had been given that he and his father would go a courting, and of course they brought the whiskey with them, that being the custom among persons in their circumstances in life. These humble courtships very much resemble the driving of a bargain between two chapmen; for, indeed, the closeness of the demands on the one side, and the reluctance of concession on the other, are almost incredible. Many a time has a match been broken up by a refusal on the one part, to give a slip of a pig, or a pair of blankets, or a year-old calf. These are small matters in themselves, but they are of importance to those who, perhaps, have nothing else on earth with which to begin the world.

The house to which Phelim and his father directed themselves was, like their own, of the humblest description. The floor of it was about sixteen feet by twelve; its furniture rude and scanty. To the right of the fire was a bed, the four posts of which ran up to the low roof; it was curtained with straw mats, with the exception of an opening about a foot and a half wide on the side next the fire, through which those who slept in it passed. A little below the foot of the bed were ranged a few shelves of deal, supported by pins of wood driven into the wall. These constituted the dresser. In the lower end of the house stood a potato-bin, made up of stakes driven into the floor, and wrought with strong wicker-work. Tied to another stake beside this bin stood a cow, whose hinder part projected so close to the door, that those who entered the cabin were compelled to push her over out of their way. This, indeed, was effected without much difficulty, for the animal became so habituated to the necessity of moving aside, that it was only necessary to lay the hand upon her. Above the door in the inside, almost touching the roof, was the hen-roost, made also of wicker-work; and opposite the bed, on the other side of the fire, stood a meal-chest,

its lid on a level with the little pane of glass which served as a window. An old straw chair, a few stools, a couple of pots, some wooden vessels and crockery, completed the furniture of the house. The pig to which Sheelah alluded was not kept within the cabin, that filthy custom being now less common than formerly.

This catalogue of cottage furniture may appear to our English readers very miserable. We beg them to believe, however, that if every cabin in Ireland were equally comfortable, the country would be comparatively happy. Still it is to be remembered, that the *dramatis personæ* of our story are of the humblest class.

When seven o'clock drew nigh, the inmates of this little cabin placed themselves at a clear fire; the father at one side, the mother at the other, and the daughter directly between them, knitting, for this is usually the occupation of a female on such a night. Everything in the house was clean; the floor swept; the ashes removed from the hearth; the parents in their best clothes, and the daughter also in her holiday apparel. She was a plain girl, neither remarkable for beauty, nor otherwise. Her eyes, however, were good, so were her teeth, and an anxious look, produced of course by an occasion so interesting to a female, heightened her complexion to a blush that became her. The creature had certainly made the most of her little finery. Her face shone like that of a child after a fresh scrubbing with a strong towel; her hair, carefully curled with the hot blade of a knife, had been smoothed with soap until it became lustrous by repeated polishing, and her best red ribbon was tied tightly about it in a smart knot, that stood out on the side of her head with something of a coquettish air. Old Donovan and his wife maintained a conversation upon some indifferent subject, but the daughter evidently paid little attention to what they said. It being near the hour appointed for Phelim's arrival, she sat with an appearance of watchful trepidation, occasionally listening, and starting at every sound that she thought bore any resemblance to a man's voice or footstep.

At length the approach of Phelim and his father was announced by a verse of a popular song, for singing which Phelim was famous;—

"A sailor coorted a farmer's daughter
That lived *contagious* to the Isle of Man,
A long time coortin', an' still discoorsin'
Of things consarnin' the ocean wide;
At lifth he saize, 'My own dearest darlint,
Will you consint for to be my bride?'"

"An' so she did consint, the darlin', but what the puck would she do else? God save the family! Paddy Donovan, how is your health? Molly, avourneen, I'm glad to hear that you're thrivin'. An' Peggy—eh? Ah, be gorra, father, here's somethin' to look at! Give us the hand of you, you bloomer! Och, och! faith you're the daisey!"

"Phelim," said the father, "will you behave yourself? Haven't you the night before you for your capers? Paddy Donovan, I'm glad to see you! Molly, give us your right hand, for, in troth, I have a regard for you! Peggy, dear, how are you? But I'm sure, I needn't be axin when I look at you! In troth, Phelim, she *is* somethin' to throw your eye at."

"Larry Toole, you're welcome," replied Donovan and his wife, "an' so is your son. Take stools both of you, an' draw near the hearth. Here, Phelim," said the latter, "draw in an' sit beside myself."

"Thank you kindly, Molly," replied Phelim; "but I'll do no sich thing. Arrah, do you think, now, that I'd begin to gosther wid an ould woman, while I have the likes o' Peggy, the darlin', beside me? I'm up to a thrick worth nine of it. No, no; this chest 'll do. Sure you know, I must help the 'duck of diamonds' here to count her stitches."

"Paddy," said Larry, in a friendly whisper, "put this whiskey past for a while, barrin' this bottle that we must taste for good luck. Sam Appleton's to come up afther us an', I suppose, some o' your own *cleavens* 'll be here afther a while."

"Thrue for you," said Donovan. "Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin is to come over presently. But, Larry, this is nonsense. One bottle o' whiskey was lashins; my Goodness, what'll we be doin' wid a whole gallon?"

"Dacency or nothin', Paddy; if it was my last I'd show sperit, an' why not? Who'd be for the shabby thing?"

"Well, well, Larry, I can't say but you're right afther all! Maybe I'd do the same thing myself, for all I'm spakin' against it."

The old people then passed round an introductory glass, after which they chatted away for an hour or so, somewhat like the members of a committee who talk upon indifferent topics until their brethren are all assembled.

Phelim, in the meantime, grappled with the daughter, whose knitting he spoiled by hooking the thread with his finger, jogging her elbow until he ran the needles past each other, and finally unravelling her clew; all which she bore with great good-humor. Sometimes, indeed, she ventured to give him a thwack upon the shoulder, with a laughing frown upon her countenance, in order to correct him for teasing her.

When Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin arrived, the spirits of the party got up. The whiskey was formally produced, but as yet the subject of the courtship, though perfectly understood, was not introduced. Phelim and the father were anxious to await the presence of Sam Appleton, who was considered, by the way, a first-rate hand at match-making.

Phelim, as is the wont, on finding the din of the conversation raised to the proper pitch, stole one of the bottles and prevailed on Peggy to adjourn with him to the potato-bin. Here they ensconced themselves very snugly; but not, as might be supposed, contrary to the knowledge and consent of the seniors, who winked at each other on seeing Phelim gallantly tow her down with the bottle under his arm. It was only the common usage on such occasions, and not considered any violation whatsoever of decorum. When Phelim's prior engagements are considered, it must be admitted that there was something singularly ludicrous in the humorous look he gave over his shoulder at the company, as he went toward the bin, having the bottom of the whiskey-bottle projecting behind his elbow, winking at them in return, by way of a hint to mind their own business and allow him to plead for himself. The bin, however, turned out to be rather an uneasy seat, for as the potatoes lay in a slanting heap against the wall, Phelim and his sweetheart were perpetually sliding down from the top to the bottom. Phelim could be industrious when it suited his pleasure. In a few minutes those who sat about the fire imagined, from the noise at the bin, that the house was about to come about their ears.

"Phelim, you thief," said the father, "what's all that noise for?"

"*Chrosh orrin!*" * said Molly Donovan, is that tundher?"

"Devil carry these piatees," exclaimed Phelim, raking them down with both hands and all his might, "if there's any sittin' at all upon them! I'm levellin' them to prevint Peggy, the darlin' from slidderin' an' to give us time to be talkin', somethin' lovin' to one another. The curse o' Cromwell an them! One might as well dhrink a glass o' whiskey wid his sweetheart, or spake a tinder word to her, on the wings of a windmill as here. There now, they're as level as you plase, acushla! Sit down, you jewel you, an' give me the egg-shell, till we have our sup o' the crathur in comfort. Faith, it was too soon for us to be comin' down in the world?"

Phelim and Peggy having each emptied the egg-shell, which among the poorer Irish is frequently the substitute for a glass, entered into the following sentimental dialogue, which was covered by the loud and entangled conversation of their friends about the fire; Phelim's arm lovingly about her neck, and his head laid down snugly against her cheek.

"Now, Peggy, you darlin' o' the world—bad cess to me but I'm as glad as two tenpennies that I levelled these piatees; there was no sittin' an them. Eh, avourneen?"

"Why, we're comfortable now, anyhow. Phelim!"

"Faith, you may say that—(a loving squeeze). Now, Peggy, begin an' tell us all about your bachelors."

"The sarra one ever I had, Phelim."

"Oh, murdher sheery, what a bounce! Bad cess to me, if you can spake a word o' thruth afther that, you common desaver! Won't you an' Paddy Moran pullin' a coard?"

"No, in throth; it was given out on us, but we never wor, Phelim. Nothin' ever passed betune us but common civility. He thrated my father an' mother wanst to share of half a pint in the Lammas Fair, when I was along wid them; but he never broke discoorse wid me barrin', as I sed, in civility an' friendship."

"An' do you mane to put it down my throath that you never had a sweetheart at all?"

"The nerra one."

"Oh, you thief! Wid two sich lips o' your own, an' two sich eyes o' your own, an' two sich cheeks o' your own! Oh, by the tarn, that won't pass."

"Well, an' supposin' I had—behave Phelim—supposin' I had, where's the harm: Sure it's well known all the sweethearts you had, an' have yet, I suppose."

"Be gorra, an' that's thruth; an' the more the merrier, you jewel you, till one get's married. I had enough of them, in my day, but you're the flower o' them all, that I'd like to spend my life wid"—(a squeeze.)

"The sorra one word the men say a body can trust. I warrant you tould that story to every one o' them as well as to me. Stop Phelim—it's well known that what you say to the colleens is no gospel. You know what they christened you 'Bouncin' Phelim' for."

"Betune you an' me, Peggy, I'll tell you a sacret; I *was* the boy for deludin' them. It's very well known the matches I might a' got; but you see, you little shaver, it was waitin' for yourself I was."

"For me! A purty story indeed! I'm sure

* The cross be about us!

it was! Oh, afther that! Why, Phelim, how can you——Well, well, did any one ever hear the likes?"

"Be the vestments, it's thruth. I had you in my eye these three years, but was waitin' till I'd get together as much money as ud' set us up in the world decently. Give me that egg-shell agin. Talkin's dhruthy work. *Shudorth, a rogarah!* * an' a pleasant honeymoon to us!"

"Wait till we're married first, Phelim; thin it'll be time enough to dhrink *that*."

"Come, acushla, it's your turn now; taste the shell, an' you'll see how lovin' it'll make us. Mother's milk's a thrifle to it."

"Well, if I take this, Phelim, I'll not touch another dhrop to-night. In the mane time here's whatever's best for us! Whoo! Oh, my! but that's strong! I dunna how the people can dhrink so much of it!"

"Faith, nor me; except bekase they have a regard for it, an' that it's worth havin' a regard for, jist like yourself an' me. Upon my faix, Peggy, it bates all, the love an likin' I have for you, an' ever had these three years past. I tould you about the eyes, mavourneen, an'—an'—about the lips——"

"Phelim—behave—I say—now stop wid you—well—well—but you're the tazin' Phelim!—Throth the girls may be glad when you're married," exclaimed Peggy, adjusting her polished hair.

"Bad cess to the bit, if ever I got so sweet a one in my life—the soft end of a honeycomb's a fool to it. One thing, Peggy, I can tell you—that I'll love you in great style. Whin we're marrid it's I that'll soodher you up. I won't let the wind blow on you. You must give up workin', too. All I'll ax you to do will be to nurse the childhre; an' that same will keep you busy enough, plase Goodness."

"Upon my faix, Phelim, you're the very sarra, so you are. Will you be asy now? I'll engage when you're married, it'll soon be another story wid you. Maybe you'd care little about us thin!"

"Be the vestments, I'm spakin' pure gospel, so I am. Sure you don't know that to be good husbands *runs* in our family. Every one of them was as sweet as thracle to their wives. Why, there's that ould cock, my fadher, an' if you'd see how he butthers up the ould woman to this day, it 'ud make your heart warm to any man o' the family."

"Ould an' young was ever an' always the same to you, Phelim. Sure the oldest woman in the parish, if she happened to be single, couldn't miss of your blarney. It's reported you're goin' to be marrid to an ould woman."

"He—hem—ahem! Bad luck to this cowld I have! it's stickin' in my throath entirely, so it is!—hem!—to a what?"

"Why to an ould woman, wid a great deal of the hard goold!"

Phelim put his hand instinctively to his waistcoat pocket, in which he carried the housekeeper's money.

"Would you oblage one wid her name?"

"You know ould Molly Kavanagh well enough, Phelim."

Phelim put up an inward ejaculation of thanks.

"To the sarra wid her, an' all sasoned women. God be praised that the night's fine, anyhow! Hand me the shell, an' we'll take a *gaulioque* aich, an' afther that we'll begin an' talk over how lovin' an' fond o' one another we'll be."

"You're takin' too much o' the whiskey, Phelim. Oh, for Goodness' sake!—oh—b—b—n—now be asy. Faix, I'll go to the fire, an' lave you altogether, so I will, if you don't give over slustherin' me, that way, an' stoppin' my breath."

"Here's all happiness to our two selves, acushla machree! Now thry another *gaulioque*, an' you'll see how deludin' it'll make you."

"Not a sup, Phelim."

"Arrah, nonsense! Be the vestment, it's as harmless as new milk from the cow. It'll only do you good, alanna. Come now, Peggy, don't be ondacent, an' it our first night's coortin'! Blood alive! don't make little o' my father's son on sich a night, an' us at business like this, anyhow!"

"Phelim, by the crass, I won't take it; so that ends it. Do you want to make little o' me? It's not much you'd think o' me in your mind, if I'd dhrink it."

"The shell's not half full."

"I wouldn't brake my oath for all the whiskey in the kingdom; so don't ax me. It's neither right nor proper of you to force it an me."

"Well, all I say is, that it's makin' little of one Phelim O'Toole, that hasn't a thought in his body but what's over head an' ears in love wid you. I must only dhrink it for you myself, thin. Here's all kinds o' good fortune to us! Now, Peggy,—sit closer to me acushla!—Now, Peggy, are you fond o' me at all? Tell thruth, now."

"Fond o' you! Sure you know all the girls is fond of you. Aren't you 'the boy for deludin' them?'—ha, ha, ha?"

"Come, come, you shaver; that won't do. Be sarious. If you knew how my heart's warmin' to you this minute, you'd fall in love wid my shadow. Come, now, out wid it. Are you fond of a sartin boy not far from you, called Bouncin' Phelim?"

* This to you, you rogue.

"To be sure I am. Are you satisfied now? Phelim! I say,"—

"Faith, it won't pass, avourneen. That's not the voice for it. Don't you hear *me*, how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin' into your ear, acushla machree? Now turn about, like a purty entisin' girl, as you are, an' put *your sweet bill* to my ear the same way, an' whisper what you know into it? That's a darlin'! Will you, achora?"

"An' maybe all this time you're promised to another?"

"Be the vestments, I'm not promised to one. Now! Saize the one!"

"You'll say that, anyhow!"

"Do you see my hands acrass? Be thim five crasses, I'm not promised to a girl livin', so I'm not, nor wouldn't, bekase I had you in my eye. Now will you tell me what I'm wantin' you? The grace o' Heaven light down an you, an' be a good, coaxin darlin' for wanst. Be this an' be that, if ever you heerd or seen sich doin's an' times as we'll have when we're marrid. Now the weeny whisper, *a colleen dhas*."

"It's time enough yet to let you know my mind, Phelim. If you behave yourself an' be——Why thin is it at the bottle agin you are? Now don't drink so much, Phelim, or it'll get into your head. I was sayin' that if you behave yourself, an' be a good boy, I may tell you somethin' soon."

"Somethin' soon! Live horse, an' you'll get grass! Peggy, if that's the way wid you, the love's all on my side, I see clearly. Are you willin' to marry me, anyhow?"

"I'm willin' to do whatsomever my father an' mother wishes."

"*I'm* for havin' the weddin' off-hand; an' of coorse, if we agree to-night, I think our best plan is to have ourselves called on Sunday. An' I'll tell you what, avourneen—be the holy vestments, if I was to be 'called' to fifty on the same Sunday, you're the darlin' I'd marry."

"Phelim, it's time for us to go up to the fire; we're long enough here. I thought you had only three words to say to me."

"Why, if you're tired o' me, Peggy, I don't want you to stop. I wouldn't force myself on the best girl that ever stepped."

"Sure you have tould me all you want to say, an' there's no use in us stayin' here. You know, Phelim, there's not a girl in the parish 'ud believe a word that 'ud come out o' your lips. Sure there's none o' them but you coorted one time or other. If you could get betther, Phelim, I dunna whether you'd be here to-night at all or not."

"Answer me this, Peggy. What do you think your father 'ud be willin' to give you? Not that I care a *cron abaun* about it, for I'd marry you wid an inch of candle."

"You know my father's but a poor man, Phelim, an' can give little or nothin'. Them that won't marry me as I am, needn't come here to look for a fortune."

"I know that, Peggy, an' be the same token, I want no fortune at all wid you but yourself, darlin'. In the mane time, to show you that I *could* get a fortune—*Dher a Lorha Heena*, I could have a wife wid a hundre an' twenty guineas!"

Peggy received this intelligence much in the same manner as Larry and Sheelah had received it. Her mirth was absolutely boisterous for at least ten minutes. Indeed, so loud had it been, that Larry and her father could not help asking:—

"Arrah, what's the fun, Peggy, achora?"

"Oh, nothin'," she replied, "but one o' Phelim's bounces."

"Now," said Phelim, "you won't believe me? Be all the books—"

Peggy's mirth prevented his oaths from being heard. In vain he declared, protested, and swore. On this occasion, he was compelled to experience the fate peculiar to all liars. Even truth, from his lips, was looked upon as falsehood.

Phelim, on finding that he could neither extort from Peggy an acknowledgment of love, nor make himself credible upon the subject of the large fortune, saw that he had nothing for it now, in order to produce an impression, but the pathetic.

"Well," said he, "you may lave me, Peggy achora, if you like; but out o' this *I'll* not budge, wid a blessing, till I cry my skinful, so I won't. Saize the toe I'll move, now, till I'm sick wid cryin'! Oh, murdher alive, this night! Isn't it a poor case entirely, that the girl I'd suffer myself to be turned inside out for, won't say that she cares about a hair o' my head! Oh, thin, but I'm the misfortunate blackguard all out! Och, oh! Peggy, achora, you'll break my heart! Hand me that shell, acushla—for I'm in the height of affliction!"

Peggy could neither withhold it, nor reply to him. Her mirth was even more intense now than before; nor, if all were known, was Phelim less affected with secret laughter than Peggy.

"It is makin' fun o' me you are, you thief, eh?—Is it laughin' at my grief you are?" exclaimed Phelim. "Be the tarn' o' wor, I'll punish you for that."

Peggy attempted to escape, but Phelim succeeded, ere she went, in taking a salutation or two, after which both joined those who sat at the fire, and in a few minutes Sam Appleton entered.

Much serious conversation had already passed in reference to the courtship, which

was finally entered into and debated, *pro* and *con*.

"Now, Paddy Donovan, that we're altogether, let me tell you one thing: there's not a betther natur'd boy, nor a stouther, claner young fellow in the parish, than *my* Phelim. He'll make your daughther as good a husband as ever broke bread!"

"I'm not sayin' against that, Larry. He is a good-nathur'd boy: but I tell you, Larry Toole, that *my* daughter's his fill of a wife any day. An' I'll put this to the back o' that—she's a hard-workin' girl, that ates no idle bread."

"Very right," said Sam Appleton. "Phelim's a hairo, an' she's a beauty. Dang me, but they wor made for one another. Phelim, abouchal, why don't you—oh, I see you are. Why, I was goin' to bid you make up to her."

"Give no gosther, Sam," replied Phelim, "but sind round the bottle, an' don't forget to let it come this way. I hardly tasted a dhrop to-night."

"Oh, Phelim!" exclaimed Peggy.

"Whisht!" said Phelim, "there's no use in lettin' the ould fellows be committin' sin. Why, they're *hearty* * as it is, the sinners."

"Come, nabors," said Burn, "I'm the boy that's for close work. How does the match stand? You're both my friends, an' may this be poison to me, but I'll spake like an honest man, for the one as well as for the other.

"Well, then," said Donovan, "how is Phelim to support my daughther, Larry? Sure that's a fair questin', any way."

"Why, Paddy," replied Larry, "when Phelim gets her, he'll have a patch of his own, as well as another. There's that 'half-acre,' and a betther piece o' land isn't in Europe!"

"Well, but what plenishin' are they to have, Larry? A bare half acre's but a poor look up."

"I'd as soon you'd not make little of it, in the mane time," replied Larry, rather warmly. "As good a couple as ever they wor liyed on that half acre; along wid what they earned by hard work otherwise."

"I'm not disparagin' it, Larry; I'd be long sorry; but about the furniture? What are they to begin the world wid?"

"Hut," said Devlin, "go to the sarra wid yez!—What 'ud they want, no more nor other young people like them, to begin the world wid? Are you goin' to make English or Scotch of them, that never marries till they're able to buy a farm an' stock it, the nagurs. By the staff in my hand, an Irishman 'ud lash a dozen o' them, wid all their prudence! Hasn't Phelim an' Peggy health and hands, what most new-married couples in Ireland begins the world wid? Sure they're not worse nor a thousand others?"

"Success, Antony," said Phelim. "Here's your health for that!"

"God be thanked they have health an' hands," said Donovan. "Still, Antony, I'd like that they'd have somethiu' more."

"Well, then, Paddy, spake up for yourself," observed Larry. "What will you put to the fore for the colleen? Don't take both flesh an' bone!"

"I'll not spake up, till I know all that Phelim's to expect," said Donovan. "I don't think he has a right to be axin' anything wid sich a girl as *my* Peggy."

"Hut, tut, Paddy! She's a good colleen enough; but do you think she's above any one that carries the name of O'Toole upon him? Still, it's but raisonable for you to wish the girl well settled. *My* Phelim will have one half o' my worldly goods, at all evints."

"Name them, Larry, if you plase."

"Why, he'll have one o' the goats—the gray one, for she's the best o' the two, in throth. He'll have two stools; three hens, an' a toss-up for the cock. The biggest o' the two pots; two good crocks; three good wooden trenchers, an'—hem—he'll have his own—I say, Paddy, are you listenin' to me?—Phelim, do you hear what I'm givin' you, *a vechonee?—his own bed!* An' there's all I can or will do for him. Now do you spake up for Peggy."

"I'm to have my own bedstead too," said Phelim, "an' bad cess to the stouter one in Europe. It's as good this minute as it was eighteen years agone."

"Paddy Donovan, spake up," said Larry.

"Spake up!" said Paddy, contemptuously. "Is it for three crowns' worth I'd spake up? The bedstead, Phelim! *Bedha husth,** man!"

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're dhry here."

"Thrue enough, Phelim," said the father. "Paddy, here's towarst you an' yours—nabors—all your healths—young couple! Paddy, give us your hand, man alive! Sure, whether we agree or not, this won't put between us."

"Throth, it won't, Larry—an' I'm thankful to you. Your health, Larry, an' all your healths! Phelim an' Peggy, success to yez, whether or not! An' now, in regard o' your civility, I *will* spake up. My proposal is

* Tipsy.

* Hold your tongue.

this:—"I'll put down guinea for guinea wid you."

Now we must observe, by the way, that this was said under the firm conviction that neither Phelim nor the father had a guinea in their possession.

"I'll do that same, Paddy," said Larry; "but I'll have it to the present company, if you're not bound to put down the *first* guinea. Nabors, amn't I right?"

"You are right, Larry," said Burn; "it's but fair that Paddy should put down the first."

"Molly, achora," said Donovan to the wife, who, by the way, was engaged in preparing the little feast usual on such occasions—"Molly, achora, give me that ould glove you have in your pocket."

She immediately handed him an old shammy glove, tied up into a hard knot, which he felt some difficulty in unloosing.

"Come, Larry," said he, laying down a guinea-note, "cover that like a man."

"Phelim carries my purse," observed the father; but he had scarcely spoken when the laughter of the company rang loudly through the house. The triumph of Donovan appeared to be complete, for he thought the father's allusion to Phelim tantamount to an evasion.

"Phelim! Phelim carries it! Faix, an' doubt he finds it a light burdyeen."

Phelim approached in all his glory.

"What am I to do?" he inquired, with a swagger.

"You're to cover that guinea-note wid a guinea, if you can," said Donovan.

"Whether 'ud you prefar goold or notes," said Phelim, looking pompously about him; "that's the talk."

This was received with another merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, goold—goold by all manes!" replied Donovan.

"Here goes the goold, my worthy," said Phelim, laying down his guinea with a firm slap upon the table.

Old Donovan seized it, examined it, then sent it round, to satisfy himself that it was a *bonâ fide* guinea.

On finding that it was good, he became blank a little; his laugh lost its strength, much of his jollity was instantly neutralized, and his face got at least two inches longer. Larry now had the laugh against him, and the company heartily joined in it.

"Come, Paddy," said Larry, "go an!—ha, ha, ha!"

Paddy fished for half a minute through the glove; and, after what was apparently a hard chase, brought up another guinea, which he laid down.

"Come, Phelim!" said he, and his eye brightened again with a hope that Phelim would fail.

"Good agin!" said Phelim, thundering down another, which was instantly subjected to a similar scrutiny.

"You'll find it good," said Larry. "I wish we had a sackful o' them. Go an, Paddy. Go an, man, who's afeard?"

"Sowl, I'm done," said Donovan, throwing down the purse with a hearty laugh—"give me your hand, Larry. Be the goold afore us, I thought to do you. Sure these two guineas is for my rint, an' we mustn't let them come atween us at all."

"Now," said Larry, "to let you see that my son's not widout something to begin the world wid—Phelim, shill out the rest o' the yallow boys."

"Faix, you ought to drhink the ould woman's health for this," said Phelim. "Poor ould crathur, many a long day she was savin' up these for me. It's my mother I'm speakin' about."

"An' we will, too," said the father; "here's *Sheelah's* health, neighbors! The best poor man's wife that ever *threwn* a gown over her shouldhers."

This was drank with all the honors, and the negotiation proceeded.

"Now," said Appleton, "what's to be done? Paddy, say what you'll do for the girl."

"Money's all talk," said Donovan; "I'll give the girl the two-year ould heifer—an' that's worth double what his father has promised Phelim; I'll give her a stone o' flax, a dacent suit o' clo'es, my blessin'—an' there's her fortune."

"Has she neither bed nor beddin'?" inquired Larry.

"Why, don't you say that Phelim's to have his own bed?" observed Donovan. "Sure one bed 'ill be plinty for them."

"I don't care a damn about fortune," said Phelim, for the first time taking a part in the bargain—"so long as I get the darlin' herself. But I think there 'ud be no harm in havin' a spare pair o' blankets—an', for that matther, a bedstead, too—in case a friend came to see a body."

"I don't much mind givin' you a *brother* to the bedstead you have, Phelim," replied Donovan, winking at the company, for he was perfectly aware of the nature of Phelim's bedstead.

"I'll tell you what you must do," said Larry, "otherwise I'll not stand it. Give the colleen a chaff bed, blankets an' all other parts complate, along wid that slip of a pig. If you don't do this, Paddy Donovan, why we'll finish the whiskey an' part friends—but it's no match."

"I'll never do it, Larry. The bed an' beddin' I'll give; but the pig I'll by no manner o' manes part wid."

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're gettin' dhry agin—sayin' nothin' is dhroothy work. Ould man, will you not bother us about fortune!"

"Come, Paddy Donnovan," said Devlin, "dang it, let out a little, considher he has ten guineas; and I give it as my downright maxim an opinion, that he's fairly entitled to the pig."

"You're welcome to give your opinion, Antony, an' I'm welcome not to care a rotten sthraw about it. *My* daughter's wife enough for him, widout a gown to her back, if he had his ten guineas doubled."

"An' *my* son," said Larry, "is husband enough for a betther girl nor ever called you father—not makin' little, at the same time, of either you or her."

"Paddy," said Burn, "there's no use in spakin' that way. I agree wid Antony, that you ought to throw in the 'slip.'"

"Is it what I have to pay my next gale o' rint wid? No, no! If he won't marry her widout it, she'll get as good that will."

"Saize the 'slip,'" said Phelim, "the darlin' herself here is all the slip I want."

"But I'm not so," said Larry, "the 'slip' must go in, or it's a brake off. Phelim can get girls that has money enough to buy us all out o' root. Did you hear *that*, Paddy Donovan?"

"I hear it," said Paddy, "but I'll b'lieve as much of it as I like."

Phelim apprehended that as his father got warm with the liquor, he might, in vindicating the truth of his own assertion, divulge the affair of the old housekeeper.

"Ould man," said he "have sinse, an' pass that over, if you have any regard for Phelim."

"I'd not be brow-bate into anything," observed Donovan.

"Sowl, you would not," said Phelim; "for my part, Paddy, I'm ready to marry your daughther (a squeeze to Peggy) widout a ha'p'orth at all, barrin' herself. It's the girl I want, an' not the slip."

"Thin, be the book, you'll get both, Phelim, for you dacency," said Donovan; "but, you see I wouldn't be bullied into puttin' one foot past the other, for the best man that ever stepped on black leather."

"Whish!" said Appleton, "that's the go! Success ould heart! Give us your hand, Paddy,—here's your good health, an' may you never button an empty pocket!"

"Is all settled?" inquired Molly.

"All, but about the weddin' an' the calls," replied her husband. "How are we to do about that, Larry?"

"Why, in the name o' Goodness, to save time," he replied, "let them be called on Sunday next, the two Sundays afther, an thin marrid, wid a blessin'."

"I agree wid that entirely," observed Molly; "an' now Phelim, clear away, you an' Peggy, off o' that chist, till we have our bit o' supper in comfort."

"Phelim," said Larry, "when the supper s done, you must slip over to Roche's for a couple o' bottles more o' whiskey. We'll make a night of it."

"There's two bottles in the house," said Donovan; "an', be the saikerment, the first man that talks of bringin' in more, till these is dhrunk, is ondacent."

This was decisive. In the meantime, the chest was turned into a table, the supper laid, and the attack commenced. All was pleasure, fun, and friendship. The reader may be assured that Phelim, during the negotiation, had not misspent the time with Peggy. Their conversation, however, was in a tone too low to be heard by those who were themselves talking loudly.

One thing, however, Phelim understood from his friend Sam Appleton, which was, that some clue had been discovered to an outrage in which he (Appleton) had been concerned. Above all other subjects, that was one on which Phelim was but a poor comforter. He himself found circumspection necessary; and he told Appleton, that if ever danger approached him, he had resolved either to enlist, or go to America, if he could command the money.

"*You* ought to do that immediately," added Phelim.

"Where's the money?" replied the other.

"I don't know," said Phelim; "but if I was bent on goin', the want of money wouldn't stop me as long as it could be found in the counthry. We had to do as bad for others, an' it can't be a greater sin to do that much for ourselves."

"I'll think of it," said Appleton. "Any rate, it's in for a penny, in for a pound, wid me."

When supper was over, they resumed their drinking, sang songs, and told anecdotes with great glee and hilarity. Phelim and Peggy danced jigs and reels, whilst Appleton sang for them, and the bottle also did its duty.

On separating about two o'clock, there was not a sober man among them but Appleton. He declined drinking, and was backed in his abstemiousness by Phelim, who knew that sobriety on the part of Sam would leave himself more liquor. Phelim, therefore, drank

for them both, and that to such excess, that Larry, by Appleton's advice, left him at his father's in consequence of his inability to proceed homewards. It was not, however, without serious trouble that Appleton could get Phelim and the father separated; and when he did, Larry's grief was bitter in the extreme. By much entreaty, joined to some vigorous shoves towards the door, he was prevailed upon to depart without him; but the old man compensated for the son's absence, by indulging in the most vociferous sorrow as he went along, about "*his* Phelim." When he reached home, his grief burst out afresh; he slapped the palms of his hands together, and indulged in a continuous howl, that one on hearing it would imagine to be the very echo of misery. When he had fatigued himself, he fell asleep on the bed, without having undressed, where he lay until near nine o'clock the next morning. Having got up and breakfasted, he related to his wife, with an aching head, the result of the last night's proceedings. Everything he assured her was settled: Phelim and Peggy were to be called the following Sunday, as Phelim, he supposed, had already informed her.

"Where's Phelim?" said the wife; "an' why didn't he come home wid you last night?"

"Where is Phelim? Why, Sheelah, woman sure he *did* come home wid me last night."

"*Chrush orrin*, Larry, no! What could happen him? Why, man, I thought you knew where he was; an' in regard of his bein' abroad so often at night, myself didn't think it sthrange."

Phelim's absence astounded them both, particularly the father, who had altogether forgotten everything that had happened on the preceding night, after the period of his intoxication. He proposed to go back to Donovan's to inquire for him, and was about to proceed there when Phelim made his appearance, dressed in his own tender apparel only. His face was three inches longer than usual, and the droop in his eye remarkably conspicuous.

"No fear of him," said the father, "here's himself. Arrah, Phelim, what became of you last night? Where wor you?"

Phelim sat down very deliberately and calmly, looked dismally at his mother, and then looked more dismally at his father.

"I suppose you're sick too, Phelim," said the father. "*My* head's goin' round like a top."

"Ate your breakfast," said his mother; it's the best thing for you."

"Where wor you last night, Phelim?" inquired the father.

"What are you sayin', ould man?"

"Who wor you wid last night?"

"Do, Phelim," said the mother, "tell us, aroon. I hope it wasn't *out* you wor. Tell us, avourneen?"

"Ould woman, what are you talking about?"

Phelim whistled "*ulican dhu oh*," or, "the song of sorrow." At length he bounced to his feet, and exclaimed in a loud, rapid voice:—

"*Ma chuirp an diowl!* ould couple, but I'm robbed of my ten guineas by Sam Appleton!"

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! Heavens above!" exclaimed the father.

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! *Gra machree*, Phelim! no, you aren't!" exclaimed the mother.

"*Gra machree yourself!* but I say I am," replied Phelim; "robbed clane of every penny of it!"

Phelim then sat down to breakfast—for he was one of those happy mortals whose appetite is rather sharpened by affliction—and immediately related to his father and mother the necessity which Appleton's connection had imposed on him of leaving the country; adding, that while he was in a state of intoxication, he had been stripped of Appleton's clothes; that his own were left beside him; that when he awoke the next morning, he found his borrowed suit gone; that on searching for his own, he found, to his misery, that the ten guineas had disappeared along with Appleton, who, he understood from his father, had "left the neighborhood for a while, till the throuble he was in 'ud pass over."

"But I know where he's gone," said Phelim, "an' may the divil's luck go wid him, an' God's curse on the day I ever had anything to do wid that hell-fire Ribbon business! 'Twas he first brought me into it, the villain; an' now I'd give the town land we're in to be fairly out of it."

"*Hanim an diowl!*" said the father, "is the ten guineas gone? The curse of hell upon him, for a black desaver! Where's the villain, Phelim?"

"He's gone to America," replied the son. "The divil tare the tongue out o' myself, too! I should be puttin' him up to go there, an' to get money, if it was to be had. The villain bit me fairly."

"Well, but how are we to manage?" inquired Larry. "What's to be done?"

"Why," said the other, "to bear it an' say nothin'. Even if he was in his father's house, the double-faced villain has me so much in his power, that I couldn't say a word about it. My curse on the Ribbon business, I say, from my heart out!"

That day was a very miserable one to Phe-

him and the father. The loss of the ten guineas, and the feverish sickness produced from their debauch, rendered their situation not enviable. Some other small matters, too, in which Phelim was especially concerned, independent of the awkward situation in which he felt himself respecting the three calls on the following day, which was Sunday, added greater weight to his anxiety. He knew not how to manage, especially upon the subject of his habiliments, which certainly were in a very dilapidated state. An Irishman, however, never despairs. If he has not apparel of his own sufficiently decent to wear on his wedding-day, he borrows from a friend. Phelim and his father remembered that there were several neighbors in the village, who would oblige him with a suit for the wedding; and as to the other necessary expenses, they did what their countrymen are famous for—they trusted to chance.

"We'll work ourselves out of it some way," said Larry. "Sure, if all fails us, we can sell the goats for the weddin' expenses. It's one comfort that Paddy Donovan must find the dinner; an' all *we* have to get is the whiskey, the marriage money, an' some other thrifles."

"They say," observed Phelim, "that people have more luck whin they're married * than whin they're single. I'll have a bout at the marriage, so I will; for worse luck I can't have, if I had half a dozen wives, than I always met wid."

"I'll go down," observed Larry, "to Paddy Donovan's, an' send him to the priest's to *give in* your names to be called to-morrow. Faith, it's well that you won't have to appear, or I dunna how you'd get over it."

"No," said Phelim, "that bill won't pass. You must go to the priest yourself, an' see the curate: if you go near Father O'Hara, it 'ud knock a plan on the head that I've invented. I'm in the notion that I'll make the ould woman bleed agin. I'll squeeze as much out of her as 'll bring me to America, for I'm not overly safe here; or, if all fails, I'll marry her, an' run away wid the money. It 'ud bring us all *across*."

Larry's interview with the curate was but a short one. He waited on Donovan, however, before he went, who expressed himself satisfied with the arrangement, and looked forward to the marriage as certain. As for Phelim, the idea of being called to three females at the same time, was one that tickled his vanity very much. Vanity, where the fair sex was concerned, had been always his predominant failing. He was not finally determined on marriage with any of them; but he knew that should he even escape the three, the *eclat* resulting from so celebrated a transaction would recommend him to the sex for the remainder of his life. Impressed with this view of the matter, he sauntered about as usual; saw Foodle Flattery's daughter, and understood that her uncle had gone to the priest, to have his niece and worthy Phelim called the next day. But besides this hypothesis, Phelim had another, which, after all, was the real one. He hoped that the three applications would prevent the priest from calling him at all.

The priest, who possessed much sarcastic humor, on finding the name of Phelim come in as a candidate for marriage honors with three different women, felt considerably puzzled to know what he could be at. That Phelim might hoax one or two of them was very probable, but that he should have the effrontery to make *him* the instrument of such an affair, he thought a little too bad.

"Now," said he to his curate, as they talked the matter over that night, "it is quite evident that this scapegrace reckons upon our refusal to call him with *any* of those females to-morrow. It is also certain that not one of the three to whom he has pledged himself is aware that he is under similar obligations to the other two."

"How do you intend to act, sir?" inquired the curate.

"Why," said Mr. O'Hara, "certainly to call him to each: it will give the business a turn for which he is not prepared. He will stand exposed, moreover, before the congregation, and that will be some punishment to him."

"I don't know as to the punishment," replied the curate. "If ever a human being was free from shame, Phelim is. The fellow will consider it a joke."

"Very possible," observed his superior, "but I am anxious to punish this old woman. It may prevent her from uniting herself with a fellow who certainly would, on becoming master of her money, immediately abandon her—perhaps proceed to America."

"It will also put the females of the parish on their guard against him," said the innocent curate, who knew not that it would raise him highly in their estimation. "We will have a scene, at all events," said Mr. O'Hara; "for I'm resolved to expose him. No blame can be attached to those whom he has duped, excepting only the old woman, whose case will certainly excite a great deal of mirth. That matters not, however; she has earned the ridicule, and let her bear it."

It was not until Sunday morning that the three calls occurred to Phelim in a new light.

* This is another absurd opinion peculiar to the Irish, and certainly one of the most pernicious that prevail among them. Indeed, I believe there is no country in which so many absurd maxims exist.

He forgot that the friends of the offended parties might visit upon his proper carcase the contumely he offered to them. This, however, did not give him much anxiety, for Phelim was never more in his element than when entering upon a row.

The Sunday in question was fine, and the congregation unusually large; one would think that all the inhabitants of the parish of Teernarogarah had been assembled. Most of them certainly were.

The priest, after having gone through the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath worship, excepting those with which he concludes the mass, turned round to the congregation, and thus addressed them:—

"I would not," said he, "upon any other occasion of this kind, think it necessary to address you at all; but this is one perfectly *unique*, and in some degree patriarchal, because, my friends, we are informed that it was allowed in the times of Abraham and his successors, to keep more than one wife. This custom is about being revived by a modern, who wants, in rather a barefaced manner, to palm himself upon us as a patriarch. And who do you think, my friends, this Irish Patriarch is? Why, no other than bouncing Phelim O'Toole!"

This was received precisely as the priest anticipated: loud were the shouts of laughter from all parts of the congregation.

"Divil a fear o' Phelim!" they exclaimed. "He wouldn't be himself, or he'd kick up a dust some way."

"Blessed Phelim! Just like him! Faith, he couldn't be marrid in the common coorse!"

"Arrah, whisht till we hear the name o' the happy crathur that's to be blisthered with Phelim! The darlin's in luck, whoever she is, an' has gained a blessed prize in the 'Bouncer.'"

"This bouncing patriarch," continued the priest, "has made his selection with great judgment and discrimination. In the first place, he has pitched upon a hoary damsel of long standing in the world;—one blessed with age and experience. She is qualified to keep Phelim's house well, as soon as it shall be built; but whether she will be able to keep Phelim himself, is another consideration. It is not unlikely that Phelim, in imitation of his great prototypes, may prefer living in a tent. But whether she keeps Phelim or the house, one thing is certain, that Phelim will keep her money. Phelim selected this aged woman, we presume, for her judgment; for surely she who has given such convincing proof of discretion, must make a useful partner to one who, like Phelim, has that virtue yet to learn. I have no doubt, however, but in a short time he will be as discreet as his teacher."

"Blood alive! Isn't that fine language?"

"You may say that! Begad, it's himself *can* discoorse! What's the Protestants to that?"

"The next upon the list is one who, though a poor man's daughter, will certainly *bring property* to Phelim. There is also an aptness in this selection, which does credit to the 'Patriarch.' Phelim is a great dancer, an accomplishment with which we do not read that the patriarchs themselves were possessed: although we certainly do read that a light heel was of little service to Jacob. Well, Phelim carries a light heel, and the second female of his choice on this list carries a 'light hand;'* it is, therefore, but natural to suppose that, if ever they are driven to extremities, they will make light of many things which other people would consider as of weighty moment. Whether Phelim and she may long remain stationary in this country, is a problem more likely to be solved at the county assizes than here. It is not improbable that his Majesty may recommend the 'Patriarch' and one of his wives to try the benefit of a voyage to New South Wales, he himself graciously vouchsaving to bear their expenses."

"Divil a lie in that, anyhow! If ever any one crossed the wather, Phelim will. Can't his Reverence be funny whin he plases?"

"Many a time it was prophecized for him: an' his Reverence knows best."

"Begad, Phelim's gettin' over the coals. But sure it's all the way the father an' mother reared him."

"Tunder-an'-turf, is he goin' to be called to a pair o' them?"

"Faix, so it seems."

"Oh, the divil's clip! Is he mad? But let us hear it out."

"The third damsel is by no means so well adapted for Phelim as either of the other two. What she could have seen in him is another problem much more difficult than the one I have mentioned. I would advise her to reconsider the subject, and let Phelim have the full benefit of the attention she may bestow upon it. If she finds the 'Patriarch' possessed of any *one* virtue, except *necessity*, I will admit that it is pretty certain that she will soon discover the longitude, and that has puzzled the most learned men of the world. If she marries this 'Patriarch', I think the angels who may visit him will come in the shape of policemen; and that Phelim, so long as he can find a cudgel, will give them

* Intimating theft.

anything but a patriarchal reception, is another thing of which we may rest pretty certain.

"I now publish the bans of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole of Teernarogarah, and Bridget Doran of Dernascobe. If any person knows of any impediment why these two should not be joined in wedlock, they are bound to declare it.

"This Bridget Doran, my friends, is no other than my old housekeeper; but when, where, or how, Phelim could have won upon her juvenile affections is one of those mysteries which is never to be explained. I dare say, the match was brought about by despair on her side, and necessity on his. She despaired of getting a husband, and he had a necessity for the money. In point of age I admit she would make a very fit wife for any "Patriarch.'"

Language could not describe the effect which this disclosure produced upon the congregation. The fancy of every one present was tickled at the idea of a union between Phelim and the old woman. It was followed by roars of laughter which lasted several minutes.

"Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon him, was he only able to butther up the ould woman! Oh, *Ghe dhiven!* that flogs. Why, it's a wondher he didn't stale the ould slip, an' make a run-away match of it—ha, ha, ha! Musha, bad scran to her, but she had young notions of her own! A purty bird she picked up in Phelim!—ha, ha, ha!"

"I also publish the bans of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole of Teernarogarah and Sally Flattery of the same place. If any of you knows of any impediment why they should not be joined in wedlock you are bound to declare it."

The mirth rose again, loud and general. Foodle Flattery, whose character was so well known, appeared so proper a father-in-law for Phelim, that his selection in this instance delighted them highly.

"Betther an' betther, Phelim! More power to you! You're fixed at last. Foodle Flattery's daughter—a known thief! Well, what harm? Phelim himself has pitch on his fingers—or had, anyhow, when he was growin' up—for many a thing stuck to them. Oh, bedad, now we know what his Reverence was at when he talked about the 'Sizes, bad luck to them! Betune her an' the ould woman, Phelim 'ud be in Paradise! Foodle Flattery's daughter! Begad, she'll 'bring him property' sure enough, as his Reverence says."

"I also publish the bans of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole—whom we must in future call the 'Patriarch'—of Teernarogarah, and Peggy Donovan of the same place. If any of you knows any impediment in the way of their marriage, you are bound to declare it."

"Bravo! Phelim acushla. 'Tis you that's the blessed youth. Tundher-an'-whiskey, did ever any body hear of sich desate? To do three o' them. Be sure the Bouncer has some schame in this. Well, one would suppose Paddy Donovan an' his daughter had more sinse nor to think of sich a runagate as Bouncin' Phelim."

"No, but the Pathriark! Sure his Reverence sez that we musn't call him anything agin but the Pathriark! Oh, be gorra, that's the name!—ha, ha, ha!"

When the mirth of the congregation had subsided, and their comments ended, the priest concluded in the following words:—

"Now, my friends, here is such a piece of profligacy as I have never, in the whole course of my pastoral duties, witnessed. It is the act of Phelim O'Toole, be it known, who did not scruple to engage himself for marriage to three females—that is, to two girls and an old woman—and who, in addition, had the effrontery to send me his name and theirs, to be given out all on the same Sunday; thus making *me* an instrument in his hands to hoax those who trusted in his word. That he can marry but one of them is quite clear; but that he would not scruple to marry the three, and three more to complete the half-dozen, is a fact which no one who knows him will doubt. For my part, I know not how this business may terminate. Of a truth he has contrived to leave the claims of the three females in a state of excellent confusion. Whether it raise or lessen him in their opinion I cannot pretend to determine. I am sorry for Donovan's daughter, for I know not what greater calamity could befall any honest family than a matrimonial union with Phelim O'Toole. I trust that this day's proceedings will operate as a caution to the females of the parish against such an unscrupulous reprobate. It is for this purpose only that I publish the names given in to me. His character was pretty well known before; it is now established; and having established it, I dismiss the subject altogether."

Phelim's fame was now nearly at its height. Never before had such a case been known; yet the people somehow were not so much astonished as might be supposed. On the contrary, had Phelim's courtship gone off like that of another man, they would have felt more surprised. We need scarcely say, that the "giving out" or "calling" of Phelim and the three damsels was spread over the whole parish before the close of that

Sunday. Every one had it—man, woman, and child. It was told, repeated, and improved as it went along. New circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personæ* brought in—all with great felicity, and quite suitable to Phelim's character.

Strongly contrasted with the amusement of the parishioners in general, was the indignation felt by the three damsels and their friends. The old housekeeper was perfectly furious; so much so, indeed, that the priest gave some dark hints at the necessity of sending for a strait waistcoat. Her fellow-servants took the liberty of breaking some strong jests upon her, in return for which she took the liberty of breaking two strong churnstaves upon them. Being a remarkably stout woman for her years, she put forth her strength to such purpose that few of them went to bed without sore bones. The priest was seriously annoyed at it, for he found that his house was a scene of battle during the remainder of the day.

Sally Flattery's uncle, in the absence of her father, indignantly espoused the cause of his niece. He and Donovan each went among their friends to excite in them a proper resentment, and to form a faction for the purpose of chastising Phelim. Their chagrin was bitter on finding that their most wrathful representations of the insult sustained by their families, were received with no other spirit than one of the most extravagant mirth. In vain did they rage and fume, and swear; they could get no one to take a serious view of it. Phelim O'Toole was the author of all, and from him it was precisely what they had expected.

Phelim himself, and the father, on hearing of the occurrence after mass, were as merry as any other two in the parish. At first the father was disposed to lose his temper; but on Phelim telling him he would bear no "gosther" on the subject, he thought proper to take it in good humor. About this time they had not more than a week's provision in the house, and only three shillings of capital. The joke of the three calls was too good a one to pass off as an ordinary affair; they had three shillings, and although it was their last, neither of them could permit the matter to escape as a dry joke. They accordingly repaired to the little public-house of the village, where they laughed at the world, got drunk, hugged each other, despised all mankind, and staggered home, ragged and merry, poor and hearty, their arms about each other's necks, perfect models of filial duty and paternal affection.

The reader is aware that the history of Phelim's abrupt engagement with the housekeeper, was conveyed by Fool Art to Sally Flattery. Her thievish character rendered marriage as hopeless to her as length of days did to Bridget Doran. No one knew the plan she had laid for Phelim, but this fool, and, in order to secure his silence, she had promised him a shirt on the Monday after the first call. Now Art, as was evident by his endless habit of shrugging, felt the necessity of a shirt very strongly.

About ten o'clock on Monday he presented himself to Sally, and claimed his recompense.

"Art," said Sally, "the shirt I intended for you is upon Squire Nugent's hedge beside their garden. You know the family's goin' up to Dublin on Thursday, Art, an' they're gettin' their washin' done in time to be off. Go down, but don't let any one see you; take the third shirt on the row, an' bring it up to me till I smooth it for you."

Art sallied down to the hedge on which the linen had been put out to dry, and having reconnoitered the premises, shrugged himself, and cast a longing eye on the third shirt. With that knavish penetration, however, peculiar to such persons, he began to reflect that Sally might have some other object in view besides *his* accommodation. He determined, therefore, to proceed upon new principles—sufficiently safe, he thought, to protect him from the consequences of theft.

"Good-morrow, Bush," said Art, addressing that on which the third shirt was spread. "Isn't it a burnin' shame an' a sin for you," he continued, "to have sich a fine white shirt an you, an' me widout a stitch to my back. Will you swap?"

Having waited until the bush had due time to reply,

"Sorra fairer," he observed; "silence gives consint."

In less than two minutes he stripped, put on one of the Squire's best shirts, and spread out his own dusky fragment in its place.

"It's a good thing," said Art, "to have a clear conscience; a fair exchange is no robbery."

Now, it so happened that the Squire himself, who was a humorist, and also a justice of the peace, saw Art putting his morality in practice at the hedge. He immediately walked out with an intention of playing off a trick upon the fool for his dishonesty; and he felt the greater inclination to do this in consequence of an opinion long current, that Art, though he had outwitted several, had never been outwitted himself.

Art had been always a welcome guest in the Squire's kitchen, and never passed the "Big House," as an Irish country gentle-

man's residence is termed, without calling. On this occasion, however, he was too cunning to go near it—a fact which the Squire observed. By taking a short cut across one of his own fields, he got before Art, and turning the angle of a hedge, met him trotting along at his usual pace.

"Well, Art, where now?"

"To the crass roads, your honor."

"Art, is not this a fine place of mine? Look at these groves, and the lawn, and the river there, and the mountains behind all. Is it not equal to Sir William R——'s?" Sir William was Art's favorite patron.

"Sir William, your honor, has all this at his place."

"But I think my views are finer."

"They're fine enough, replied Art; "*but where's the lake before the door?*"

The Squire said no more about his prospects.

"Art," he continued, "would you carry a letter from me to M——?"

"I'll be wantin' somethin' to dhrink on the way," said Art.

"You shall get something to eat and drink before you go," said the Squire, "and half-a-crown for your trouble."

"Augh," exclaimed Art, "be dodda, sir, you're nosed like Sir William, and chinned like Captain Taylor." This was always Art's compliment when pleased.

The Squire brought him up to the house, ordered him refreshment, and while Art partook of it, wrote a letter of mittimus to the county jailor, authorizing him to detain the bearer in prison until he should hear further from him.

Art, having received the half-crown and the letter, appeared delighted; but, on hearing the name of the person to whom it was addressed, he smelt a trick. He promised faithfully, however, to deliver it, and betrayed no symptoms whatever of suspicion. After getting some distance from the big house, he set his wits to work, and ran over in his mind the names of those who had been most in the habit of annoying him. At the head of this list stood Phelim O'Toole, and on Phelim's head did he resolve to transfer the revenge which the Squire, he had no doubt, intended to take on himself.

With considerable speed he made way to Larry O'Toole's, where such a scene presented itself as made him for a moment forget the immediate purport of his visit.

Opposite Phelim, dressed out in her best finery, stood the housekeeper, zealously insisting on either money or marriage. On one side of him stood old Donovan and his daughter, whom he had forced to come, in the character of a witness, to support his charges against the gay deceiver. On the other were ranged Sally Flattery, in tears, and her uncle in wrath, each ready to pounce upon Phelim.

Phelim stood the very emblem of patience and good-humor. When one of them attacked him, he winked at the other two; when either of the other two came on, he winked still at those who took breath. Sometimes he trod on his father's toe, lest the old fellow might lose the joke, and not unfrequently proposed their going to a public-house, and composing their differences over a bottle, if any of them would pay the expenses.

"What do you mane to do?" said the housekeeper; "but it's asy known I'm an unprojected woman, or I wouldn't be thrated as I am. If I had relations livin' or near me, we'd pay you on the bones for bringin' me to shame and scandal, as you have done."

"Upon my *sames*, Mrs. Doran, I feel for your situation, so I do," said Phelim. You've outlived all your friends, an' if it was in my power to bring any o' them back to you I'd do it."

"Oh, you desaver, is that the feelin' you have for me, when I thought you'd be a guard an' a projection to me? You know I have the money, you sconce, an' how comfortable it 'ud keep us, if you'd only see what's good for you. You blarnied an' palavered me, you villain, till you gained my infections an' thin you tuck the cholic as an excuse to have me in a state of dissolution an' disparagement. You promised to marry me, an' you had no notion of it."

"You're not the only one he has disgraced, Mrs. Doran," said Donovan. "A purty way he came down, himself an' his father, undher pretence of coortin' my daughter. He should hy down his ten guineas, too, to show us what he had to begin the world wid, the villain!—an' him had no notion of it aither."

"An' he should send this girl to make me go to the priest to have him and her called, the reprobate," said Nick Flattery; "an' him had no notion of it aither."

"Sure he sent us all there," exclaimed Donovan,

"He did," said the old woman.

"Not a doubt of it," observed Flattery.

"Ten guineas!" said the housekeeper. "An' so you brought my ten guineas in your pocket to coort another girl! Aren't you a right profligate?"

"Yes," said Donovan, "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Answer the dacent people," said Flattery, "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Take the world asy, all of ye," replied

Phelim. "Mrs. Doran, there was three of you called, sure enough; but, be the vestments, I intinded—do you hear me, Mrs. Doran? Now have rason—I say, do *you* hear me? Be the vestmints, I intinded to marry only *one* of you; an' that I'll do still, except I'm vexed—(a wink at the old woman). Yet you're all dyin' at me, as if I had three heads or three tails upon me."

"Maybe the poor boy's not so much to blame," said Mrs. Doran. "There's hussies in this world," and here she threw an angry eye upon the other two, "that 'ud give a man no pace till he'd promise to marry them."

"Why did he promise to them that didn't want him thin?" exclaimed Donovan. "I'm not angry that he didn't marry my daughther—for I wouldn't give her to him now—but I am at the slight he put an her."

"Paddy Donovan, did *you* hear what I said jist now?" replied Phelim, "I wish to Jamini some people 'ud have sinse! Be them five crasses, I knew thim I intinded to marry, as well as I do where I'm standin'. That's plain talk, Paddy. I'm sure the world's not passed yet, I hope"—(a wink at Paddy Donovan.)

"An' wasn't he a big rascal to make little of my brother's daughter as he did?" said Flattery; "but he'll rub his heels together for the same act."

"Nick Flatthery, do you think I could marry three wives? Be that horseshoe over the door, Sally Flathery, you didn't thrate me dacent. She did not, Nick, an' you ought to know that it was wrong of her to come here to-day."

"Well, but what do you intind to do Phelim, avourn—you profligate?" said the half-angry, half-pacified housekeeper, who, being the veteran, always led on the charge.

"Why, I intind to marry *one* of you," said Phelim. "I say, Mrs. Doran, do you see thim ten fingers acrass—be thim five crasses I'll do what I said, if nothing happens to put it aside."

"Then be an honest man," said Flattery, "an' tell us which o' them you *will* marry."

"Nick, don't you know I always regarded *your* family. If I didn't that I may never do an ill turn! Now! But some people can't see anything. Arrah, tundher-an'-whiskey, man, would you expect me to tell out before all that's here, who I'll marry—to be hurtin' the feelin's of the rest. Faith, I'll never do a shabby thing."

"What rekimpinse will you make *my* daughter for bringin' down her name afore the whole parish, along wid them she oughtn't to be named in the one day wid?" said Donovan.

"An' who is that, Paddy Donovan?" said the housekeeper, with a face of flame.

"None of your broad hints, Paddy," said Nick. "If it's a collusion to Sally Flattery you mane, take care I don't make you ate your words."

"Paddy," exclaimed Phelim, "you oughtn't to be hurtin' their feelin's!"—(a friendly wink to Paddy.)

"If you mane me," said the housekeeper, "by the crook on the fire, I'd lave you a mark."

"I mane you for one, thin, since you provoke me," replied Donovan.

"For *one*, is it?" said Nick; "an' who's the other, i' you plase?"

"Your brother's daughter," he replied. "Do you think I'd *even** my daughter to a thief?"

"Be gorra," observed Phelim, "that's too provokin', an' what I wouldn't bear. Will ye keep the pace, I say, till I spake a word to Mrs Doran? Mrs. Doran, can I have a word or two wid you outside the house?"

"To be sure you can," she replied; "I'd give you fair play, if the *diowol* was in you."

Phelim, accordingly, brought her out, and thus accosted her,—

"Now, Mrs. Doran, you think I thrated you ondacent; but do you see that book?" said he, producing a book of ballads, on which he had sworn many a similar oath before? "Be the contints o' that book, as sure as you're beside me, it's *you* I intind to marry. These other two—the curse o' the crows upon them! I wish we could get them from about the place—is both dyin' for love o' me, an' I surely did promise to get myself *called* to them. They wanted it to be a promise of marriage; but, says I, 'sure if we're called together it's the same, for whin it comes to that, all's right,'—an' so I tould both o' them, unknownst to one another. Arra, be me sowl, you'd make two like them, so you would; an' if you hadn't a penny, I'd marry you afore aither o' them to-morrow. Now, there's the whole sacret, an' don't be onaisy about it. Tell Father O'Hara how it is, whin you go home, an' that he must call the three o' you to me agin on next Sunday, and the Sunday afther, plase Goodness; jist that I may keep my promise to them. You know I couldn't have luck or grace if I marrid you wid the sin of two broken promises on me."

"My goodness, Phelim, but you tuck a burdyeen off o' me! Faix, you'll see how happy we'll be."

"To be sure we will! But I'm tould you're sometimes crass, Mrs. Doran. Now, you

* Compare.

must promise to be kind an' lovin' to the childre, or be the vestment, I'll break off the match yet."

"Och, an' why wouldn't I, Phelim, acushla? Sure that's but rason."

"Well, take this book an' swear it. Be gorra, your word won't do, for it's a thing my mind's made up on. It's I that'll be fond o' the childre."

"An' how am I to swear it, Phelim? for I never tuck an oath myself yet."

"Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the coutints o' this book."

"Be the coutints o' this book,"

"I'll be kind an' motherly, an' boistherous,"

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an boistherous,"

"To my own childhre,"

"To my own childhre,"

"An' never bate or abuse thim,"

"An' never bate or abuse thim,"

"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"

"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"

"An' this I swear,"

"An' this I swear,"

"In the presence of *St. Phelim*,"

"In the presence of *St. Phelim*,"

"Amin!"

"Amin!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, acushla, if you could jist know how asy my conscience is about the childhre, poor crathurs, you'd be in mighty fine spirits. There won't be sich a lovin' husband, begad, in Europe. It's I that'll coax you, an' butther you up like a new pair o' brogues; but, begad, you must be sweeter than liquorice or sugar-candy to me. Won't you, darlin'?"

"Be the crass, Phelim, darlin', jewel, I'll be as kind a wife as ever breathed! Arrah, Phelim, won't you come down to-morrow evenin'? There'll be no one at home but myself, an'—ha, ha, ha!—Oh, you coaxin' rogue! But, Phelim, you musn't be——Oh, you're a rogue! I see you laughin'! Will you come darlin?"

"Surely. But, death alive! I was near forgettin'; sure, bad luck to the penny o' the ten guineas but I paid away."

"Paid away! Is it my ten guineas?"

"Your ten guineas, darlin'; an' right well I managed it. Didn't I secure Pat Hanratty's farm by it? Sam Appleton's uncle had it as good as taken; so, begad, I came down wid the ten guineas, by way of airles, an' now we have it. I knew you'd be plased to hear it, an' that you'd be proud to give me ten more for clo'es an' the weddin' expenses. Isn't that good news, avourneen? Eh, you duck o' diamonds? Faith, let Phelim alone! An' another thing—I must call you *Bridget* for the future! It's sweeter an' more lovin'."

"Phelim, I wish you had consulted wid me afore you done it: but it can't be helped. Come down to-morrow evenin', an' we'll see what's to be done."

"The grace o' heaven upon you, but you *are* the winnin'est woman alive this day! Now take my advice, an' go home without comin' in. I'm wantin' to get this other pair off o' my hands, as well as I can, an' our best way is to do it all widout noise. Isn't it, darlin'?"

"It is, Phelim, jewel; an' I'll go."

"Faith, Bridget, you've dealt in thracle afore now, you're so sweet. Now, acushla, farewell: an' take care of yourself till to-morrow evenin'!"

Phelim, on re-entering his father's cabin, found Larry and Peggy Donovan placed between her father and Flattery, each struggling to keep them asunder. Phelim at first had been anxious to set them by the ears, but his interview with the old woman changed his plan of operations altogether. With some difficulty he succeeded in repressing their tendency to single combat, which, having effected, he brought out Flattery and his niece, both of whom he thus addressed:—

"Be the vestment, Sally, only that my regard an' love for you is uncommon, I'd break off the affair altogether, so I would."

"An' why would you do so, Phelim O'Toole?" inquired the uncle.

"Bekase," replied Phelim, "you came here an' made a show of me, when I wished to have no *bruliagh*, at all at all. In regard of Peggy Donovan, I never spoke a word to the girl about marriage since I was christened. Saize the syllable! My father brought me down there to gosther awhile, the other night, an' Paddy sent away for whiskey. An' the curse o' Cromwell on myself! I should get tossicated. So while I was half-sas over, the two ould rips set to makin' the match—planned to have us called—an' me knowin' nothin' about it, good, bad, or indifferent. That's the thruth, i n the sky above us."

"An' what have you to say about the housekeeper, Phelim?"

"Why I don't know yet who *done* me there. I was about takin' a farm, an' my father borried ten guineas from her. Somebody heard it—I suspect Sam Appleton—an' gave in our names to the priest, to be called, makin' a good joke of it. All sorts o' luck to them, barrin' good luck, that did it; but they put me in a party state! But never heed! I'll find them out yet. Now go home, both o' you, an' I'll slip down in half an hour, with a bottle o' whiskey in my pocket. We'll talk over what's to be done. Sure Sally here, knows that it's my own intherest to marry her and no one else."

"If my father thought you would, Phelim, he'd not *stay*, even if he was to crass the wather!"

"Go home, Sally darlin' till I get this mad Donovan an' his daughter away. Be all that's beautiful I'll be apt to give him a taste o' my shillely, if he does'nt behave himself! Half an hour I'll be down in—wid the bottle; an' don't you go, Nick, till you see me."

"Phelim," said the uncle, "you know how the case is. You must aither marry the girl, or take a long voyage, abouchal. We'll have no bouncin' or palaver."

"Bedad, Mick, I've great patience wid you," said Phelim, smiling: "go off, I say, both of you."

They proceeded homewards, and Phelim returned to appease the anger of Donovan, as he had that of the others. Fresh fiction was again drawn forth, every word of which the worthy father corroborated. They promised to go down that night and drink another bottle together; a promise which they knew by the state of their finances, it was impossible to fulfil. The prospect of a "booze," however, tranquillized Donovan, who in his heart relished a glass of liquor as well as either Phelim or the father. Shaking of hands and professions of friendship were again beginning to multiply with great rapidity, when Peggy thought proper to make a few observations on the merits of her admirer.

"In regard to me," she observed, "you may save yourself the throuble o' comin'. I wouldn't marry Phelim, afther what the priest said yistherday, if he had the riches o' the townland we're spakin' in. I never cared for him, nor liked him; an' it was ouly to plase my father an' mother, that I consinted to be called to him at all. I'll never join myself to the likes of him. If I do, may I be a corpse the next minute!"

Having thus expressed herself, she left her father, Phelim, and Larry, to digest her sentiments, and immediately went home.

Donovan, who was outrageous at this contempt of his authority, got his hat with the intention of compelling her to return and retract, in their presence, what she had said; but the daughter, being the more light-footed of the two, reached home before he could overtake her, where, backed by her mother, she maintained her resolution, and succeeded, ere long, in bringing the father over to her opinion.

During this whole scene in Larry's, Fool Art sat in that wild abstraction which characterizes the unhappy class to which he belonged. He muttered to himself, laughed—or rather chuckled—shrugged his shoulders, and appeared to be as unconscious of what had taken place as an automaton. When the coast was clear he rose up and plucking Phelim's skirt, beckoned him towards the door.

"Phelim," said he, when they had got out, "would you like to airn a crown?"

"Tell me how, Art?" said Phelim.

"A letther from the Square to the jailer of M——jail. If you bring back an answer, you'll get a crown, your dinner, an' a quart o' strong beer."

"But why don't you bring it yourself, Art?"

"Why I'm afeard. Sure they'd keep me in jail, I'm tould, if they'd catch me in it. Aha! Be dodda, I won't go near them: sure they'd hang me for shootin' Bonypart. —Aha!"

"Must the answer be brought back today, Art?"

"Oh! It wouldn't do to-morrow at all. Be dodda, no! Five shillins, your dinner, an' a quart of sthrong beer!—Aha! But you must give me a shillin' or two, to buy a sword; for the Square's goin' to make me a captain: thin I'll be grand! an' I'll make you a sargin'."

This seemed a windfall to Phelim. The unpleasant dilemma in which Sally Flattery had placed him, by the fabricated account of her father's imprisonment, made him extremely anxious to see Foodle himself, and to ascertain the *precise* outrage for which he had been secured. Here then was an opportunity of an interview with him, and of earning five shillings, a good dinner, and a quart of strong beer, as already specified.

"Art," said he, "give me the letther, an' I'm the boy that'll soon do the job. Long life to you, Art! Be the coutints o' the book, Art, I'll never pelt you or vex you agin, my worthy; an' I'll always call you captain!"

Phelim immediately commenced his journey to M——, which was only five miles distant, and in a very short time reached the jail, saw the jailer, and presented his letter.

The latter, on perusing it, surveyed him with the scrutiny of a man whose eye was practised in scanning offenders.

Phelim, whilst the jailer examined him, surveyed the strong and massy bolts with which every door and hatchway was secured. Their appearance produced rather an uncomfortable sensation in him; so much so, that when the jailer asked him his name, he thought it more prudent, in consequence of a touch of conscience he had, to personate Art for the present, inasmuch as he felt it impossible to assume any name more safe than that of an idiot.

"My name is Art Maguire," said he in reply to the jailer. "I'm messenger to Square S——, the one he had was discharged on

Friday last. I expect soon to be made groom, too."

"Come this way," said the jailer, "and you shall have an answer."

He brought Phelim into the prison-yard, where he remained for about twenty minutes, laboring under impressions which he felt becoming gradually more unpleasant. His anxiety was not lessened on perceiving twenty or thirty culprits, under the management of the turnkeys, enter the yard, where they were drawn up in a line, like a file of soldiers.

"What's *your* name?" said one of the turnkeys.

"Art Maguire," replied Phelim.

"Stand here," said the other, shoving him among the prisoners. "Keep your head up, you villain, an' don't be ashamed to look your friends in the face. It won't be hard to identify you, at any rate, you scoundrel. A glimpse of that phiz, even by starlight, would do you, you dog. Jack, tell Mr. S. to bring in the gintlemen—they're all ready."

Phelim's dismay on finding himself under drill with such a villainous crew was indescribable. He attempted to parley with the turnkey, but was near feeling the weight of his heavy keys for daring to approach a man placed in authority.

While thus chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, three gentlemen, accompanied by the jailer, entered the yard, and walked backward and forward in front of the prisoners, whose faces and persons they examined with great care. For a considerable time they could not recognize any of them; but just as they were about to give up the scrutiny, one of the gentlemen approached Phelim, and looking narrowly into his countenance, exclaimed,

"Here, jailer, this man I identify. I cannot be mistaken in his face; the rough visage and drooping eye of that fellow put all doubt as to his identity out of question. What's his name?"

"He gives his name, sir, as Arthur Maguire."

"Arthur what, sir?" said another of the turnkeys, looking earnestly at Phelim. "Why, sir, this is the fellow that swore the alibis for the Kellys—ay, an' for the Delaneys, an' for the O'Briens. His name is Phelim O'Toole; an' a purty boy he is, by all report."

Phelim, though his heart sank within him, attempted to banter them out of their bad opinion of him; but there was something peculiarly dismal and melancholy in his mirth.

"Why, gintlemen—ha, ha!—be gorra, I'd take it as a convanience—I mane, as a favor—if you'd believe me that there's a small taste of mistake here. I was sent by Square S. wid a letter to Mr. S——t, an' he gave me fifty ordhers to bring him back an answer this day. As for Phelim O'Toole, if you mane the rascal that swears the alibis, faith, I can't deny but I'm as like him, the villain, as one egg is to another. Bad luck to his 'dhroop,' any how; little I thought that it would ever bring me into throuble—ha, ha, ha! Mr. S——t, what answer have you for the Square, sir? Bedad, I'm afeard I'll be late."

"That letter, Master Maguire, or Toole, or whatever your name is, authorizes me to detain you as a prisoner, until I hear further from Mr. S."

"I identify him distinctly," said the gentleman, once more. "I neither doubt nor waver on the subject; so you will do right to detain him. I shall lodge information against him immediately."

"Sir," said Phelim to the jailer, "the Square couldn't mane me at all, in regard that it was another person he gave the letter to, for to bring to you, the other person gave it to me. I can make my oath of that. Be gorra, you're playin' your thricks upon sthrangers now, I suppose."

"Why, you lying rascal," said the jailer, "have you not a few minutes ago asserted to the contrary? Did you not tell me that your name was Arthur, or Art Maguire? That you are Mr. S.'s messenger, and expect to be made his groom. And now you deny all this."

"He's Phelim O'Toole," said the turnkey, "I'll swear to him; but if you wait for a minute, I'll soon prove it."

He immediately retired to the cell of a convict, whom he knew to be from the townland of Teernarogarah: and ordering its inmate to look through the bars of his window, which commanded the yard, he asked him if there was any one among them whom he knew.

The fellow in a few minutes replied, "Whethen, divil a one, barrin' bouncin' Phelim O'Toole."

The turnkey brought him down to the yard, where he immediately recognized Phelim as an old friend, shook hands with him, and addressed him by his name.

"Bad luck to you," said Phelim in Irish, "is this a place to welcome your friends to?"

"There is some mystery here," said the jailer. "I suppose the fact is, that this fellow returned a wrong name to Mr. S., and that that accounts for the name of Arthur Maguire being in the letter."

All Phelim's attempts to extricate himself were useless. He gave them the proper

version of the letter affair with Fool Art, but without making the slightest impression. The jailer desired him to be locked up.

"Divil fire you all, you villains!" exclaimed Phelim, "is it goin' to put me in crib ye are for no rason in life? Doesn't the whole parish kuow that I was never off o' my bed for the last three months, wid a complaint I had, until widin two or three days agone!"

"There are two excellent motives for putting you in crib," said the jailer; "but if yon can prove that you have been confined to your bed so long as you say, why it will be all the better for yourself. Go with the turnkey."

"No, tarenation to the fut I'll go," said Phelim, "till I'm carried."

"Doesn't the gintleman identify you, you villain," replied one of the turnkeys; "an' isn't the Square's letther in your favor?"

"Villain, is id!" exclaimed Phelim. "An' from a hangman's cousin, too, we're to bear this!—eh? Take that, anyhow, an' maybe you'll get more when you don't expect it. Whoo! Success, Phelim! There's blood in you still, abouchal!"

He accompanied the words by a spring of triumph from the ground, and surveyed the already senseless turnkey with exultation. In a moment, however, he was secured, for the purpose of being put into strong irons.

"To the devil's warmin' pan wid ye all," he continued, "you may do your worst. I defy you. Ha! by the heavens above me, *you'll* suffer for this, my fine gintleman. What can ye do but hang or thransport me, you villains? I tell ye, if a man's sowl had a crust of sin on it a foot thick, the best way to get it off 'ud be jist to shoot a dozen like you. Sin! Oh, the divil saize the sin at all in it. But wait! Did ye ever hear of a man they call Dan O'Connell? Be my sowl, he'll make yez rub your heels together, for keepin' an innocent boy in jail, that there's no law or warrant out for. This is the way we're thrated by thim that's ridin' rough shod over us. But have a taste o' patience, ye scoundrels! It won't last, I can tell yez. Our day will soon come, an' thin I'd recommend yez to travel for your health. Hell saize the day's pace or happiness ever will be seen in the country, till laws, an' judges, an' juries, an' jails, an' jailers, an' turnkeys, an' hangmen, is all swep out of it. Saize the day! An' along wid them goes the parsons, an' procthors, tithes an' taxes, all to the devil together. That day's not very far off, ye d——d villains! An' now I tell ye, that if a hair o' my head's touched—ay, if I was hanged to-morrow—I'd lave *them* behind me that 'ud put a bullet, wid the help an' blessin' o' God, through any one that'll injure me! So lay that to your conscience, an' do your best. Be the crass, O'Connell 'ill make you look nine ways at wanst for this! He's the boy can put the pin in your noses! He's the boy can make yez thrimble, one an' all o' yez—like a dog in a wet sack! An', wid the blessin' o' God, he'll help us to put our feet on your necks afore long!"

"That's a prudent speech," observed the jailer; "it will serve you very much."

Phelim consigned him to a very warm settlement in reply.

"Bring the ruffian off," added the jailer: "put him in solitary confinement."

"Put me wid Foodle Flattery," said Phelim; "you've got *him* here, an' I'll go nowhere else. Faith, you'll suffer for givin' me false imprisonment. Doesn't O'Connell's name make you shake? Put me wid Foodle Flattery, I say."

"Foodle Flattery! There is no such man here. Have you got such a person here?" inquired the jailer of the turnkey.

"Not at present," said the turnkey; "but I know Foodle well. We've had him here twice. Come away, Phelim; follow me; you're goin' to be put where you'll have an opportunity of sayin' your prayers."

He then ushered Phelim to a cell, where the reader may easily imagine what he felt. His patriotism rose to a high pitch; he deplored the wrongs of his country bitterly, and was clearly convinced that until jails, judges, and assizes, together with a long train of similar grievances, were utterly abolished, Ireland could never be right, nor persecuted "boys," like himself, at full liberty to burn or murder the enemies of their country with impunity. Notwithstanding these heroic sentiments, an indifferent round oath more than once escaped him against Ribbonism in whole and in part. He cursed the system, and the day, and the hour on which he was inveigled into it. He cursed those who had initiated him; nor did his father and mother escape for their neglect of his habits, his morals, and his education. This occurred when he had time for reflection. Whilst thus dispensing his execrations, the jailer and the three gentlemen, having been struck with his allusion to Foodle Flattery, and remembering that Foodle was of indifferent morals, came to the unanimous opinion that it would be a good plan to secure him; and by informing him that Phelim was in prison upon a capital charge, endeavor to work upon his fears, by representing his companion as disposed to turn approver. The state of the country, and Foodle's character, justified his apprehension on suspicion. He was accordingly taken, and when certified of Phelim's situ-

ation, acted precisely as had been expected. With very little hesitation, he made a full disclosure of the names of several persons concerned in burnings, waylayings, and robbery of arms. The two first names on the list were those of Phelim and Appleton, with several besides, some of whom bore an excellent, and others an execrable, character in the country.

The next day Fool Art went to Larry's, where he understood that Phelim was on the missing list. This justified his suspicions of the Squire; but by no means lessened his bitterness against him, for the prank he had intended to play upon him. With great simplicity, he presented himself at the Big House, and met its owner on the lawn, accompanied by two other gentlemen. The magistrate was somewhat surprised at seeing Art at large, when he imagined him to be under the jailer's lock and key.

"Well, Art," said he, concealing his amazement, "did you deliver my letter?"

"It went safe, your honor," replied Art.

"Did you yourself give it into his hands, as I ordered you?"

"Whoo! Be dodda, would your honor think Art 'ud tell a lie? Sure he read it. Aha!"

"An' what did he say, Art?"

"Whoo! Why, that he didn't know which of us had the least sense. You for sendin' a fool on a message, or me for deliverin' it."

"Was that all that happened?"

"No, sir. He said," added the fool, with bitter sarcasm, alluding to a duel, in which the Squire's character had not come off with flying colors—"he said, sir, that whin you have another challenge to fight, you may get sick *agin* for threepence to the poticarry."

This having been the manner in which the Squire was said to have evaded the duel, it is unnecessary to say that Art's readiness to refresh his memory on the subject prevented him from being received at the Big House in future.

Reader, remember that we only intended to give you a sketch of Phelim O'Toole's courtship. We will, however, go so far beyond our original plan, as to apprise you of his fate.

When it became known in the parish that he was in jail, under a charge of felony, Sally Flattery abandoned all hopes of securing him as a husband. The housekeeper felt suitable distress, and hoped, should the poor boy be acquitted, that "he might hould up his head wid any o' them." Phelim, through the agency of his father, succeeded in getting ten guineas from her, to pay the lawyers for defending him; not one penny of which he applied to the purpose for which he obtained it. The expenses of his defence were drawn from the Ribbon fund, and the Irish reader cannot forget the eloquent and pathetic appeal made by his counsel to the jury, on his behalf, and the strength with which the fact of his being the whole support of a helpless father and mother was stated. The appeal, however, was ineffectual; worthy Phelim was convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When his old acquaintances heard the nature of his destiny, they remembered the two prophecies that had been so often uttered concerning him. One of them was certainly fulfilled to the letter—we mean that in which it was stated, "that the greatest swaggerer among the girls generally comes to the wall at last." The other, though not literally accomplished, was touched at least upon the spirit; transportation for life ranks next to hanging.

We cannot avoid mentioning a fact connected with Phelim which came to light while he remained in prison. By incessant trouble he was prevailed upon, or rather compelled, to attend the prison school, and on examining him, touching his religious knowledge, it appeared that he was ignorant of the plainest truths of Christianity; that he knew not how or by whom the Christian religion had been promulgated; nor, indeed, any other moral truth connected with Revelation.

Immediately after his transportation, Larry took to drink, and his mother to begging, for she had no other means of living. In this mode of life, the husband was soon compelled to join her. They are both mendicants, and Sheelah now appears sensible of the error in their manner of bringing Phelim up.

"Ah! Larry," she is sometimes heard to say, "I doubt that we wor wrong for flyin' in the face o' God, becase He didn't give us childhre. An' when it plased Him to grant us a son, we oughtn't to 've spoiled him by over-indulgence, an' by lettin' him have his own head in everythin' as we did. If we had sint him to school, an' larned him to work, an' corrected him when he desarved it, instead of laughin' at his lies, an' misbehavior, and his oaths, as if they wor sport—ay, an' abusin' the nabors when they'd complain of him, or tell us what he was—ay!—if we had, it's a credit an' a comfort he'd be to us now, an' not a shame an' a disgrace, an' an affliction. We made our own bed, Larry, an' now we must lie down an it. An' God help us! we made *his* bed too, poor boy, an' a hard one it is. God forgive us! but, anyhow, my heart's breakin', for bad as he was, sure we havn't him to look upon!"

"Thrue," replied Larry. "Still he was game an' cute to the last. Biddy Doran's ten guineas will sarve him *begaut*, poor fellow. But sure the 'boys' kep their word to him, anyhow, in regard of shootin' Foodle Flattery. Myself was never betther plased in my life, than to hear that he got the slugs into his heart, the villain!"

*** We have attempted to draw Phelim O'Toole as closely as possible to the character of that class, whose ignorance, want of education and absence of all moral principle, constitute them the shame and reproach of the country. By such men the peace of Ireland is destroyed, illegal combinations formed, blood shed, and nightly outrages committed. There is nothing more certain than this plain truth, that if proper religious and moral knowledge were impressed upon the early principles of persons like Phelim, a conscience would be created capable of revolting from crime. Whatever the grievances of a people may be, whether real or imaginary, one thing is clear, that neither murder nor illegal violence of any description, can be the proper mode of removing or redressing them. We have kept Phelim's Ribbonism in the background, because its details could excite only aversion, and preferred exhibiting his utter ignorance of morality upon a less offensive subject, in order that the reader might be enabled to infer, rather than to witness with his mind's eye, the deeper crimes of which he was capable.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

One day about the middle of November, in the year 18—, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy were digging potatoes on the side of a hard, barren hill, called Esker Dhu. The day was bitter and wintry, the men were thinly clad, and as the keen blast swept across the hill with considerable violence, the sleet-like rain which it bore along pelted into their garments with pitiless severity. The father had advanced into more than middle age; and having held, at a rack-rent the miserable waste of farm which he occupied, he was compelled to exert himself in its cultivation, despite either obduracy of soil, or inclemency of weather. This day, however, was so unusually severe, that the old man began to feel incapable of continuing his toil. The son bore it better; but whenever a cold rush of stormy rain came over them, both were compelled to stand with their sides against it, and their heads turned, so as that the ear almost rested back upon the shoulder in order to throw the rain off their faces. Of each, however, that check which was exposed to the rain and storm was beaten into a red hue; whilst the other part of their faces was both pale and hunger-pinched.

The father paused to take breath, and, supported by his spade, looked down upon the sheltered inland which, inhabited chiefly by Prostestants and Presbyterians, lay rich and warm-looking under him.

"Why, thin," he exclaimed to the son—a lad about fifteen,—"sure I know well I oughtn't to curse yez, anyway, you black set! an yit, the Lord forgive me my sins, I'm almost timpted to give yez a volley, an' that from my heart out! Look at thim, Jimmy agra—only look at the black thieves! how warm an' wealthy they sit there in our ould possessions, an' here we must toil till our fingers are worn to the stumps, upon this thievin' bent. The curse of Cromwell on it! —You might as well ax the divil for a blessin', as expect anything like a dacent crop out of it.—Look at thim two ridges!—such a poor sthring o' praties is in it!—one here an' one there—an' yit we must turn up the whole ridge for that same! Well, God sind the time soon, when the right will take place, Jimmy agra!"

"An' doesn't Pasthorini say it? Sure whin Twenty-five comes, *we'll* have our own again: the right will overcome the might—the bottomless pit will be locked—ay, double boulted, if St. Pether gets the kays, for he's the very boy that will accommodate the heretics wid a warm corner; an' yit, faith, there's many o' thim that myself 'ud put in a good word for, afther all."

"Throth, an' here's the same, Jimmy. There's Jack Stuart, an' if there's a cool corner in hell, the same Jack will get it—an' that he may, I pray Gor this day, an' amin. The Lord sind it to him! for he richly desarves it. Kind, neighborly, and frindly, is he an' all belongin' to him; an' I wouldn't be where a hard word 'ud be spoken of him, nor a dog in connection wid the family ill-treated; for which rason may he get a cool corner in hell, I humbly sufficate."

"What do you think of Jack Taylor? Will he be cosey?"

"Throth, I doubt so—a blessed youth is Jack: yit myself 'ud hardly wish it. He's a heerum-skeerum, divil-may-care fellow, no doubt of it, an' laughs at the priests, which same I'm thinkin' will get him below stairs more nor a new-milk heat, any way; but thin agin, he thrates thim dacent, an' gives thim good dinners, an' they take all this rolliken in good part, so that it's likely he's not in airnest in it, and surely they ought to know best, Jimmy."

"What do you think of *Yallow Sam?—honest Sam*, that they say was born widout a heart, an' carries the *black* wool in his ears, to keep out the cries of the widows an' the orphans, that are long rotten in their graves through his dark villany!—He'll get a snug birth!"*

"*Yallow Sam*," replied the old man, slowly, and a dark shade of intense hatred blackened his weather-beaten countenance, as he looked in the direction from which the storm blew: "'twas *he* left us where we're standin', Jimmy—undher this blast, that's cowldher an' bittherer nor a step-mother's breath, this cuttin' day! 'Twas *he* turned us on the wide world, whin your poor mother was risin' out of her faver. 'Twas he squenched the hearth, whin she wasn't able to lave the house, till I carried her in my arms into Paddy Cassidy's—the tears fallin' from my eyes upon her face, that I loved next to God. Didn't he give our farm to his bastard son, a purple Orangeman? Out we went, to the winds an' skies of heaven, bekase the rich *bodagh* made intherest agin st us. I tould him whin he chated me out o' my fifteen goolden guineas, that his masther, the landlord, should hear of it; but I could never get next or near to him, to make my complaint. Eh? A snug birth! I'm only afeard that hell has no corner hot enough for him—but lave that to the divil himself: if he doesn't give him the best thratement hell can afford, why I'm not here."

"Divil a one o' the *ould boy's* so bad as they say, father; he gives it to *thim* hot an' heavy, at all evints."

"Why even if he was at a loss about Sam, depind upon it, he'd get a hint from his betthers above, that 'ud be sarviceable."

"They say he visits him as it is, an' that Sam can't sleep widout some one in the room wid him. Dan Philips says the priest was there, an' had a Mass in every room in the house; but Charley Mack tells me there's no thruth in it. He was advised to it, he says; but it seems the ould boy has too strong a hoult of him, for Sam said he'd have the divil any time sooner nor the priest, and its likest what he would say."

"Och, och, Jimmy, avick, I'm tir'd out! We had betther give in; the day's too hard, an' there's no use in standin' agin the weather that's in it. Lave the ould villain to God, who he can't chate, any way."

"Well, may our curse go along wid the rest upon him, for dhrivin' us to sich an unnatural spot as this! Hot an' heavy, into the sowl an' marrow of him may it penethrate. An' sure that's no more than all the counthry's wishin' him, whether or not—not to mintion the curses that's risin' out o' the grave agin him, loud an' piercin'!"

"God knows it's not slavin' yourself on sich a day as this *you'd* be, only for him. Had we kep our farm, you'd be now well an in your larnin' for a priest—an' there 'ud be one o' the family sure to be a gintleman, anyhow; but that's gone too, agra. Look at the smoke, how comfortable it rises from Jack Sullivan's, where the priest has a Station to-day. 'Tisn't fishin' for a sthray pratie *he* is, upon a ridge like this. But it can't be helped; an' God's will be done! Not himself!—faix, it's he that'll get the height of good thratement, an' can ride home, well lined, both inside an' outside. Much good may it do him!—'tis but his right."

The lad now paused in his turn, looked down on Jack Sullivan's comfortable house, sheltered by a clump of trees, and certainly saw such a smoke tossed up from the chimney, as gave unequivocal evidence of preparation for a good dinner. He next looked "behind the wind," with a visage made more blank and meagre by the contrast; after which he reflected for a few minutes, as if working up his mind to some sudden determination. The deliberation, however, was short; he struck his open hand upon the head of the spade with much animation, and instantly took it in both hands, exclaiming:

"Here, father, here goes; to the divil once an' for ever I pitch slavery,"* and as he spoke, the spade was sent as far from him as he had strength to throw it. "To the divil I pitch slavery! An' now, father, wid the help o' God, this is the last day's work I'll ever put my hand to. There's no way of larnin' Latin here; but off to Munster I'll start, an' my face you'll never see in this parish, till I come home either a priest an' a gintleman! But that's not all, father dear; I'll rise you out of your distress, or die in the struggle. I can't bear to see your gray hairs in sorrow and poverty."

* This was actually said of the person alluded to—a celebrated usurer and agent to two or three estates, who was a little deaf, and had his ears occasionally stuffed with black wool.

* Toil—labor.

"Well, Jimmy—well, agra—God enable you, avourneen; 'tis a good intintion. The divil a one o' me will turn another spadeful aither, for this day: I'm *dhrookin'* * wid the rain. We'll go home an' take an air o' the fire—we want it; and afterwards we can talk about what you're *on* † for."

It is usual to attribute to the English and Scotch character, exclusively, a cool and persevering energy in the pursuit of such objects as inclination or interest may propose for attainment; whilst Irishmen are considered too much the creatures of impulse to reach a point that requires coolness, condensation of thought, and efforts successively repeated. This is a mistake. It is the opinion of Englishmen and Scotchmen who know not the Irish character thoroughly. The fact is, that in the attainment of an object, where a sad-faced Englishman would despair, an Irishman will, probably, laugh, drink, weep, and fight, during his progress to accomplish it. A Scotchman will miss it, perhaps, but, having done all that could be done, he will try another speculation. The Irishman may miss it too; but to console himself he will break the head of any man who may have impeded him in his efforts, as a proof that he *ought* to have succeeded; or if he cannot manage that point, he will crack the pate of the first man he meets, or he will get drunk, or he will marry a wife, or swear a gauger never to show his face in that quarter again; or he will exclaim, if it be concerning a farm, with a countenance full of simplicity—"God bless your honor, long life and honor to you, sir! Sure an' 'twas but a thrifle, anyhow, that your Reverence will make up for me another time. An' 'tis well I know your Lordship 'ud be the last man on airth to give me the cowld shoulder, so you would, an' I an ould residenthur on your own father's estate, the Lord be praised for that same! An' 'tis a happiness, an' nothin' else, so it is, even if I payed double rint—wherein, maybe, I'm not a day's journey from that same, manin' the double rint, your honor; only that one would do a great deal for the honor an' glory of livin' undher a raal gintleman—an' that's but rason."

There is, in short, a far-sightedness in an Irishman which is not properly understood, because it is difficult to understand it. I do not think there is a nation on earth, whose inhabitants mix up their interest and their feelings together more happily, shrewdly, and yet less ostensibly, than Irishmen contrive to do. An Irishman will make you laugh at his joke, while the object of that joke is wrapped up from you in the profoundest mystery, and you will consequently make the concession to a certain point of his character, which has been really obtained by a faculty you had not penetration to discover, or, rather, which he had too much sagacity to exhibit. Of course, as soon as your back is turned, the broad grin is on him, and one of his cheeks is stuck out two inches beyond the other, because his tongue is in it—at your stupidity, simplicity, or folly. Of all the national characters on this habitable globe, I verily believe that that of the Irish is the most profound and unfathomable; and the most difficult on which to form a system, either social, moral, or religious.

It would be difficult, for example, to produce a more signal instance of energy, system, and perseverance than that exhibited in Ireland during the struggle for Emancipation. Was there not flattery to the dust? blarney to the eyes? heads broken? throats cut? houses burned? and cattle houghed? And why? Was it for the *mere pleasure* of blarney—of breaking heads (I won't dispute the last point, though, because I scorn to give up the glory of the national character),—of cutting throats—burning houses—or houghing cattle? No; but to secure Emancipation. In attaining that object was exemplified the Irish method of gaining a point.

"Yes," said Jemmy, "to the divil I pitch slavery! I will come home able to *rise* yez from your poverty, or never show my face in the parish of Ballysogarth agin."

When the lad's determination was mentioned to his mother and the family, there was a loud and serious outcry against it: for no circumstance is relished that ever takes away a member from an Irish hearth, no matter what the nature of that circumstance may be.

"Och, thin, is it for that *bocaun* * of a boy to set off wid himself; runnin' through the wide world afther larnin', widout money or friends! Avourneen, put it out of yer head. No; struggle on as the rest of us is doin', an' maybe ye'll come as well off at the long run."

"Mother, dear," said the son, "I wouldn't wish to go agin what you'd say; but I made a promise to myself to *rise* yez out of your poverty if I can, an' my mind's made up on it; so don't cross me, or be the manes of my havin' bad luck on my journey, in regard of me goin' agin yer will, when you know 'twould be the last thing I'd wish to do."

"Let the gossoon take his way, Vara. Who knows but it was the Almighty put the

* Dripping—very wet.
† Determined on.

* Soft, innocent person.

thoughts of it into his head. Pasthorini says that there will soon be a change, an' 'tis a good skame it 'ill be to have him a *sogarth* when the fat livins will be walkin' back to their ould owners."

"Oh, an' may the Man above grant *that*, I pray Jamini this day! for are n't we harrished out of our lives, scrapin' an' scramblin' for the black thieves, what we ought to put on our backs, an' into our own mouths. Well, they say it's not lucky to take money from a priest, because it's the price o' sin, an' no more it can, secin' that they want it themselves; but I'm sure it's *their** money that *ought* to carry the bad luck to them, in regard of their gettin' so many bitter curses along wid it."

When a lad from the humblest classes resolves to go to Munster as a poor scholar, there is but one course to be pursued in preparing his outfit. This is by a collection at the chapel among the parishioners, to whom the matter is made known by the priest, from the altar some Sunday previous to his departure. Accordingly, when the family had all given their consent to Jemmy's project, his father went, on the following day, to communicate the matter to the priest, and to solicit his co-operation in making a collection in behalf of the lad, on the next Sunday but one: for there is always a week's notice given, and sometimes more, that the people come prepared.

The conversation already detailed between father and son took place on Friday, and on Saturday, a day on which the priest never holds a Station, and, of course, is generally at home, Dominick M'Evoy went to his house with the object already specified in view. The priest was at home; a truly benevolent man, but like the worthies of his day, not over-burdened with learning, though brimful of kindness and hospitality mixed up with drollery and simple cunning.

"Good morning, Dominick!" said the priest, as Dominick entered.

"Good morrow, kindly, Sir," replied Dominick: "I hope your Reverence is well, *and* in good health."

"Troth I am, Dominick! I hope there's nothing wrong at home; how is the wife and children?"

"I humbly thank your Reverence for axin'! Troth there's no rason for complainin' in regard o' the health; sarra one o' them but's bravely, consitherin' all things: I believe I'm the worst o' them, myself, yer Reverence. I'm gettin' ould, you see, an' stiff, an' wake; but that's only in the coorse o' nathur; a man can't last always. Wait till them that's young an' hearty *now*, harrows as much as I ploughed in my day, an' they won't have much to brag of. Why, thin, but yer Reverence stands it bravely—faix, wondherfully itself—the Lord be praised! an' it warms my own heart to see you look so well."

"Thank you, Dominick. Indeed, my health, God be thanked, is very good. Ellish," he added, calling to an old female servant—"you'll take a glass, Dominick, the day is cowldish—Ellish, here take the kay, and get some spirits—the *poteen*, Ellish—to the right hand in the cupboard. Indeed, my health is very good, Dominick. Father Murray says he invies me my appetite, an' I tell him he's guilty of one of the Seven deadly sins."

"Ha, ha, ha!—Faix, an' Invy *is* one o' them sure enough; but a joke is a joke in the mane time. A pleasant gintleman is the same Father Murray, but yer Reverence is too deep for him in the jokin' line, for all that. Ethen, Sir, but it's you that gave ould Cokely the keen cut about his religion—ha, ha, ha! Myself laughed till I was sick for two days afther it—the ould thief!"

"Eh?—Did you hear that, Dominick? Are you sure that's the poteen, Ellish? Ay, an' the best of it all was, that his pathrun, Lord Foxhunter, was present. Come, Dominick, tay that—it never seen wather. But the best of it all was—

—"'Well, Father Kavanagh,' said he, 'who put you into the church? Now,' said he, 'you'll come over me wid your regular succession from St. Peter, but I won't allow that.'

"'Why, Mr. Cokely,' says I, back to him, 'I'll give up the succession;' says I, 'and what is more, I'll grant that *you* have been *called* by the Lord, and that *I* have *not;* but the Lord that called you,' says I, 'was *Lord Foxhunter.*' Man, you'd tie his Lordship wid a cobweb, he laughed so heartily.

"'Bravo, Father Kavanagh,' said he. 'Cokely, you're *bate,*' said he; 'and upon my honor you must both dine with me to-day,' says he—and capital claret he keeps."

"Your health, Father Kavanagh, an' God spare you to us! Hah! wather! Oh, the divil a taste itself did the same stuff *see!* Why, thin, I think your Reverence an' me's about an age. I bleeve I'm a thrifle oulder; but I don't bear it so well as you do. The family, you see, an' the childhre, an' the cares o' the world, pull me down: throth, the same family's a throuble to me. I wish I had them all settled safe, any way."

"What do you intind to do with them, Dominick?"

"In throth, that's what brought me to yer

* The Protestant clergy.

Reverence. I've one boy—Jimmy—a smart chap entirely, an' he has taken it into his head to go as a poor scholar to Munster. He's fond o' the larnin', there's not a doubt o' that, an' small blame to him to be sure; but then again, what can I do? He's bint on goin', an' I'm not able to help him, poor fellow, in any shape; so I made bould to see yer Reverence about it, in hopes that you might be able to plan out something for him more betther nor I could do. I have the good wishes of the neighbors, and indeed of the whole parish, let the thing go as it may."

"I know that, Dominick, and for the same rason we'll have a collection at the three althars. I'll mintion it to them after Mass to-morrow, and let them be prepared for Sunday week, when we can make the collection. Hut, man, never fear; we'll get as much as will send him half-way to the priesthood; and I'll tell you what, Dominick, I'll never be the man to refuse giving him a couple of guineas myself."

"May the heavenly Father bless an' keep your Reverence. I'm sure 'tis a good right the boy has, as well as all of us, to never forget your kindness. But as to the money—he'll be proud of your assistance the other way, sir,—so not a penny—'tis only your good-will we want—hem—except indeed, that you'd wish yourself to make a piece of kindness of it to the poor boy. Oh, not a drop more, sir,—I declare it'll be apt to get into my head. Well, well—sure an' we're not to disobey our clargy, whether or not: so here's your health over agin, your Reverence! an' success to the poor child that's bint on good!"

"Two guineas his Reverence is to give you from himself, Jimmy," said the father, on relating the success of this interview with the priest; "an' faix I was widin one of refusin' it, for feard it might bring something *unlucky** wid it; but, thought I, on the spur, it's best to take it, any way. We can asily put it off on some o' these black-mouthed Presbyterians or Orangemen, by way of changin' it, an' if there's any hard fortune in it, let them have the full benefit of it, *ershi misha.*" †

It is by trifles of this nature that the unreasonable though enduring hatred with which the religious sects of Ireland look upon those of a different creed is best known. This feeling, however, is sufficiently mutual. Yet on both sides there is something more speculative than practical in its nature. When they speak of each other as a distinct class, the animosity, though abstracted, appears to be most deep; but when they mingle in the necessary intercourse of life, it is curious to see them frequently descend, on both sides, from the general rule to those exceptions of good-will and kindness, which natural benevolence and mutual obligation, together with a correct knowledge of each other's real characters, frequently produce. Even this abstracted hatred, however, has been the curse of our unhappy country; it has kept us too much asunder, or when we met exhibited us to each other in our darkest and most offensive aspects.

Dominick's conduct in the matter of the priest's money was also a happy illustration of that mixture of simplicity and shrewdness with which an Irishman can frequently make points meet, which superstition, alone, without such ingenuity, would keep separate for ever. Many another man might have refused the money from an ignorant dread of its proving *unlucky;* but his mode of reasoning on the subject was satisfactory to himself, and certainly the most ingenious which, according to his belief, he could have adopted—that of foisting it upon a heretic.

The eloquence of a country priest, though rude, and by no means elevated, is sometimes well adapted to the end in view, to the feelings of his auditory, and to the nature of the subject on which he speaks. Pathos and humor are the two levers by which the Irish character is raised or depressed; and these are blended in a manner too anomalous to be ever properly described. Whoever could be present at a sermon on the Sunday when a Purgatorian Society is to be established, would hear pathos and see grief of the first water. It is then he would get a "nate" and glowing description of Purgatory, and see the broad, humorous, Milesian faces, of three or four thousand persons, of both sexes, shaped into an expression of the most grotesque and clamorous grief. The priest, however, on particular occasions of this nature, very shrewdly gives notice of the sermon, and of the purpose for which it is to be preached:—if it be grave, the people are prepared to cry; but if it be for a political, or any other purpose not decidedly religious, there will be abundance of that rough, blunt satire and mirth, so keenly relished by the peasantry, illustrated, too, by the most comical and ridiculous allusions. That priest, indeed, who is the best master of this latter faculty is uniformly the greatest favorite. It is no unfrequent thing to see the majority of an Irish congregation drowned in sorrow and tears, even when they are utterly ignorant of the language spoken; particularly in those dis-

* There is a superstitious belief in some parts of Ireland, that priests' money is unlucky; "because," say the people, "it is the price of sin"—alluding to absolution.

† Say I.

tricts where the Irish is still the vernacular tongue. This is what renders notice of the sermon and its purport necessary; otherwise the honest people might be seriously at a loss whether to laugh or cry.

"*Ellish avourneen, gho dhe dirsha?*"—"Ellish, my dear, what is he saying?"

"*Och, musha niel eshighum, ahagur—ta sha er Purgathor, ta barlhum.*"—"Och, I dunna that, jewel; I believe he's on Purgatory."

Och, och, oh—och, och, oh—oh, i, oh, i, oh!"

And on understanding that Purgatory is the subject, they commence their grief with a rocking motion, wringing their hands, and unconsciously passing their beads through their fingers, whilst their bodies are bent forward towards the earth.

On the contrary, when the priest gets jocular—which I should have premised, he never does in what is announced as a solemn sermon—you might observe several faces charged with mirth and laughter, turned, even while beaming with this expression, to those who kneel beside them, inquiring:

"Arrah, Barny, what is it—ha, ha, ha!—what is it he's sayin'? The Lord spare him among us, anyhow, the darlin' of a man! Eh, Barny, you that's in the inside the English?" This, of course is spoken in Irish.

Barny, however, is generally too much absorbed in the fun to become interpreter just then; but as soon as the joke is nearly heard out, in compliance with the importunity of his neighbors, he gives them a brief hint or two, and instantly the full chorus is rung out, long, loud, and jocular.

On the Sunday in question, as the subject could not be called strictly religious, the priest, who knew that a joke or two would bring in many an additional crown to Jemmy's *caubeen*,* was determined that they should at least have a laugh for their money. The man, besides, was benevolent, and knew the way to the Irish heart; a knowledge which he felt happy in turning to the benefit of the lad in question.

With this object in view, he addressed the people somewhat in the following language:

"'*Blessed is he that giveth his money to him that standeth in need of it.*'

"These words, my brethren, are taken from St. Paul, who, among ourselves, knew the value of a friend in distress as well as any other apostle in the three kingdoms—hem. It's a nate text, my friends, anyhow. He manes, however, when we have it to give, my own true, well-tried, ould friends!—when we have it to give. It's absence althers the case, in toto; because you have all heard the proverb—'there is no takin' money out of an empty purse:' or, as an ould ancient author said long ago upon the same subject:

'Cantabit whackuus coram lathrone whiathur!'

—(Dshk, dshk, dshk*—that's the larnin'!)—He that carries an empty purse may fwhistle at the thief. It's *sing* in the Latin; but sing or fwhistle, in my opinion, he that goes wid an empty purse seldom sings or fwhistles to a pleasant tune. Melancholy music I'd call it, an' wouldn't, may be, be much asthray afther—Hem. At all evints, may none of this present congregation, whin at their devotions, ever sing or fwhistle to the same tune! No; let it be to 'money in both pockets,' if you sing at all; and as long as you have that, never fear but you'll also have the 'priest in his boots' into the bargain—("Ha, ha, ha!—God bless him, isn't he the pleasant gentleman, all out—ha, ha, ha!—moreover, an' by the same a token, it's thrue as Gospel, so it is,")—for well I know you're the high-spirited people, who wouldn't see your priest without them, while a fat parson, with half-a-dozen chins upon him, red and rosy, goes about every day in the week bogged in boots, like a horse-trooper!—("Ha, ha, ha!—good, Father Dan! More power to you—ha, ha, ha! We're the boys that wouldn't see you in want o' them, sure enough. Isn't he the droll crathur?")

"But suppose a man hasn't money, what is he to do? Now this divides itself into what is called Hydrostatics an' Metaphuysics, and must be proved logically in the following manner:

"First, we suppose him *not* to have the money—there I may be wrong or I may be right; now for the illustration and the logic.

"Pether Donovan."

"Here, your Reverence."

"Now, Pether, if I suppose you to have *no* money, am I right, or am I wrong?"

"Why, thin, I'd be sarry to prove your Reverence to be wrong, so I would; but, for all that, I believe I must give it against you."

"How much have you got, Pether?"

"Ethen, but 'tis your Reverence that's comin' close upon me; two or three small note an' some silver."

"How much silver, Pether?"

"I'll tell your Reverence in a jiffy. I ought to have a ten shillin', barring the price of a quarther o' tobaccy that I bought at the crass-roads beyant. Nine shillins an' some hapuns, yer Reverence."

* Such collections were generally made in hats—the usual name for an Irish peasant's hat being *caubeen*.

* This sound, which expresses wonder, is produced by striking the tip of the tongue against the palate.

"Very good, Pether, you must hand me the silver, till I give the rest of the illustration wid it."

"But does your Reverence mind another ould proverb?—'a fool an' his money's asy parted.' Sure an' I know you're goin' to do a joke upon me."

("Give him the money, Pether," from a hundred voices—"give his Reverence the money, you nager you—give him the silver, you dirty spalpeen you—hand it out, you misert.")

"Pether, if you don't give it dacently, I'll not take it; and in that case—"

"Here, here, your Reverence—here it is; sure I wouldn't have your ill-will for all I'm worth."

"Why, you nager, if I wasn't the first orathor livin', barrin' Cicero or Demosthenes himself, I couldn't *schrew* a penny out o' you! Now, Pether, there's a specimen of logic for you; an' if it wasn't good, depind upon it the money would be in your pocket still. I've never known you to give a penny for any charitable purpose, since ever I saw your face: but I'm doin' a good action in your behalf for once; so if you have any movin' words to say to the money in question, say them, for you'll never finger it more."

A burst of the most uproarious mirth followed this manœuvre, in which the simple priest himself joined heartily; whilst the melancholy of Peter's face was ludicrously contrasted with the glee which characterized those who surrounded him.

"Hem!—Secondly—A man, you see, may have money, or he may not, when his fellow creature who stands in need of it makes an appale to his dacency and his feelings; and sorry I'd be to think that there's a man before me, or a woman either, who'd refuse to assist the distresses of any one, of any creed, church, or persuasion, whether white, black, or yallow—no; I don't except even the blue-bellies themselves. It's what I never taught you, nor never will tache you to the day of my death! To be sure, a fellow-creature may say, 'Help me, my brother, I am distressed,' or, 'I am bent on a good purpose, that your kindness can enable me to accomplish.' But suppose that you have not the money *about you at the time*, wouldn't you feel sorry to the back-bone? Ay, would yez—to the very core of the heart itself. Or if any man—an' he'd be nothing else than a *bodagh* that would say it—if any man would tell me that you would not, I'd—yes—I'd give him his answer, as good as I gave to ould Cokely long ago, and you all know what that was.

"The next point is, what would you do if you hadn't it about you? It's I that can tell you what you'd do:—you'd say, 'I haven't got it, brother,'—for ev'ry created bein' of the human kind is your brother, barrin' the women, an' they are your sisters—[this produced a grin upon many faces]—'but,' says you, 'if you wait a bit for a day or two, or a week, or maybe for a fortnight, I'll try what I can do to help you.'

"Picture to yourselves a fellow-creature in distress—suppose him to have neither hat, shoe, nor stocking—[this was a touch of the pathetic]—and altogether in a state of utter destitution! Can there be a more melancholy picture than this? No, there can't. But 'tisn't the tithe of it!—a barefaced robbery is the same tithe—think of him without father, mother, or friend upon the earth—both dead, and ne'er another to be had for love or money—maybe he has poor health—maybe he's sick, an' in a strange country—[here Jemmy's mother and friends sobbed aloud, and the contagion began to spread—the priest, in fact, knew where to touch]—his face is pale—his eyes sunk with sickness and sorrow in his head—his bones are cuttin' the skin—he knows not where to turn himself—hunger and sickness are strivin' for him.—[Here the grief became loud and general, and even the good-natured preacher's own voice got somewhat unsteady.]—He's in a bad state entirely—miserable! more miserable!! most miserable!!! [och, och, oh!] sick, sore, and sorry!—he's to be pitied, felt for, and compassionated!—[a general outcry]—'tis a faver he has, or an ague, maybe, or a rheumatism, or an embargo * on the limbs, or the king's evil, or a consumption, or a decline, or God knows but it's the falling sickness—[och, och, oh!—och, och, oh! from the whole congregation, whilst the simple old man's eyes were blinded with tears at the force of the picture he drew.—[Ay, maybe it's the *falling*-sickness, and in that case how on earth can he *stand* it].—He can't, he can't, wurra strew, wurra strew!—och, och, oh!—ogh, ogh, ogh!]—The Lord in heaven look down upon him—[amin, amin, this blessed an' holy Sunday that's in it!—och, oh!]—pity him—[amin, amin!—och, och, an amin!]—with miseracordial feeling and benediction! He hasn't a rap in his company!—moneyless, friendless, houseless, an' homeless! Ay, my friends, you all have homes—but *he* has none! Thrust back by every hard-hearted spalpeen, and he, maybe, a better father's son than the Turk that refuses him! Look at your own childre, my friends! Bring the case home to yourselves! Suppose he was one of them—alone on the earth, and none to pity him in his sorrows! Your own

* Lumbago, we presume.

childre, I say, in a strange land.—[Here the outcry became astounding; men, women, and children in one general uproar of grief.] —An' this may all be Jemmy M'Evoy's case, that's going in a week or two to Munster, as a poor scholar—may be his case, I say, except you befriend him, and show your *decency* and your *feelings*, like Christians and Catholics; and for either decency or kindness, I'd turn yez against any other congregation in the diocess, or in the kingdom—ay, or against Dublin, itself, if it was convanient, or in the neighborhood."

Now here was a *coup de main*—not a syllable mentioned about Jemmy M'Evoy, until he had melted them down, ready for the impression, which he accordingly made to his heart's content.

"Ay," he went on, "an' 'tis the parish of Ballysogarth that has the name, far and near, for *both*, and well they desarve it. You won't see the poor gossoon go to a strange country with empty pockets. He's the son of an honest man—one of yourselves; and although he's a poor man, you know 'twas *Yallow Sam* that made him so—that put him out of his comfortable farm and shipped a *black-mouth** into it. You won't turn your backs on the son in regard of *that*, any way. As for Sam, let *him* pass; he'll not grind the poor nor truckle to the rich, when he gives up his stewardship in the kingdom come. Leave him to the friend of the poor—to his God; but the son of them that he oppressed, you will stand up for. He's going to Munster, to learn 'to go upon the Mission:' and, on Sunday next, there will be a collection made here, and at the other two althars for him; and, as your own characters are at stake, I trust it will be neither mane nor shabby. There will be Protestants here, I'll engage, and you must act decently before them, if it was only to set them a good example. And now I'll tell yez a story that the mintion of the Protestants brings to my mind:—

"There was, you see, a Protestant man and a Catholic woman once married together. The man was a swearing, drinking, wicked rascal, and his wife the same: between them they were a blessed pair to be sure. She never bent her knee under a priest until she was on her death-bed; nor was he known ever to enter a church door, or to give a shilling in charity but once, that being as follows:—He was passing a Catholic place of worship one Sunday, on his way to fowl—for he had his dog and gun with him;—'twas beside a road, and many of the congregation were kneeling out across the way. Just as he passed they were making a collection for a poor scholar—and surely they that love the larning desarve to be encouraged! Well, behold you, says one of them, 'will you remember the poor scholar,' says he, 'and put something in the hat? You don't know,' says he, 'but his prayers will be before you.'* 'True enough, maybe,' says the man, 'and there's a crown to him, for God's sake.' Well and good; the man died, and so did the wife; but the very day before her departure, she got a scapular, and died in it. She had one sister, however, a good crature, that did nothing but fast and pray, and make her sowl. This woman had strong doubts upon her mind, and was very much troubled as to whether or not her sister went to heaven; and she begged it as a favor from the blessed Virgin, that the state of her sister's sowl might be revaled to her. Her prayer was granted. One night, about a week after her death, her sister came back to her, dressed all in white, and circled round by a veil of glory.

"'Is that Mary?' said the living sister.

"'It is,' said the other; 'I have got liberty to appear to you,' says she, 'and to tell you that I'm happy.'

"'May the holy Virgin be praised!' said the other. 'Mary, dear, you have taken a great weight off of me,' says she: 'I thought you'd have a bad chance, in regard of the life you led.'

"'When I died,' said the spirit, 'and was on my way to the other world, I came to a place where the road divided itself into three parts;—one to heaven, another to hell, and a third to purgatory. There was a dark gulf between me and heaven, and a breach between me and purgatory that I couldn't step across, and if I had missed my foot there, I would have dropped into hell. So I would, too, only that the blessed Virgin put my own scapular over the breach, and it became firm, and I stepped on it, and got over. The Virgin then desired me to look into hell, and the first person I saw was my own husband, standing with a green sod under his feet! 'He got that favor,' said the blessed Virgin, 'in consequence of the prayers of a holy priest, that had once been a poor scholar, that he gave assistance to, at a collection made for him in such a chapel,' says she. 'Then,' continued the sowl, 'Mary,' says she, 'but there's some great change in the world since I died, or why would the people live so long? It can't be less than six thousand years since I departed, and yet I find every one of my friends just as I left them.'

* In the North of Ireland the word black-mouth means a Presbyterian.

* In the other world.

"'Why,' replied the living sister, 'you're only six days dead.'

"'Ah, avourneen!' said the other, 'it can't be—it can't be! for I have been thousands on thousands of years in pain!'—and as she spoke this she disappeared.

"Now there's a *proof* of the pains of purgatory, where one day seems as long as a thousand years; and you know we oughtn't to grudge a thrifle to a fellow-crature, that *we* may avoid it. So you see, my friends, there's nothing like good works. You know not when or where this lad's prayers may benefit you. If he gets ordained, the first mass he says will be for his benefactors; and in every one he celebrates after that, they must also be remembered: the words are *pro omnibus benefactoribus meis, per omnia secula seculorum!*

"Thirdly—hem—I now lave the thing to yourselves.

"But wasn't I match for Pether Donovan, that would brake a stone for the marrow *—Eh?—(a broad laugh at Pether's rueful visage.)—Pether, you Turk, will your heart never soften—will you never have dacency, an' you the only man of your family that's so? Sure they say you're going to be marrid some of these days. Well, if you get your wife in my parish, I tell you, Pether, I'll give you a fleecin', for don't think I'll marry you as chape as I would a poor honest man. I'll make you shell out the yallowboys, and 'tis that will go to your heart, you nager you; and then I'll eat you out of house and home at the Stations. May the Lord grant us, in the mane time, a dacent appetite, a blessing which I wish you all,——&c."

At this moment the congregation was once more in convulsions of laughter at the dressing which Peter, whose character was drawn with much truth and humor, received at the hands of the worthy pastor.

Our readers will perceive that there was not a single prejudice, or weakness, or virtue, in the disposition of his auditory, left untouched in this address. He moved their superstition, their pride of character, their dread of hell and purgatory, their detestation of Yellow Sam, and the remembrance of the injury so wantonly inflicted on M'Evoy's family; he glanced at the advantage to be derived from the lad's prayers, the example they should set to Protestants, made a passing hit at tithes; and indulged in the humorous, the pathetic, and the miraculous. In short, he left no avenue to their hearts untouched; and in the process by which he attempted to accomplish his object he was successful.

There is, in fact, much rude, unpolished eloquence among the Roman Catholic priesthood, and not a little which, if duly cultivated by study and a more liberal education, would deserve to be ranked very high.

We do not give this as a specimen of their *modern* pulpit eloquence, but as a sample of that in which some of those Irish clergy shone, who, before the establishment of Maynooth, were admitted to orders immediately from the hedge-schools, in consequence of the dearth of priests which then existed in Ireland. It was customary in those days to ordain them even before they departed for the continental colleges, in order that they might, by saying masses and performing other clerical duties, be enabled to add something to the scanty pittance which was appropriated to their support. Of the class to which Father Kavanagh belonged, there are few, if any, remaining. They sometimes were called "Hedge-priests," * by way of reproach; though for our own parts, we wish their non-interference in politics, unaffected piety, and simplicity of character, had remained behind them.

On the Sunday following, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy attended mass, whilst the other members of the family, with that sense of honest pride which is more strongly inherent in Irish character than is generally supposed, remained at home, from a reluctance to witness what they could not but consider a degradation. This decency of feeling was anticipated by the priest, and not overlooked by the people; for the former, the reader may have observed, in the whole course of his address never once mentioned the word "charity;" nor did the latter permit the circumstance to go without its reward, according to the best of their ability. So keen and delicate are the perceptions of the Irish, and so acutely alive are

* I know not whether this may be considered worthy of a note or not. I have myself frequently seen and tasted what is appropriately termed by the peasantry "Stone Marrow." It is found in the heart of a kind of soft granite, or perhaps I should rather say freestone. The country people use it medicinally, but I cannot remember what particular disease it is said to cure. It is a soft, saponaceous substance, not unpleasant to the taste, of a bluish color, and melts in the mouth, like the fat of cold meat, leaving the palate greasy. How far an investigation into its nature and properties might be useful to the geologist or physician, it is not for me to conjecture. As the fact appeared to be a curious one, and necessary, moreover, to illustrate the expression used in the text, I thought it not amiss to mention it. It may be a *bonne bouche* for the geologists.

* This nickname was first bestowed upon them by the continental priests, who generally ridiculed them for their vulgarity. They were, for the most part, simple but worthy men.

they to those nice distinctions of kindness and courtesy, which have in their hearts a spontaneous and sturdy growth, that mocks at the stunted virtues of artificial life.

In the parish of Ballysogarth there were three altars, or places of Roman Catholic worship; and the reader may suppose that the collection made at each place was considerable. In truth, both father and son's anticipations were far under the sum collected. Protestants and Presbyterians attended with their contributions, and those of the latter who scrupled to be present at what they considered an idolatrous worship, did not hesitate to *send* their quota by some Roman Catholic neighbor.

Their names were accordingly announced with an encomium from the priest, which never failed to excite a warm-hearted murmur of approbation. Nor was this feeling transient, for, we will venture to say, that had political excitement flamed up even to rebellion and mutual slaughter, the persons and property of *those* individuals would have been held sacred.

At length Jemmy was equipped; and sad and heavy became the hearts of his parents and immediate relations as the morning appointed for his departure drew nigh. On the evening before, several of his more distant relatives came to take their farewell of him, and, in compliance with the usages of Irish hospitality, they were detained for the night. They did not, however, come empty-handed: some brought money; some brought linen, stockings, or small presents—"jist, Jimmy, asthore, to keep *me* in yer memory, sure,—and nothin' else it is for, mavourneen."

Except Jemmy himself, and one of his brothers who was to accompany him part of the way, none of the family slept. The mother exhibited deep sorrow, and Dominick, although he made a show of firmness, felt, now that the crisis was at hand, nearly incapable of parting with the boy. The conversation of their friends and the cheering effects of the poteen, enabled them to sustain his loss better than they otherwise would have done, and the hope of seeing him one day "an ordained priest," contributed more than either to support them.

When the night was nearly half spent, the mother took a candle and privately withdrew to the room in which the boy slept. The youth was fair, and interesting to look upon—the clustering locks of his white forehead were divided; yet there was on his otherwise open brow, a shade of sorrow, produced by the coming separation, which even sleep could not efface. The mother held the candle gently towards his face, shading it with one hand, lest the light might suddenly awake him; she then surveyed his features long and affectionately, whilst the tears fell in showers from her cheeks.

"There you lie," she softly sobbed out, in Irish, "the sweet pulse of your mother's heart; the flower of our flock, the pride of our eyes, and the music of our hearth! Jimmy, avourneen machree, an' how can I part wid you, my darlin' son! Sure, when I look at your mild face, and think that you're takin' the world on your head to *rise* us out of our poverty, isn't my heart breakin'! A lonely house we'll have afther you, acushla! Goin' out and comin' in, at home or abroad, your voice won't be in my ears, nor your eye smilin' upon me. An' thin to think of what you may suffer in a sthrange land! If your head aches, on what tendher breast will it lie? or who will bind the ribbon of comfort * round it? or wipe your fair, mild brow in sickness? Oh, Blessed Mother!—hunger, sickness, and sorrow may come upon you *when you'll be far from your own, an' from them that loves you!*"

This melancholy picture was too much for the tenderness of the mother; she sat down beside the bed, rested her face on her open hand, and wept in subdued but bitter grief. At this moment his father, who probably suspected the cause of her absence, came in and perceived her distress.

"Vara," said he, in Irish also, "is my darlin' son asleep?"

She looked up, with streaming eyes, as he spoke, and replied to him in a manner so

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* The following quotation, taken from a sketch called "The Irish Midwife," by the author, gives an illustration of this passage:—"The first, meaning pain in the head, she cures by a very formal and serious process called 'measuring the head.' This is done by a ribbon, which she puts round the cranium, repeating during the admeasurement a certain prayer or charm from which the operation is to derive its whole efficacy. The measuring is performed twice—in the first instance, to show that its sutures are separated by disease, or, to speak more plainly, that the bones of the head are absolutely opened, and that as a natural consequence the head must be much larger than when the patient is in a state of health. The circumference of the first admeasurement is marked upon a ribbon, after which she repeats the charm that is to remove the headache, and measures the cranium again, in order to show, by a comparison of the two ribbons, that the sutures have been closed, the charm successful, and the headache immediately removed. It is impossible to say how the discrepancy in the measurement is brought about; but be that as it may, the writer of this has frequently seen the operation performed in such a way as to defy the most scrutinizing eye to detect any appearance of imposture, and he is convinced that in the majority of cases there is not the slightest imposture intended. The operator is in truth a dupe to a strong and delusive enthusiasm."

exquisitely affecting, when the circumstances of the boy, and the tender allusion made by the sorrowing mother, are considered—that in point of fact no heart—certainly no Irish heart—could withstand it. There is an old Irish melody unsurpassed in pathos, simplicity, and beauty—named in Irish "Tha ma mackulla 's na foscal me,"—or in English, "I am asleep, and don't waken me." The position of the boy caused the recollection of the old melody to flash into the mother's heart,—she simply pointed to him as the words streamed in a low melodious murmur, but one full of heartrending sorrow, from her lips. The old sacred association—for it was one whic' she had sung for him a thousand times,—until warned to desist by his tears—deepened the tenderness of her heart, and she said with difficulty, whilst she involuntarily held over the candle to gratify the father's heart by a sight of him.

"I was keepin' him before my eye," she said; "God knows but it may be the last night we'll ever see him undher our own roof! Dominick, achora, I doubt I can't part wid him from my heart."

"Then how can I, Vara?" he replied. "Wasn't he my right hand in everything? When was he from me, ever since he took a man's work upon him? And when he'd finish his own task for the day, how kindly he'd begin an' help me wid mine! No, Vara, it goes to my heart to let him go away upon sich a plan, and I wish he hadn't taken the notion into his head at all."

"It's not too late, maybe," replied his mother: "I think it wouldn't be hard to put him off of it; the crathur's own heart is failin' him to lave us. He has sorrow upon his face where he lies."

The father looked at the expression of affectionate melancholy which shaded his features as he slept; and the perception of the boy's internal struggle against his own domestic attachments in accomplishing his first determination, powerfully touched his heart.

"Vara," said he, "I know the boy—he won't give it up; and 'twould be a pity—maybe a sin—to put him from it. Let the child get fair play, and thry his coorse. If he fails, he can come back to us, an' our arms an' hearts will be open to welcome him! But, if God prospers him, wouldn't it be a blessin' that we never expected, to see him in the white robes, celebratin' one mass for his parents. If these ould eyes could see that, I would be continted to close them in pace an' happiness for ever."

"An' well you'd become them, avourneen machree! Well would your mild and handsome countenance look wid the long heavenly stole of innocence upon you! and although it's atin' into my heart, I'll bear it for the sake of seein' the same blessed sight. Look at that face, Dominick; mightn't many a lord of the land be proud to have sich a son? May the heavens shower down its blessin' upon him!"

The father burst into tears. "It is—it is!" said he. "It is the face that 'ud make many a noble heart proud to look at it! Is it any wondher it 'ud cut *our* hearts, thin, to have it taken from afore our eyes? Come away, Vara, come away, or I'll not be able to part wid it. It *is* the lovely face—an' kind is the heart of my darlin' child!" As he spoke, he stooped down and kissed the youth's cheek, on which the warm tears of affection fell, soft as the dew from heaven. The mother followed his example, and they both left the room.

"We must bear it," said Dominick, as they passed into another apartment; "the money's gathered, an' it wouldn't look well to be goin' back wid it to them that befrinded us. *We'd* have the blush upon our face for it, an' the child no advantage."

"Thrue for you, Dominick; and we must make up our minds to live widout him for a while."

The following morning was dark and cloudy, but calm and without rain. When the family were all assembled, every member of it evinced traces of deep feeling, and every eye was fixed upon the serene but melancholy countenance of the boy with tenderness and sorrow. He himself maintained a quiet equanimity, which, though apparently liable to be broken by the struggles of domestic affection, and in character with his meek and unassuming disposition, yet was supported by more firmness than might be expected from a mind in which kindness and sensibility were so strongly predominant. At this time, however, his character was not developed, or at least not understood, by those that surrounded him. To strong feelings and enduring affections he added a keenness of perception and a bitterness of invective, of which, in his conversation with his father concerning Yellow Sam, the reader has already had sufficient proofs. At breakfast little or nothing was eaten; the boy himself could not taste a morsel, nor any other person in the family. When the form of the meal was over, the father knelt down—"It's right," said he, "that we should all go to our knees, and join in a Rosary in behalf of the child that's goin' on a good intintion. He won't thrive the worse bekase the last words that he'll hear from his father and mother's lips is a prayer for bringin' the blessin' of God down upon his endayvors."

This was accordingly performed, though not without tears and sobs, and frequent demonstrations of grief; for religion among the peasantry is often associated with bursts of deep and powerful feeling.

When the prayer was over, the boy rose and calmly strapped to his back a satchel covered with deer-skin, containing a few books, linen, and a change of very plain apparel. While engaged in this, the uproar of grief in the house was perfectly heart-rending. When just ready to set out, he reverently took off his hat, knelt down, and, with tears streaming from his eyes, craved humbly and meekly the blessing and forgiveness of his father and mother. The mother caught him in her arms, kissed his lips, and, kneeling also, sobbed out a fervent benediction upon his head; the father now, in the grief of a strong man, pressed him to his heart, until the big burning tears fell upon the boy's face; his brothers and sisters embraced him wildly; next his more distant relations; and lastly, the neighbors who were crowded about the door. After this he took a light staff in his hand, and, first blessing himself after the form of his church, proceeded to a strange land in quest of education.

He had not gone more than a few perches from the door, when his mother followed him with a small bottle of holy water. "Jimmy, *a lanna voghl*," * said she, "here's this, an' carry it about you—it will keep evil from you; an' be sure to take good care of the written correckther you got from the priest an' Square Benson; an', darlin', don't be lookin' too often at the cuff o' your coat, for feard the people might get a notion that you have the bank-notes sewed in it. An', Jimmy agra, don't be too lavish upon their Munster crame; they say it's apt to give people the ague. Kiss me agin, agra; an' the heavens above keep you safe and well till we see you once more!"

She then tenderly, and still with melancholy pride, settled his shirt collar, which she thought did not set well about his neck: and kissing him again, with renewed sorrow left him to pursue his journey.

M'Evoy's house was situated on the side of a dark hill—one of that barren description which can be called neither inland nor mountain. It commanded a wide and extended prospect, and the road along which the lad travelled was visible for a considerable distance from it. On a small hillock before the door sat Dominick and his wife, who, as long as their son was visible, kept their eyes, which were nearly blinded with tears, rivetted upon his person. It was now they gave full vent to their grief, and discussed with painful and melancholy satisfaction all the excellent qualities which he possessed. As James himself advanced, one neighbor after another fell away from the train which accompanied him, not, however, until they had affectionately embraced and bid him adieu and perhaps slipped, with peculiar delicacy, an additional mite into his waistcoat pocket. After the neighbors, then followed the gradual separation from his friends—one by one left him, as in the great journey of life, and in a few hours he found himself accompanied only by his favorite brother.

This to him was the greatest trial he had yet felt; long and heartrending was their embrace. Jemmy soothed and comforted his beloved brother, but in vain. The lad threw himself on the spot at which they parted, and remained there until Jemmy turned an angle of the road which brought him out of his sight, when the poor boy kissed the marks of his brother's feet repeatedly, and then returned home, hoarse and broken down with the violence of his grief.

He was now alone, and for the first time felt keenly the strange object on which he was bent, together with all the difficulties connected with its attainment. He was young and uneducated, and many years, he knew, must elapse e'er he could find himself in possession of his wishes. But time would pass at home, as well as abroad, he thought; and as there lay no impediment of peculiar difficulty in his way, he collected all his firmness and proceeded.

There is no country on the earth in which either education, or the desire to procure it, is so much reverenced as in Ireland. Next to the claims of the priest and schoolmaster come those of the poor scholar for the respect of the people. It matters not how poor or how miserable he may be; so long as they see him struggling with poverty in the prosecution of a purpose so laudable, they will treat him with attention and kindness. Here there is no danger of his being sent to the workhouse, committed as a vagrant, or passed from parish to parish until he reaches his own settlement. Here the humble lad is not met by the sneer of purse-proud insolence, or his simple tale answered only by the frown of heartless contempt. No—no—no. The best bit and sup are placed before him; and whilst his poor, but warm-hearted, entertainer can afford only potatoes and salt to his own half-starved family, he will make a struggle to procure something better for the poor scholar; "*Bekase he's far from his own, the crathur!* An' sure the intintion in him is good, anyhow; the Lord prosper him,

* My poor child.

an' every one that has the heart set upon the larnin'!'

As Jemmy proceeded, he found that his satchel of books and apparel gave as clear an intimation of his purpose, as if he had carried a label to that effect upon his back.

"God save you, a bouchal!" said a warm, honest-looking countryman, whom he met driving home his cows in the evening, within a few miles of the town in which he purposed to sleep.

"God save you kindly!"

"Why, thin, 'tis a long journey you have before you, alanna, for I know well it's for Munster you're bound."

"Thrue for you; 'tis there, wid the help of God, I'm goin'. A great scarcity of larnin' was in my own place, or I wouldn't have to go at all," said the boy, whilst his eyes filled with tears.

"'Tis no discredit in life," replied the countryman, with untaught natural delicacy, for he perceived that a sense of pride lingered about the boy which made the character of poor scholar sit painfully upon him; "'tis no discredit, dear, nor don't be cast down. I'll warrant you that God will prosper you; an' that He may, avick, I pray this day!" and as he spoke, he raised his hat in reverence to the Being whom he invoked. "An' tell me, dear—where do you intend to sleep to-night?"

"In the town forrid here," replied Jemmy. "I'm in hopes I'll be able to reach it before dark."

"Pooh! asy you will. Have you any friends or acquaintances there that 'ud welcome you, *a bouchal dhas* (my handsome boy)?"

"No, indeed," said Jemmy, "they're all strangers to me; but I can stop in 'dhry lodgin',' for it's chaper."

"Well, alanna, I believe you; but *I'm no stranger to you*—so come home wid me to-night; where you'll get a good bed, and betther thratement nor in any of their dhry lodgins. Give me your books, and I'll carry them for you. Ethen, but you have a great batch o' them entirely. Can you make any hand o' the Latin at all yet?"

"No, indeed," replied Jemmy, somewhat sorrowfully; "I didn't ever open a Latin book, at all at all."

"Well, acushla, everything has a beginnin'; —you won't be so. An' I know by your face that you'll be bright at it, an' a credit to them owes* you. There's my house in the fields beyant, where you'll be well kept for one night, any way, or for twinty, or for ten times twinty, if you wanted them."

* Owns.

The honest farmer then commenced the song of *Colleen dhas Crotha na Mho* *, which he sang in a clear mellow voice, until they reached the house.

"Alley," said the man to his wife, on entering, "here's a stranger I've brought yon."

"Well," replied Alley, "he's welcome sure, any way; *Ceud millia failta ghud*, alanna! sit over to the fire. Brian, get up, dear,' said she to one of the children, "an' let the stranger to the hob."

"He's goin' on a good errand, the Lord bless him!" said the husband, "up the country for the larnin'. Put thim books over on the settle; an' whin the *girshas* are done milkin', give him a brave dhrink of the sweet milk; it's the stuff to thravel on."

"Troth, an' I will, wid a heart an' a half, wishin' it was betther I had to give him. Here, Nelly, put down a pot o' wather, an' lave soap an' a *praskeen*, afore you go to milk, till I bathe the dacent boy's feet. Sore an' tired they are afther his journey, poor young crathur."

When Jemmy placed himself upon the hob, he saw that some peculiarly good fortune had conducted him to so comfortable a resting-place. He considered this as a good omen; and felt, in fact, much relieved, for the sense of loneliness among strangers was removed.

The house evidently belonged to a wealthy farmer, well to do in the world; the chimney was studded with sides upon sides of yellow smoke-dried bacon, hams, and hung beef in abundance. The kitchen tables were large, and white as milk; and the dresser rich in its shining array of delf and pewter. Everything, in fact, was upon a large scale. Huge meal chests were ranged on one side, and two or three settle beds on the other, conspicuous, as I have said, for their uncommon cleanliness; whilst hung from the ceiling were the *glaiks*, a machine for churning; and beside the dresser stood an immense churn, certainly too unwieldy to be managed except by machinery. The farmer was a ruddy-faced Milesian, who wore a drab frieze coat, with a velvet collar, buff waistcoat, corduroy small-clothes, and top-boots well greased from the tops down.† He was not only an agriculturist, but a grazier—remarkable for shrewdness and good sense, generally attended fairs and markets, and brought three or four large droves of fat cattle to England every year. From his fob hung the brass chain and almost rusty key of a watch, which he kept certainly more for use than ornament.

* The pretty girl milking her cow.

† This, almost in every instance, is the dress of a wealthy Irish farmer.

"A little sup o' this," said he, "won't take your life," approaching Jemmy with a bottle of as good poteen as ever escaped the eye of an exciseman; "it'll refresh you—for you're tired, or I wouldn't offer it, by rason that one bint on what you're bint on, oughtn't to be makin' freedoms wid the same dhrink. But there's a time for everything, an' there's a time for this.——Thank you, agra," he added, in reply to Jemmy, who had drunk his health. "Now, don't be frettin'—but make yourself as aisy as if you were at your own father's hearth. You'll have everything to your heart's contint for this night; the carts are goin' in to the market to-morrow airly—you can sit upon them, an' maybe you'll get somethin' more nor you expect: sure the Lord has given it to me, an' why wouldn't I share it wid them that wants it more nor I do?"

The lad's heart yearned to the generous farmer, for he felt that his kindness had the stamp of truth and sincerity upon it. He could only raise his eyes in a silent prayer, that none belonging to him might ever be compelled, as strangers and way-farers, to commit themselves, as he did, to the casualties of life, in pursuit of those attainments which poverty cannot otherwise command. Fervent, indeed, was his prayer; and certain we are, that because it was sincere, it must have been heard.

In the meantime, the good woman, or *vanithee*, had got the pot of water warmed, in which Jemmy was made to put his feet. She then stripped up her arms to the elbows, and, with soap and seedy meal, affectionately bathed his legs and feet: then, taking the praskeen, or coarse towel, she wiped them with a kindness which thrilled to his heart.

"And now," said she, "I must give you a cure for blisthers, an' it's this:—In the mornin', if we're all spared, as we will, plase the Almighty, I'll give you a needle and some white woollen thread, well soaped. When your blisthers gets up, dhraw the soapy thread through them, clip it on each side, an', my life for yours, they won't throuble you. Sure I thried it the year I went on my Station to Lough Derg, an' I know it to be the rale cure."

"Here, Nelly," said the farmer,—who sat with a placid benevolent face, smoking his pipe on the opposite hob—to one of the maids who came in from milking,—"bring up a noggin of that milk, we want it here: let it be none of your washy *foremilk*, but the *strippins*, Nelly, that has the strinth in it. Up wid it here, a colleen."

"The never a one o' the man but's doatin' downright, so he is," observed the wife, "to go to fill the tired child's stomach wid plash. Can't you wait till he ates a thrifle o' somethin' stout, to keep life in him, afther his hard journey? Does your feet feel themselves cool an' asy now, ahagur?"

"Indeed," said Jemmy, "I'm almost as fresh as when I set out. 'Twas little thought I had, when I came away this mornin', that I'd meet wid so much friendship on my journey. I hope it's a sign that God's on my side in my undertakin'!"

"I hope so, avourneen—I hope so, an' it is, too," replied the farmer, taking the pipe out of his mouth, and mildly whiffing away the smoke, "an' God'll be always on your side, as long as your intentions are good. Now ate somethin'—you must want it by this; an' thin, when you rest yourself bravely, take a tass into a good feather-bed, where you can sleep rings round you.* Who knows but you'll be able to say mass for me or some o' my family yit. God grant that, any way, avick!"

Poor James's heart was too full to eat much; he took, therefore, only a very slender portion of the refreshments set before him; but his hospitable entertainer had no notion o permitting him to use the free exercise of his discretion on this important point. When James put away the knife and fork, as an indication of his having concluded the meal the farmer and his wife turned about, both at the same moment, with a kind of astonishment.

"Eh? is it giving over that way you are? Why, alanna, it's nothin' at all you've tuck; sure little Brian there would make a fool of you, so he would, at the atin'. Come, come, a bouchal—don't be ashamed, or make any way sthrange at all, but ate hearty."

"I declare I *have* ate heartily, thank you," replied James; "oceans itself, so I did. I couldn't swally a bit more if the house was full."

"Arrah, Brian," said the wife, "cut him up more o' that hung beef, it's ashamed the crathur is! Take it, avick; don't we know the journey you had! Faix, if one o' the boys was out on a day's thravellin', you'd see how he'd handle himself"

"Indeed," said James, "I can't—if I could I would. Sure I would be no way backward at all, so I wouldn't."

"Throth, an' you can an' must," said the farmer: "the never a rise you'll rise, till you finish that"—putting over a complement out of all reasonable proportion with his age and size.

"There now's a small taste, an' you must finish it. To go to ate nothin' at all! Hut tut! by the tops o' my boots, you must put

* As much as you please.

that clear an' clane out o' sight, or I'll go mad an' burn them."

The lad recommenced, and continued to eat as long as he could possibly hold out; at length he ceased:

"I can't go on," said he; "don't ax me: I can't indeed."

"Bad manners to the word I'll hear till you finish it; you know it's but a thrifle to spake of. Thry agin, avick, but take your time; you'll be able for it."

The poor lad's heart was engaged on other thoughts and other scenes; his home, and its beloved inmates—sorrow and the gush of young affections, were ready to burst forth.

"I cannot ate," said he, and he looked imploringly on the farmer and his wife, whilst the tears started to his eyes—"don't ax me, for my heart's wid them I left behind me, that I may never see agin!" and he wept in a burst of grief which he could not restrain.

Neither the strength nor tenderness of the lad's affection was unappreciated by this excellent couple. In a moment the farmer's wife was also in tears; nor did her husband break the silence for some minutes.

"The Almighty pity an' strengthen him!" said the farmer's wife, "but he has the good an' the kind heart, an' would be a credit to any family.—Whisht, acushla machree—whisht, we won't ax you to ate—no indeed. It was out o' kindness we did it: don't be cast down aither; sure it isn't the ocean you're crossin'; but goin' from one county like to another. God 'll guard an' take care o' you, so he will. Your intintion 's good, an' he'll prosper it."

"He will, avick," said the farmer himself—"he will. Cheer up, my good boy! I know thim that's larned an' creditable clargy this day, that went as you're goin'—ay, an' that ris an' helped their parents, an' put them above poverty an' distress; an' never fear, wid a blessin', but you'll do the same."

"That's what brings me at all," replied the boy, drying his tears; "if I was once able to take them out o' their distresses, I'd be happy: only I'm afeard the cares o' the world will break my father's heart before I have it in my power to assist him."

"No such thing, darlin'," said the good woman. "Sure his hopes out o' you, an' his love for you will keep him up; an' you dunna but God may give him a blessin' too, avick."

"Mix another sup o' that for him," said the farmer: "he's low spirited, an' it's too strong to give him any more of it as it is. Childhre, where's the masther from us—eh? Why, thin, God help them, the crathurs—wasn't it *thoughtful** o' them to lave the place while he was at his dinner, for fraid he'd be dashed—manin' them young crathurs, Alley, But can you tell us where the 'masther' is? Isn't this his night wid us? I know he tuck his dinner here."

"Ay did he; but it's up to Larry Murphy's he's gone, to thry his son in his book-keepin'. Mavrone, but he had time enough to put him well through it afore this, any way."

As she spoke, a short thickset man, with black twinkling eyes and ruddy cheeks entered. This personage was no other than the schoolmaster of that district, who circulated, like a newspaper, from one farmer's house to another, in order to expound for his kind entertainers the news of the day, his own learning, and the very evident extent of their ignorance.

The moment he came in, the farmer and his wife rose with an air of much deference, and placed a chair for him exactly opposite the fire, leaving a respectful distance on each side, within which no illiterate mortal durst presume to sit.

"Misther Corcoran," said the farmer, presenting Jemmy's satchel, through which the shapes of the books were quite plain, "*thig in thu shinn?*" * and as he spoke he looked significantly at its owner.

"Ah," replied the man of letters, "*thigum, thigum.*† God be wid the day when I carried the likes of it. 'Tis a badge of polite genius, that no boy need be ashamed of. So my young suckling of litherature, you're bound for Munster?—for that counthry where the swallows fly in conic sections—where the magpies and the turkey's confab in Latin, and the cows and bullocks will roar you Doric Greek—bo-a-o—clamo. What's your pathronymic? *quo nomine gowdes, Domine doctissime?*"

The lad was silent; but the farmer's wife turned up the whites of her eyes with an expression of wonder and surprise at the erudition of the "masther."

"I persave you are as yet uninitiated into the elementary *principia* of the languages; well—the honor is still before you. What's your name?"

"James M'Evoy, sir."

Just now the farmer's family began to assemble round the spacious hearth; the young lads, whose instruction the worthy teacher claimed as his own peculiar task, came timidly forward, together with two or three pretty bashful girls with sweet flashing eyes, and countenances full of feeling and intelligence. Behind on the settles, half-a-dozen servants of both sexes sat in pairs—each boy placing himself beside his favorite girl. These

* Considerate.

* Do you understand this?
† I understand—I understand.

appeared to be as strongly interested in the learned conversation which the master held, as if they were masters and mistresses of Munster Latin and Doric Greek themselves; but an occasional thump cautiously bestowed by no slender female hand upon the sturdy shoulder of her companion, or a dry cough from one of the young men, fabricated to drown the coming blow, gave slight indications that they contrived to have a little amusement among themselves, altogether independent of Mr. Corcoran's erudition.

When the latter came in, Jemmy was taking the tumbler of punch which the farmer's wife had mixed for him; on this he fixed an expressive glance, which instantly reverted to the *vanithee*, and from her to the large bottle which stood in a window to the right of the fire. It is a quick eye, however, that can anticipate Irish hospitality.

"Alley," said the farmer, ere the wife had time to comply with the hint conveyed by the black, twinkling eye of the schoolmaster; "why, Alley"——

"Sure, I am," she replied, "an' will have it for you in less than no time."

She accordingly addressed herself to the bottle, and in a few minutes handed a reeking jug of punch to the *Farithee*, or good man.

"Come, Masther, by the hand o' my body, I don't like dhry talk so long as I can get anything to moisten the discoorse. Here's your health, Masther," continued the farmer, winking at the rest, "and a speedy conclusion to what you know! In throth, she's the pick of a good girl—not to mintion what she has for her portion. I'm a friend to the same family, an' will put a spoke in your wheel, Masther, that'll sarve you."

"Oh, Mr. Lanigan, very well, sir—very well—you're becoming quite facetious upon me," said the little man, rather confused; "but upon my credit and reputation, except the amorous inclination and regard to me is on *her* side," and he looked sheepishly at his hands, "I can't say that the arrows of Cupid have as yet pinethrated the sintimintal side of *my* heart. It is not with me as it was wid Dido—hem—

Non 'hæret lateri lethalis arundo,'

as Virgil says. Yet I can't say, but if a friend were to become spokesman for me, and insinuate in my behalf a small taste of amorous sintimintality, why—hem, hem, hem! The company's health! Lad, James M'Evoy, *your* health, and success to you, my good boy!—hem, hem!"

"Here's wishin' him the same!" said the farmer.

"James," said the schoolmaster, "you are goin' to Munsther, an' I can say that I have travelled it from end to end, not to a bad purpose, I hope—hem! Well, a bouchal, there are hard days and nights before you, so keep a firm heart. If you have money, as 'tis likely you have, don't let a single rap of it into the hands of the schoolmaster, although the first thing he'll do will be to bring you home to his own house, an' palaver you night an' day, till he succeeds in persuading you to leave it in his hands for security. You might, if not duly pre-admonished, surrender it to his solicitations, for—

'Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.'

Michael, what case is *mortalium?*" added he, suddenly addressing one of the farmer's sons; "come, now, Michael, where's your brightness? What case is *mortalium?*"

The boy was taken by surprise, and for a few minutes could not reply.

"Come man," said the father, "be sharp, spake out bravely, an' don't be afraid; nor don't be in a hurry aither, we'll wait for you."

"Let him alone—let him alone," said Corcoran; "I'll face the same boy agin the county for *cuteness*. If he doesn't expound that, I'll never consthre a line of Latin, or Greek, or Masoretic, while I'm livin'."

His cunning master knew right well that the boy, who was only confused at the suddenness of the question, would feel no difficulty in answering it to his satisfaction. Indeed, it was impossible for him to miss it, as he was then reading the seventh book of Virgil, and the fourth of Homer. It is, however, a trick with such masters to put simple questions of that nature to their pupils, when at the houses of their parents, as knotty and difficult, and when they are answered, to assume an air of astonishment at the profound reach of thought displayed by the pupil.

When Michael recovered himself, he instantly replied, "*Mortalium* is the genitive case of *nemo*, by '*Nomina Partitiva*.'"

Corcoran laid down the tumbler, which he was in the act of raising to his lips, and looked at the lad with an air of surprise and delight, then at the farmer and his wife, alternately, and shook his head with much mystery. "Michael," said he to the lad, "will you go out and tell us what the night's doin'."

The boy accordingly went out—"Why," said Corcoran, in his absence, "if ever there was a phanix, and that boy will be the bird—an Irish phanix he will be, a

Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno!

There's no batin' him at anything he undhertakes. Why, there's thim that are makin'

good bread by their larnin', that couldn't resolve that; and you all saw how he did it widout the book! Why, if he goes on at this rate, I'm afraid he'll soon be too many for myself—hem!"

"Too many for yourself! Fill the masther's tumbler, Alley. Too many for yourself! No, no! I doubt he'll never see that day, bright as he is, an' cute. That's it—put a hape upon it. Give me your hand, masther. I thank you for your attention to him, an' the boy *is* a credit to us. Come over, Michael, avourneen. Here, take what's in this tumbler, an' finish it. Be a good boy and mind your lessons, an' do everything the masther here—the Lord bless him!—bids you; an' you'll never want a frind, masther, nor a dinner, nor a bed, nor a guinea, while the Lord spares me aither the one or the other."

"I know it, Mr. Lanigan. I know it; and I will make that boy the pride of Ireland, if I'm spared. I'll show him *cramboes*[8] that would puzzle the great Scaliger himself; and many other difficulties I'll let him into, that I have never let out yet, except to Tim Kearney, that bate them all at Thrinity College in Dublin up, last June."

"Arrah, how was that, Masther?"

"Tim, you see, went in to his Entrance Examinayshuns, and one of the Fellows came to examine him, but divil a long it was till Tim sacked him.

"'Go back agin', says Tim, 'and sind some one that's *able* to tache me, for you're *not*.'

"So another greater scholar agin came to thry Tim, and *did* thry him, and Tim made a hare of *him*, before all that was in the place—five or six thousand ladies and gintlemen, at laste!

"The great learned Fellows thin began to look odd enough; so they picked out the best scholar among them but one, and slipped him at Tim; but well becomes Tim, the never a long it was till he had *him*, too, as dumb as a post. The fellow went back—

"'Gintlemen,' says he to the rest, 'we'll be disgraced all out,' says he, 'for except the Prowost sacks that Munsther spalpeen, he'll bate us all, an' we'll never be able to hould up our heads afther.'

"Accordingly, the Prowost attacks Tim; and such a meetin' as they had, never was seen in Thrinity College since its establishment. At last when they had been nine hours and a half at it, the Prowost put one word to him that Tim couldn't expound, so he lost it by *one* word only. For the last two hours the Prowost carried on the examinashun in Hebrew, thinking, you see, he *had* Tim there; but he was mistaken, for Tim answered him in good Munsther Irish, and it so happened that they understood each other, for the two languages are first cousins, or, at all evints, close blood relations. Tim was then pronounced to be the best scholar in Ireland except the Prowost; though among ourselves, they might have thought of the man that *taught* him. That, however, wasn't all. A young lady fell into love wid Tim, and is to make him a present of herself and her great fortune (three estates) the moment he becomes a counsellor; and in the meantime she allows him thirty pounds a year to bear his expenses, and live like a gintleman.

"Now to return to the youth in the corner: *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*, Jemmy keep your money, or give it to the priest to keep, and it will be safest; but by no means let the Hyblean honey of the schoolmaster's blarney deprive you of it, otherwise it will be a *vale, vale, longum vale* between you. *Crede experto!*"

"Masther," said the farmer, "many a sthrange accident you met wid on yer thravels through Munsther?"

"No doubt of that, Mr. Lanigan. I and another boy thravelled it in society together. One day we were walking towards a gintleman's house on the road side, and it happened that we met the owner of it in the vicinity, although we didn't know him to be such.

"'*Salvete Domini!*' said he, in good fresh Latin.

"'*Tu sis salvus, quoque!*' said I to him, for my comrade wasn't cute, an' I was always orathor.

"'*Unde venitis?*' said he, comin' over us wid another deep piece of larnin' the construction of which was, 'where do yez come from?'

"I replied, '*Per varios casus et tot discrimina rerum, venimus a Mayo.*'

"'Good!' said he, 'you're bright; follow me.'

"So he brought us over to his own house, and ordered us bread and cheese and a posset; for it was Friday, an' we couldn't touch mate. He, in the mane time, sat an chatted along wid us. The thievin' cook, however, in makin' the posset, kept the curds to herself, except a slight taste here and there, that floated on the top; but she was liberal enough of the whey, any how.

"Now I had been well trained to fishing in my more youthful days; and no gorsoon could grope a trout wid me. I accordingly sent the spoon through the pond before me wid the skill of a connoisseur; but to no purpose—it came up wid nothin' but the whey.

"So, said I off hand to the gintleman,

houlding up the bowl, and looking at it with a disappointed face,

Apparent *rari* nantes in gurgite vasto.

'This,' says I, 'plase your hospitality, may be Factolus, but the divil a taste o' the proper sand is in the bottom of it.'

"The wit of this, you see, pleased him, and we got an excellent treat in his *studium*, or study: for he was determined to give myself another trial.

"'What's the wickedest line in Virgil?' said he.

"Now I had Virgil at my fingers' ends, so I answered him:

'*Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.*'

"'Very good,' said he, 'you have the genius, and will come to somethin' yet: now tell me the most moral line in Virgil.'

"I answered:

'*Discere justitiam moniti et non temnere divos.*' *

"'Depend upon it,' said he, 'you will be a luminary. The morning star will be but a farthing candle to you; and if you take in the learning as you do the cheese, in a short time there won't be a man in Munsther fit to teach you,' and he laughed, for you see he had a tendency to jocosity.

"He did not give me up here, however, being determined to go deeper wid me.

"'Can you translate a newspaper into Latin prose?' said he.

"Now the divil a one o' me was just then sure about the prose, so I was goin' to tell him; but before I had time to speak, he thrust the paper into my hand, and desired me to thranslate half-a-dozen barbarous advertisements.

"The first that met me was about a reward offered for a Newfoundland dog and a terrier, that had been stolen from a fishing-tackle manufacturer, and then came a list of his shabby merchandise, ending with a long-winded encomium upon his gunpowder, shot, and double-barrelled guns. Now may I be shot with a blank cartridge, if I ever felt so much at an amplush in my life, and I said so.

"'Your honor has hooked me wid the fishing hooks,' said I; 'but I grant the cheese was good bait, any how.'

"So he laughed heartily, and bid me go on.

"Well, I thought the first was difficult: but the second was Masoretic to it—something about drawbacks, excisemen, and a long custom-house list, that would puzzle Publius Virgilius Maro, if he was set to translate it. However, I went through wid it as well as I could; where I couldn't find Latin, I laid in the Greek, and where the Greek failed me, I gave the Irish, which, to tell the truth, in consequence of its vernacularity, I found to be the most convanient. Och, och many a larned scrimmage I have signalized myself in, during my time. Sure my name's as common as a mail-coach in Thrinity College; and 'tis well known there isn't a fellow in it but I could sack, except may be, the prowost. That's their own opinion. 'Corcoran,' says the prowost, 'is the most larned man in Ireland; an' I'm not ashamed,' says he, 'to acknowledge that I'd rather decline meeting him upon deep points.' Ginteels, all your healths—hem! But among ourselves I could bog him in a very short time; though I'd scorn to deprive the gintleman of his reputaytion or his place, even if he sent me a challenge of larnin' to-morrow, although he's too cute to venture on doing *that*—hem, hem!"

To hear an obscure creature, whose name was but faintly known in the remote parts even of the parish in which he lived, draw the long-bow at such a rate, was highly amusing. The credulous character of his auditory, however, was no slight temptation to him; for he knew that next to the legends of their saints, or the Gospel itself, his fictions ranked in authenticity; and he was determined that it should not be his fault if their opinion of his learning and talents were not raised to the highest point.

The feeling experienced by the poor scholar, when he awoke the next morning, was one both of satisfaction and sorrow. He thought once more of his home and kindred, and reflected that it might be possible he had seen the last of his beloved relations. His grief, however, was checked when he remembered the warm and paternal affection with which he was received on the preceding night by his hospitable countryman. He offered up his prayers to God; humbly besought his grace and protection; nor did he forget to implore a blessing upon those who had thus soothed his early sorrows, and afforded him, though a stranger and friendless, shelter, comfort, and sympathy.

"I hope," thought he, "that I will meet many such, till I overcome my difficulties, an' find myself able to assist my poor father an' mother!"

And he did meet many such among the humble, and despised, and neglected of his countrymen; for—and we say it with pride—the character of this excellent farmer is thoroughly that of our peasantry within the range of domestic life.

When he had eaten a comfortable break-

* He is evidently drawing the long-bow here; this anecdote has been told before.

fast, and seen his satchel stuffed with provision for his journey, the farmer brought him up to his own room, in which were also his wife and children.

"God," said he, "has been good to me; blessed be his holy name!—betther it appears in one sinse, than he has been to you, dear, though maybe I don't desarve it as well. But no matther, acushla; *I* have it, an' *you* want it; so here's a thriffe to help your forrid in your larnin'; an' all I ax from you is to offer up a bit of a prayer for me, of an odd time, an' if ever you live to be a priest, to say, if it wouldn't be throublesome, one Mass for me an' those that you see about me. It's not much, James agra—only two guineas. They may stand your friend, whin friends will be scarce wid you; though, I hope, that won't be the case aither."

The tears were already streaming down Jemmy's cheeks. "Oh," said the artless boy, "God forever reward you! but sure I have a great dale of money in the—in the—cuff o' my coat. Indeed I have, an' I won't want it!"

The farmer, affected by the utter simplicity of the lad, looked at his wife and smiled, although a tear stood in his eye at the time. She wiped her eyes with her apron, and backed the kind offer of her husband.

"Take it, asthore," she added, "in your cuff! Musha, God help you! sure it's not much you or the likes of you can have in your cuff, avourneen! Don't be ashamed, but take it; we can well afford it, glory be to God for it! It's not, agra, bekase you're goin' the way you are—though that same's an honor to you—but bekase our hearts warmed to you, that we offered it, an' bekase we would wish you to be thinkin' of us now an' thin, when you're in a strange part of the country. Let me open your pocket an' put them into it That's a good boy, thank you, an' God bless an' prosper you! I'm sure you were always biddable."

"Now childre," said the farmer, addressing his sons and daughters, "never see the sthranger widout a friend, nor wantin' a bed or a dinner, when you grow up to be men an' women. There's many a turn in this world; we may be strangers ourselves; an' think of what I would feel if any of you was far from me, widout money or friends, when I'd hear that you met a father in a strange counthry that lightened your hearts by his kindness. Now, dear, the carts 'll be ready in no time—eh? Why there they are at the gate waitin' for you. Get into one of them, an' they'll lave you in the next town. Come, man, budan' age, be stout-hearted, an' don't cry; sure we did nothin' for you to spake of."

He shook the poor scholar by the hand, and drawing his hat over his eyes, passed hurriedly out of the room. Alley stooped down, kissed his lips, and wept; and the children each embraced him with that mingled feeling of compassion and respect which is uniformly entertained for the poor scholar in Ireland.

The boy felt as if he had been again separated from his parents; with a sobbing bosom and wet cheeks he bid them farewell, and mounting one of the carts was soon beyond sight and hearing of the kind-hearted farmer and his family.

When the cart had proceeded about a mile, it stopped, and one of the men who accompanied it addressing a boy who passed with two sods of turf under his arm, desired him to hurry on and inform his master that they waited for him.

"Tell Misther Corcoran to come into coort," said the man, laughing, "my Lordship's waitin' to hear his defince for intindin' *not* to run away wid Miss Judy Malowny. Tell him Lord *Carty's* ready to pass sintince on him for not stalin' the heart of her wid his Rule o' Three. Ha! by the holy farmer, you'll get it for stayin' from school to this hour. Be quick, abouchal!"

In a few minutes the trembling urchin, glad of any message that might serve to divert the dreaded birch from himself, entered the uproarious "Siminary," caught his forelock, bobbed down his head to the master, and pitched his "two sods" into a little heap of turf which lay in the corner of the school.

"Arrah, Pat Roach, is this an hour to inter into my establishment wid impunity? Eh, you Rosicrusian?"

"Masther, sir," replied the adroit monkey, "I've a message for you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' what might the message be, Masther Pat Roach? To dine to-day wid your worthy father, abouchal?"

"No, sir; it's from one o' Mr. Lanigan's boys—him that belongs to the carts, sir; he wants to spake to you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' do you give that by way of an apologetical oration for your absence from the advantages of my tuition until this hour? However, *non constat Patrici;* I'll pluck the crow wid you on my return. If you don't find yourself a well-flogged youth for your 'mitchin,' never say that this right hand can administer condign punishment to that part of your physical theory which constitutes the antithesis to your *vacuum caput. Eu et cove,* you vilhain," he added, pointing to the birch, "it's newly cut and trimmed, and pregnant wid alacrity for the operation. I correct, Patricius, on fundamental principles, which you'll soon *feel* to your cost."

"Masther, sir," replied the lad, in a friendly, conciliating tone, "my father 'ud be oblaged to you, if you'd take share of a fat goose wid him to-morrow."

"Go to your sate, Paddy, avourneen; devil a dacent boy in the seminary I joke so much wid, as I do wid yourself; an' all out of respect for your worthy parents. Faith, I've a great regard for them, all out, an' tell them so."

He then proceeded to the carts, and approaching Jemmy, gave him such advice touching his conduct in Munster, as he considered to be most serviceable to an inexperienced lad of his years.

"Here," said the kind-hearted soul—"here, James, is my mite; it's but bare ten shillings; but if I could make it a pound for you, it would give me a degree of delectability which I have not enjoyed for a long time. The truth is, there's something like the *nodus matrimonii*, or what they facetiously term the priest's gallows, dangling over my head, so that any little thrifle I may get must be kept together for that crisis, James, abouchal; so that must be my apology for not giving you more, joined to the naked fact, that I never was remarkable for a superfluity of cash under any circumstances. Remember what I told you last night. Don't let a shilling of your money into the hands of the masther you settle wid. Give it to the parish priest, and dhraw it from him when you want it. Don't join the parties or the factions of the school. Above all, spake ill of nobody; and if the masther is harsh upon you, either bear it patiently, or mintion it to the priest, or to some other person of respectability in the parish, and you'll be protected. You'll be apt to meet cruelty enough, my good boy; for there are larned Neros in Munster, who'd flog if the province was in flames.

"Now, James, I'll tell you what you'll do, when you reach the larned south. Plant yourself on the highest hill in the neighborhood wherein the academician with whom you intend to stop, lives. Let the hour of reconnoitring be that in which dinner is preparing. When seated there, James, take a survey of the smoke that ascends from the chimneys of the farmer's houses, and be sure to direct your steps to that from which the highest and merriest column issues. This is the old plan and it is a sure one. The highest smoke rises from the largest fire, the largest fire boils the biggest pot, the biggest pot generally holds the fattest bacon, and the fattest bacon is kept by the richest farmer. It's a wholesome and comfortable *climax*, my boy, and one by which I myself was enabled to keep a dacent portion of educated flesh between the master's birch and my ribs. The science itself is called Gastric Geography, and is peculiar only to itinerant young gintlemen who seek for knowledge in the classical province of Munster.

"Here's a book that thravelled along wid myself through all my peregrinations—Creech's Translation of Horace. Keep it for my sake; and when you accomplish your education, if you return home this way, I'd thank you to give me a call. Farewell! God bless you and prosper you as I wish, and as I am sure you desarve."

He shook the lad by the hand; and as it was probable that his own former struggles with poverty, when in the pursuit of education, came with all the power of awakened recollection to his mind, he hastily drew his hand across his eyes, and returned to resume the brief but harmless authority of the ferula.

After arriving at the next town, Jemmy found himself once more prosecuting his journey alone. In proportion as he advanced into a strange land, his spirits became depressed, and his heart cleaved more and more to those whom he had left behind him. There is, however, an enthusiasm in the visions of youth, in the speculations of a young heart, which frequently overcomes difficulties that a mind taught by the experience of life would often shrink from encountering. We may all remember the utter recklessness of danger, with which, in our youthful days, we crossed floods, or stood upon the brow of yawning precipices—feats which, in after years, the wealth of kingdoms could not induce us to perform. Experience, as well as conscience, makes cowards of us all.

The poor scholar in the course of his journey had the satisfaction of finding himself an object of kind and hospitable attention to his countrymen. His satchel of books was literally a passport to their hearts. For instance, as he wended his solitary way, depressed and travel-worn, he was frequently accosted by laborers from behind a ditch on the roadside, and, after giving a brief history of the object he had in view, brought, if it was dinner-hour, to some farm-house or cabin, where he was made to partake of their meal. Even those poor creatures who gain a scanty subsistence by keeping what are called "dhry lodgins," like *lucus a non lucendo*, because they never keep out the rain, and have mostly a bottle of whiskey for those who know *how* to call for it, even they, in most instances, not only refused to charge the poor scholar for his bed, but declined to receive any remuneration for his subsistence.

"Och, och, no, you poor young crathur, not from *you*. No, no; if we wouldn't help

the likes o' you, who ought we to help? No dear; but instead o' the *avrighad*,* just lave us your blessin', an' maybe we'll thrive as well wid that, as we would wid your little pences, that you'll be wanting for yourself, whin your frinds won't be near to help you."

Many, in fact, were the little marks of kindness and attention which the poor lad received on his way. Sometimes a ragged peasant, if he happened to be his fellow-traveller, would carry his satchel so long as they travelled together, or a carman would give him a lift on his empty car; or some humorous postilion, or tipsy "shay-boy," with a comical leer in his eye, would shove him into his vehicle, remarking—

"Bedad, let nobody say you're a poor scholar *now*, an' you goin' to school in a coach! Be the piper that played afore Moses, if ever any rascal upraids you wid it, tell him, says you—'You damned rap,' says you, 'I wint to school in a coach! an' that,' says you, 'was what none o' yer beggarly gineration was ever able to do,' says you; 'an' moreover, be the same token,' says you, 'be the holy farmer, if you bring it up to me, I'll make a third eye in your forehead wid the butt o' this whip,' says you. Whish! darlins! That's the go! There's drivin', Barny! Eh?"

At length, after much toil and travel, he reached the South, having experienced as he proceeded a series of affectionate attentions, which had, at least, the effect of reconciling him to the measure he had taken, and impressing upon his heart a deeper confidence in the kindness and hospitality of his countrymen.

Upon the evening of the day on which he terminated his journey, twilight was nearly falling; the town in which he intended to stop for the night was not a quarter of a mile before him, yet he was scarcely able to reach it; his short, yielding steps were evidently those of a young and fatigued traveller: his brow was moist with perspiration: he had just begun, too, to consider in what manner he should introduce himself to the master who taught the school at which he had been advised to stop, when he heard a step behind him, and on looking back, he discovered a tall, well-made, ruddy-faced young man, dressed in black, with a book in his hand, walking after him.

"*Unde et quo viator?*" said the stranger, on coming up to him.

"Oh, sir," replied Jemmy, "I have not Latin *yet*."

"You are on your way to seek it, however," replied the other. "Have you travelled far?"

"A long way, indeed, sir; I came from the County ——, sir, — the upper part of it."

"Have you letters from your parish priest?"

"I have, sir, and one from my father's landlord, Square Benson, if you ever heard of him."

"What's your object in learning Latin?"

"To be a priest, wid the help o' God; an' to rise my poor father an' mother out of their poverty."

His companion, after hearing this reply, bent a glance upon him, that indicated the awakening of an interest in the lad much greater than he probably otherwise would have felt.

"It's only of late," continued the boy, "that my father an' mother got poor; they were once very well to do in the world. But they were put out o' their farm in ordher that the agint might put a man that had married a *get** of his own into it. My father intended to lay his case before Colonel B———, the landlord; but he couldn't see him at all, bekase he never comes near the estate. The agint's called Yallow Sam, sir; he's rich through cheatery an' dishonesty; puts money out at intherest, then goes to law, an' brakes the people entirely; for, somehow, he never was known to lose a lawsuit at all, sir. They say it's the divil, sir, that keeps the lawyers on his side; an' that when he an' the lawyers do be dhrawin' up their writins, the devil—God betune me an' harm!—does be helpin' them!"

"And is Colonel B—— actually—or, rather, was he your father's landlord?"

"He was, indeed, sir; it's thruth I'm tellin' you."

"Singular enough! Stand beside me here—do you see that large house to the right among the trees?"

"I do, sir; a great big house, entirely—like a castle, sir."

"The same. Well, that house belongs to Colonel B——, and I am very intimate with him. I am Catholic curate of this parish; and I was, before my ordination, private tutor in his family for four years."

"Maybe, sir, you might have intherest to get my father back into his farm?"

"I do not know that, my good lad, for I am told Colonel B—— is rather embarrassed, and, if I mistake not, in the power of the man you call Yellow Sam, who has, I believe, heavy mortgages upon his property. But no matter; if I cannot help your father,

* Money.

* A term implying illegitimacy.

I shall be able to serve yourself. Where do you intend to stop for the night?"

"In dhry lodgin', sir, that's where my father and mother bid me stop always. They war very kind to me, sir, in the dhry lodgins."

"Who is there in Ireland who would not be kind to *you*, my good boy? I trust you do not neglect your religious duties?"

"Wid the help o' God, sir, I strive to attind to them as well as I can; particularly since I left my father and mother. Every night an' mornin', sir, I say five Pathers, five Aves, an' a Creed; an' sometimes when I'm walkin' the road, I slip up an odd Pather, sir, an' Ave, that God may grant me good luck."

The priest smiled at his candor and artlessness, and could not help feeling the interest which the boy had already excited in him increase.

"You do right," said he, "and take care that you neglect not the worship of God. Avoid bad company; be not quarrelsome at school; study to improve yourself diligently; attend mass regularly; and be punctual in going to confession."

After some further conversation, the priest and he entered the town together.

"This is my house," said the former; "or if not altogether mine—at least, that in which I lodge; let me see you here at two o'clock to-morrow. In the meantime, follow me, and I shall place you with a family where you will experience every kindness and attention that can make you comfortable."

He then led him a few doors up the street, till he stopped at a decent-looking "House of Entertainment," to the proprietors of which he introduced him.

"Be kind to this strange boy," said the worthy clergyman, "and whatever the charges of his board and lodging may be until we get him settled, I shall be accountable for them."

"God forbid, your Reverence, that ever a penny belongin' to a poor boy lookin' for his larnin' should go into our pockets, if he was wid us twelve months in the year. No—no! He can stay with the bouchaleens;* let them be thryin' one another in their books. If he is fardher on in the Latin then Andy, he can help Andy; an' if Andy has the foreway of him, why Andy can help him. Come here, boys, all of yez. Here's a comrade for yez—a dacent boy that's lookin' for his larnin', the Lord enable him! Now be kind to him, an' whisper," he added, in an undertone, "don't be bringin' a blush to the gorsoon's face. Do ye hear? Ma chorp! if ye do!—Now mind it. Ye know what I can do whin I'm well vexed! Go, now, an' get him somethin' to ate an' dhrink, an' let him sleep wid Barney in the feather bed."

During the course of the next day, the benevolent curate introduced him to the parish priest, who from the frequent claims urged by poor scholars upon his patronage, felt no particular interest in his case. He wrote a short letter, however, to the master with whom Jemmy intended to become a pupil, stating that "he was an honest boy, the son of *legitimate parents*, and worthy of consideration."

The curate, who saw further into the boy's character than the parish priest, accompanied him on the following day to the school; introduced him to the master in the most favorable manner, and recommended him in general to the hospitable care of all the pupils. This introduction did not serve the boy so much as might have been expected; there was nothing particular in the letter of the *parish* priest, and the curate was *but* a curate—no formidable personage in *any* church where the good-will of the rector has not been already secured.

Jemmy returned that day to his lodgings, and the next morning, with his Latin Grammar under his arm, he went to school to taste the first bitter fruits of the tree of knowledge.

On entering it, which he did with a beating heart, he found the despot of a hundred subjects sitting behind a desk, with his hat on, a brow superciliously severe, and his nose crimped into a most cutting and vinegar curl. The truth was, the master knew the character of the curate, and felt that because he had taken Jemmy under his protection, no opportunity remained for him of fleecing the boy, under the pretence of securing his money, and that consequently the arrival of the poor scholar would be no windfall, as he had expected.

When Jemmy entered, he looked first at the master for his welcome; but the master, who verified the proverb, that there are none so blind as those who will not see, took no notice whatsoever of him. The boy then looked timidly about the school in quest of a friendly face, and indeed few faces except friendly ones were turned upon him.

Several of the scholars rose up simultaneously to speak to him; but the pedagogue angrily inquired why they had left their seats and their business.

"Why, sir," said a young Munsterman, with a fine Milesian face—"be gorra, sir, I believe if *we* don't welcome the poor scholar, I think *you* won't. This is the boy, sir, that

* Little boys.

Mr. O'Brien came along wid yistherday, an' spoke so well of."

"I know that, Thady; and Misther O'Brien thinks, because he himself first passed through that overgrown hedge-school wid slates upon the roof of it, called Thrinity College, and matriculated in Maynooth afther, that he has legal authority to recommend every young vagrant to the gratuitous benefits of legitimate classicality. An' I suppose, that you are acting the Pathrun, too, Thady, and intind to take this young wild-goose under your protection?"

"Why, sir, isn't he a poor scholar? Sure he mustn't want his bit an' sup, nor his night's lodgin', anyhow. You're to give him his larnin' only, sir."

"I suppose so, Mr. Thaddeus; but this is the penalty of celebrity. If I weren't so celebrated a man for classics as I am, I would have none of this work. I tell you, Thady, if I had fifty sons I wouldn't make one o' them *celebrated*."

"Wait till you have one first, sir, and you may make him as great a numskull as you plase, Master."

"But in the meantime, Thady, I'll have no dictation from you, as to whether I have one or fifty; or as to whether he'll be an ass or a Newton. I say that a dearth of larnin' is like a year of famine in Ireland. When the people are hard pushed, they bleed the fattest bullocks, an' live on their blood; an' so it is wid us Academicians. It's always he that has the most larned blood in his veins, and the greatest quantity of it that such hungry leeches fasten on."

"Thrue for you, sir," said the youth with a smile; "but they say the bullocks always fatten the betther for it. I hope you'll bleed well now, sir."

"Thady, I don't like the curl of your nose; an', moreover, I have always found you prone to sedition. You remember your conduct at the 'Barring out.' I tell you it's well that your worthy father is a decent wealthy man, or I'd be apt to give you a *memoria technica* on the *subtratum*, Thady."

"God be praised for my father's wealth, sir! But I'd never wish to have a good memory in the way you mention."

"Faith, an' I'll be apt to add that to your other qualities, if you don't take care of yourself."

"I want no such addition, Masther; if you do, you'll be apt to subtract yourself from this neighborhood, an', maybe, there won't be more than a cipher gone out of it, afther all."

"Thady, you're a wag," exclaimed the crestfallen pedagogue; "take the lad to your own sate, and show him his task. How is your sister's sore throat, Thady?"

"Why, sir," replied the benevolent young wit, "she's betther than I am. She can *swallow* more, sir."

"Not of larnin', Thady; there you've the widest gullet in the parish."

"My father's the richest man in it, Masther," replied Thady. "I think, sir, my gullet and his purse are much about the same size—wid *you*."

"Thady, you're first-rate at a reply; but exceedingly deficient in the retort courteous. Take the lad to your sate, I say, and see how far he is advanced, and what he is fit for. I suppose, as you are so ginerous, you will volunteer to tache him yourself."

"I'll do that wid pleasure, sir; but I'd like to know whether *you* intind to tache him or not."

"An' I'd like to know, Thady, who's to pay me for it, if I do. A purty return Michael Rooney made me for making him such a linguist as he is. 'You're a tyrant,' said he, when he grew up, 'and instead of expecting me to thank you for your instructions, you ought to thank me for not preparing you for the county hospital, as a memento of the cruelty and brutality you made me feel, when I had the misfortune to be a poor scholar under you.' And so, because he became curate of the parish, he showed me the outside of it."

"But will you tache this poor young boy, sir?"

"Let me know who's to guarantee his payments."

"I have money myself, sir, to pay you for two years," replied Jemmy. "They told me, sir, that you were a great scholar, an' I refused to stop in other schools by rason of the name you have for Latin and Greek."

"*Verbum sat*," exclaimed the barefaced knave. "Come here. Now, you see, I persave you have dacency. Here is your task; get that half page by heart. You have a cute look, an' I've no doubt but the stuff's in you. Come to me afther dismiss, 'till we have a little talk together."

He accordingly pointed out the task, after which he placed him at his side, lest the inexperienced boy might be put on his guard by any of the scholars. In this intention, however, he was frustrated by Thady, who, as he thoroughly detested the knavish tyrant, resolved to caution the poor scholar against his dishonesty. Thady, indeed most heartily despised the mercenary pedagogue, not only for his obsequiousness to the rich, but on account of his severity to the children of the poor. About two o'clock the young wag went out for a few minutes, and immediately

returned in great haste to inform the master, that Mr. Delaney, the parish priest, and two other gentlemen wished to see him over at the Cross-Keys, an inn which was kept at a place called the Nine Mile House, within a few perches of the school. The parish priest, though an ignorant, insipid old man, was the master's patron, and his slightest wish a divine law to him. The little despot, forgetting his prey, instantly repaired to the Cross-Keys, and in his absence, Thady, together with the larger boys of the school, made M'Evoy acquainted with the fraud about to be practised on him.

"His intintion," said they, "is to keep you at home to-night, in ordher to get whatever money you have into his own hands, that he may keep it safe for you; but if you give him a penny, you may bid farewell to it. Put it in the curate's hands," added Thady, "or in my father's, an' thin it'll be safe. At all evints, don't stay wid him this night. He'll take your money and then turn you off in three or four weeks."

"I didn't intind to give him my money," replied Jemmy; "a schoolmaster I met on my way here, bid me not to do it. I'll give it to the priest."

"Give it to the curate," said Thady—"wid him it'll be safe; for the parish priest doesn't like to throuble himself wid anything of the kind."

This was agreed upon; the boy was prepared against the designs of the master, and a plan laid down for his future conduct. In the meantime, the latter re-entered the school in a glow of indignation and disappointment.

Thady, however, disregarded him; and as the master knew that the influence of the boy's father conld at any time remove him from the parish, his anger subsided without any very violent consequences. The parish priest was his avowed patron, it is true; but if the parish priest knew that Mr. O'Rorke was dissatisfied with him, that moment he would join Mr. O'Rorke in expelling him from the neighborhood. Mr. O'Rorke was a wealthy and a hospitable man, but the schoolmaster was neither the one nor the other.

During school-hours that day, many a warm-hearted urchin entered into conversation with the poor scholar; some moved by curiosity to hear his brief and simple history; others anxious to offer him a temporary asylum in their father's houses; and several to know if he had the requisite books, assuring him if he had not they would lend them to him. These proofs of artless generosity touched the homeless youth's heart the more acutely, inasmuch as he could perceive but too clearly that the eye of the master rested upon him, from time to time, with no auspicious glance.

When the scholars were dismissed, a scene occurred which was calculated to produce a smile, although it certainly placed the poor scholar in a predicament by no means agreeable. It resulted from a contest among the boys as to who should first bring him home. The master who, by that cunning for which the knavish are remarkable, had discovered in the course of the day that his designs upon the boy's money was understood, did not ask him to his house. The contest was, therefore, among the scholars; who, when the master had disappeared from the school-room, formed themselves into a circle, of which Jemmy was the centre, each pressing his claim to secure him.

"The right's wid me," exclaimed Thady; "I stood to him all day, and I say I'll have him for this night. Come wid me, Jimmy. Didn't I do most for you to-day?"

"I'll never forget your kindness," replied poor Jemmy, quite alarmed at the boisterous symptoms of pugilism which already began to appear. In fact, many a tiny fist was shut, as a suitable accompaniment to the auguments with which they enforced their assumed rights.

"There, now," continued Thady, "that puts an ind to it; he says he'll never forget my kindness. That's enough; come wid me, Jimmy."

"*Is it* enough?" said a lad, who, if his father was less wealthy than Thady's, was resolved to put strength of arm against strength of purse. "Maybe it isn't enough! *I* say I bar it, if your father was fifty times as rich!—Rich! Arrah, don't be comin' over us in regard of your riches, man alive! I'll bring the sthrange boy home this very night, an' it isn't your father's dirty money that'll prevint me."

"I'd advise you to get a double ditch about your nose," replied Thady, "before you begin to say anything disrespectful against my father.—Don't think to ballyrag over me. *I'll* bring the boy, for I have the best right to him. Didn't I *do** the masther on his account?"

"A double ditch about my nose?"

"Aiye!"

"Are you able to fight me?"

"I'm able to thry it, anyhow, an' willin' too."

"Do you *say* you're able to fight me?"

"I'll bring the boy home whether or not.'

"Thady's not your match, Jack Ratigan," said another boy. "Why don't you challenge your match?"

* Outwit.

"If *you* say a word, I'll half-sole your eye. Let him *say* whether he's able to fight me like a man or not. That's the chat."

"Half-sole my eye! Thin here I am, an' why don't you do it. You're crowin' over a boy that you're bigger than. *I'll* fight you for Thady. Now half-sole my eye if you dar! Eh? Here's my eye, now! Arrah, be the holy man, I'd——Don't we know the white hen's in you. Didn't Barny Murtagh cow you at the black-pool, on Thursday last, whin we wor bathin'?"

"Come, Ratigan," said Thady, "peel an' turn out. I say, I *am* able to fight you; an' I'll make you ate your words aginst my father, by way of givin' you your dinner. An' I'll make the dacent strange boy walk home wid me over your body—that is, if he'd not be afraid to dirty his feet."

Ratigan and Thady immediately set to, and in a few minutes there were scarcely a little pair of fists present that were not at work, either on behalf of the two first combatants, or with a view to determine their own private rights in being the first to exercise hospitality towards the amazed poor scholar. The fact was, that while the two largest boys were arguing the point, about thirty or forty minor disputes all ran parallel to theirs, and their mode of decision was immediately adopted by the pugnacious urchins of the school. In this manner they were engaged, poor Jemmy attempting to tranquillize and separate them, when the master, armed in all his terrors, presented himself.

With the tact of a sly old disciplinarian, he first secured the door, and instantly commenced the agreeable task of promiscuous castigation. Heavy and vindictive did his arm descend upon those whom he suspected to have cautioned the boy against his rapacity; nor amongst the warm-hearted lads, whom he thwacked so cunningly, was Thady passed over with a tender hand. Springs, bouncings, doublings, blowing of fingers, scratching of heads, and rubbing of elbows—shouts of pain, and doleful exclamations, accompanied by action that displayed surpassing agility—marked the effect with which he plied the instrument of punishment. In the meantime the spirit of reaction, to use a modern phrase, began to set in. The master, while thus engaged in dispensing justice, first received a rather vigorous thwack on the ear from behind, by an anonymous contributor, who gifted him with what is called a musical ear, for it sang during five minutes afterwards. The monarch, when turning round to ascertain the traitor, received another insult on the most indefensible side, and that with a cordiality of manner, that induced him to send his right hand reconnoitring the invaded part. He wheeled round a second time with more alacrity than before; but nothing less than the head of James could have secured him on this occasion. The anonymous contributor sent him a fresh article. This was supported by another kick behind: the turf began to fly; one after another came in contact with his head and shoulders so rapidly, that he found himself, instead of being the assailant, actually placed upon his defence. The insurrection spread, the turf flew more thickly; his subjects closed in upon him in a more compact body; every little fist itched to be at him; the larger boys boldly laid in the facers, punched him in the stomach, treated him most opprobriously behind, every kick and cuff accompanied by a memento of his cruelty; in short, they compelled him, like Charles the Tenth, ignominiously to fly from his dominions.

On finding the throne vacant, some of them suggested that it ought to be overturned altogether. Thady, however, who was the ringleader of the rebellion, persuaded them to be satisfied with what they had accomplished, and consequently succeeded in preventing them from destroying the fixtures.

Again they surrounded the poor scholar, who, feeling himself the cause of the insurrection, appeared an object of much pity. Such was his grief that he could scarcely reply to them. Their consolation on witnessing his distress was overwhelming. They desired him to think nothing of it; if the master, they told him, should wreak his resentment on *him*, "be the holy farmer, they would *pay** the *masther*." Thady's claim was now undisputed. With only the injury of a black eye, and a lip swelled to the size of a sausage, he walked home in triumph, the poor scholar accompanying him.

The master, who feared that this open contempt of his authority, running up, as it did, into a very unpleasant species of retaliation, was something like a signal for him to leave the parish, felt rather more of the penitent the next morning than did any of his pupils. He was by no means displeased, therefore, to see them drop in about the usual hour. They came, however, not one by one, but in compact groups, each officered by two or three of the larger boys; for they feared that, had they entered singly, he might have punished them singly, until his vengeance should be satisfied. It was by bitter and obstinate struggles that they succeeded in repressing their mirth, when he appeared at his desk with one of his eyes literally closed, and his nose considerably

* Punish.

improved in size and richness of color. When they were all assembled, he hemmed several times, and, in a woe-begone tone of voice, split—by a feeble attempt at maintaining authority and suppressing his terrors—into two parts, that jarred most ludicrously, he briefly addressed them as follows:—

"Gintlemen classics, I have been now twenty-six years engaged in the propagation of Latin and Greek litherature, in conjunction wid mathematics, but never, until yesterday, has my influence been spurned; never, until yesterday, have sacrilegious hands been laid upon my person; never, until yesterday, have I been kicked—insidiously, ungallantly, and treacherously kicked—by my own subjects. No, gintlemen,—and whether I ought to bestow that respectable epithet upon you after yesterday's proceedings is a matter which admits of dispute,—never before has the lid of my eye been laid drooping, and that in such a manner that I must be blind to the conduct of half of my pupils, whether I will or not. You have complained, it appears, of my want of impartiality; but, God knows, you have compelled me to be partial for a week to come. Neither blame me if I may appear to look upon you with scorn for the next fortnight; for I am compelled to turn up my nose at you much against my own inclination. You need never want an illustration of the *naso adunco* of Horace again; I'm a living example of it. That, and the doctrine of projectile forces, have been exemplified in a manner that will prevent me from ever relishing these subjects in future. No king can consider himself properly such until after he has received the oil of consecration; but you, it appears, think differently. You have unkinged me first, and anointed me afterwards; but, I say, no potentate would relish such unction. It smells confoundedly of republicanism. Maybe this is what *you* understand by the Republic of Letters; but, if it be, I would advise you to change your principles. You treated my ribs as if they were the ribs of a common man; my shins you took liberties with even to excoriation; my head you made a target of, for your hardest turf; and my nose you dishonored to my face. Was this ginerous? was it discreet? was it subordinate? and, above all, was it *classical?* However, I will show you what greatness of mind is. I will convince you that it is more noble and god-like to forgive an injury, or rather five dozen injuries, than to avenge one; when—hem—yes, I say, when I—I—*might* so easily avenge it. I now present you wid an amnesty: return to you allegiance; but never, while in this seminary, under my tuition, attempt to take the execution of the laws into your own hands. Homerians, come up!"

This address, into which he purposely threw a dash of banter and mock gravity, delivered with the accompaniments of his swelled nose and drooping eye, pacified his audience more readily than a serious one would have done. It was received without any reply or symptom of disrespect, unless the occasional squeak of a suppressed laugh, or the visible shaking of many sides with inward convulsions, might be termed such.

In the course of the day, it is true, their powers of maintaining gravity were put to a severe test, particularly when, while hearing a class, he began to adjust his drooping eyelid, or coax back his nose into its natural position. On these occasions a sudden pause might be noticed in the business of the class; the boy's voice, who happened to read at the time, would fail him; and, on resuming his sentence by command of the master, its tone was tremulous, and scarcely adequate to the task of repeating the words without his bursting into laughter. The master observed all this clearly enough, but his mind was already made up to take no further notice of what had happened.

All this, however, conduced to render the situation of the poor scholar much more easy, or rather less penal, than it would otherwise have been. Still the innocent lad was on all possible occasions a butt for this miscreant. To miss a word was a pretext for giving him a cruel blow. To arrive two or three minutes later than the appointed hour was certain on his part to be attended with immediate punishment. Jemmy bore it all with silent heroism. He shed no tear—he uttered no remonstrance; but, under the anguish of pain so barbarously inflicted, he occasionally looked round upon his schoolfellows with an expression of silent entreaty that was seldom lost upon them. Cruel to him the master often was; but to inhuman barbarity the large scholars never permitted him to descend. Whenever any of the wealthier farmers' sons had neglected their lessons, or deserved chastisement, the mercenary creature substituted a joke for the birch; but as soon as the son of a poor man, or, which was better still, the poor scholar, came before him, he transferred that punishment which the wickedness or idleness of respectable boys deserved, to his or their shoulders. For this outrageous injustice the hard-hearted old villain had some plausible excuse ready, so that it was in many cases difficult for Jemmy's generous companions to interfere in his behalf, or parry the sophistry of such a petty tyrant.

In this miserable way did he pass over the

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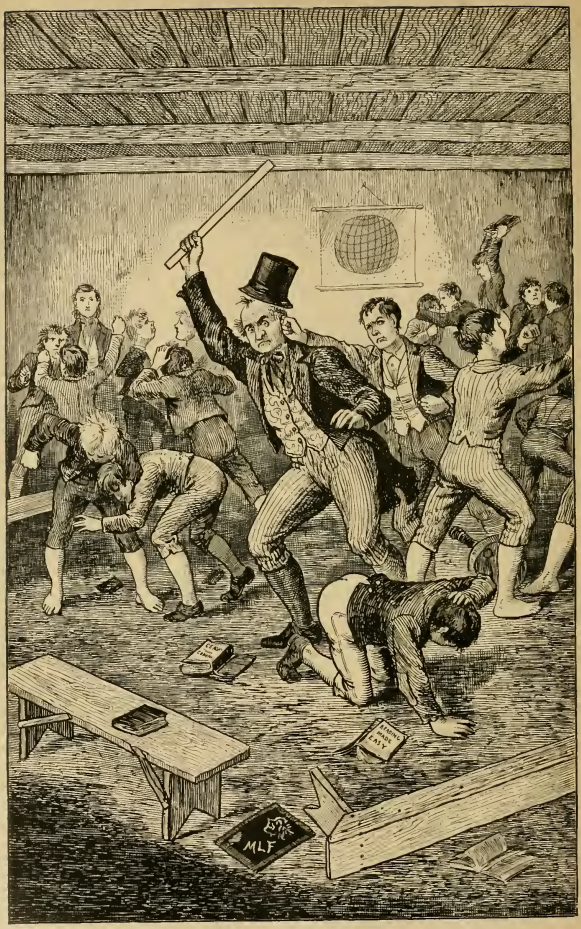

THE MASTER, WHILE THUS ENGAGED IN DISPENSING JUSTICE, FIRST RECEIVED A RATHER VIGOROUS THWACK ON THE EAR FROM BEHIND, BY AN ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTOR.—*The Poor Scholar*, p. 1099, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

tedious period of a year, going about every night in rotation with the scholars, and severely beaten on all possible occasions by the master. His conduct and manners won him the love and esteem of all except his tyrant instructor. His assiduity was remarkable, and his progress in the elements of English and classical literature surprisingly rapid. This added considerably to his character, and procured him additional respect. It was not long before he made himself useful and obliging to all the boys beneath his standing in the school. These services he rendered with an air of such kindness, and a grace so naturally winning, that the attachment of his schoolfellows increased towards him from day to day. Thady was his patron on all occasions: neither did the curate neglect him. The latter was his banker, for the boy had very properly committed his purse to his keeping. At the expiration of every quarter the schoolmaster received the amount of his bill, which he never failed to send in, when due.

Jemmy had not, during his first year's residence in the south, forgotten to request the kind curate's interference with the landlord, on behalf of his father. To be the instrument of restoring his family to their former comfortable holding under Colonel B——, would have afforded him, without excepting the certainty of his own eventual success, the highest gratification. Of this, however, there was no hope, and nothing remained for him but assiduity in his studies, and patience under the merciless scourge of his teacher. In addition to an engaging person and agreeable manners, nature had gifted him with a high order of intellect, and great powers of acquiring knowledge. The latter he applied to the business before him with indefatigable industry. The school at which he settled was considered the first in Munster; and the master, notwithstanding his known severity, stood high, and justly so, in the opinion of the people, as an excellent classical and mathematical scholar. Jemmy applied himself to the study of both, and at the expiration of his second year had made such progress that he stood without a rival in the school.

It is usual, as we have said, for the poor scholar to go night after night, in rotation, with his schoolfellows; he is particularly welcome in the houses of those farmers whose children are not so far advanced as himself. It is expected that he should instruct them in the evenings, and enable them to prepare their lessons for the following day, a task which he always performs with pleasure, because in teaching them he is confirming his own mind in the knowledge which he has previously acquired. Towards the end of the second year, however, he ceased to circulate in this manner. Two or three of the most independent parishioners, whose sons were only commencing their studies, agreed to keep him week about; an arrangement highly convenient to him, as by that means he was not so frequently dragged, as he had been, to the remotest parts of the parish. Being an expert penman, he acted also as secretary of grievances to the poor, who frequently employed him to draw up petitions to obdurate landlords, or to their more obdurate agents, and letters to soldiers in all parts of the world, from their anxious and affectionate relations. All these little services he performed kindly and promptly; many a blessing was fervently invoked upon his head; the "good word" and "the prayer" were all they could afford, as they said, "to the *bouchal dhas oge* * that tuck the world an him for sake o' the larnin', an' that hasn't the kindliness o' the mother's breath an' the mother's hand near him, the crathur."

About the middle of the third year he was once more thrown upon the general hospitality of the people. The three farmers with whom he had lived for the preceding six months emigrated to America, as did many others of that class which, in this country, most nearly approximates to the substantial yeomanry of England. The little purse, too, which he had placed in the hands of the kind priest, was exhausted; a season of famine, sickness, and general distress had set in; and the master, on understanding that he was without money, became diabolically savage. In short, the boy's difficulties increased to a perplexing degree. Even Thady and his grown companions, who usually interposed in his behalf when the master became excessive in correcting him, had left the school, and now the prospect before him was dark and cheerless indeed. For a few months longer, however, he struggled on, meeting every difficulty with meek endurance. From his very boyhood he had reverenced the sanctity of religion, and was actuated by a strong devotional spirit. He trusted in God, and worshipped Him night and morning with a sincere heart.

At this crisis he was certainly an object of pity; his clothes, which, for some time before had been reduced to tatters, he had replaced by a cast-off coat and small-clothes, a present from his friend the Curate, who never abandoned him. This worthy young man could not afford him money, for as he had but fifty pounds a year, with which to

* The pretty *young* boy. *Boy* in Ireland does not always imply youth.

clothe, subsist himself, keep a horse, and pay rent, it was hardly to be expected that his benevolence could be extensive. In addition to this, famine and contagious disease raged with formidable violence in the parish; so that the claims upon his bounty of hundreds who lay huddled together in cold cabins, in out-houses, and even behind ditches, were incessant as well as heart-rending. The number of interments that took place daily in the parish was awful; nothing could be seen but funerals attended by groups of ragged and emaciated creatures from whose hollow eyes gleamed forth the wolfish fire of famine. The wretched mendicants were countless, and the number of coffins that lay on the public roads—where, attended by the nearest relatives of the deceased, they had been placed for the purpose of procuring charity—were greater than ever had been remembered by the oldest inhabitant.

Such was the state of the parish when our poor scholar complained one day in school of severe illness. The early symptoms of the prevailing epidemic were well known; and, on examining more closely into his situation, it was clear that, according to the phraseology of the people, he had "got the faver on his back"—had caught "a heavy load of the faver." The Irish are particularly apprehensive of contagious maladies. The moment it had been discovered that Jemmy was infected, his schoolfellows avoided him with a feeling of terror scarcely credible, and the inhuman master was delighted at any circumstance, however calamitous, that might afford him a pretext for driving the friendless youth out of the school.

"Take," said he, "every thing belongin' to you out of my establishment: you were always a plague to me, but now more so than ever. Be quick, sirra, and nidificate for yourself somewhere else. Do you want to thranslate my siminary into an hospital, and myself into Lazarus, as president? Go off, you wild goose! and conjugate *agroto* wherever you find a convenient spot to do it in."

The poor boy silently and with difficulty arose, collected his books, and, slinging on his satchel, looked to his schoolfellows, as if he had said, "Which of you will afford me a place where to lay my aching head?" All, however, kept aloof from him; he had caught the contagion, and the contagion, they knew, had swept the people away in vast numbers.

At length he spoke. "Is there any boy among you," he inquired, "who will bring me home? You know I am a stranger, an' far from my own, God help me!"

This was followed by a profound silence. Not one of those who had so often befriended him, or who would, on any other occasion, share their bed and their last morsel with him, would even touch his person, much less allow him, when thus plague-stricken, to take shelter under their roof. Such are the effects of selfishness, when it is opposed only by the force of those natural qualities that are not elevated into a sense of duty by clear and profound views of Christian truth. It is one thing to perform a kind action from constitutional impulse, and another to perform it as a fixed duty, perhaps contrary to that impulse.

Jemmy, on finding himself avoided like a Hebrew leper of old, silently left the school, and walked on without knowing whither he should ultimately direct his steps. He thought of his friend the priest, but the distance between him and his place of abode was greater, he felt, than his illness would permit him to travel. He walked on, therefore, in such a state of misery as can scarcely be conceived, much less described. His head ached excessively, an intense pain shot like death-pangs through his lower back and loins, his face was flushed, and his head giddy. In this state he proceeded, without money or friends; without a house to shelter him, or a bed on which to lie, far from his own relations, and with the prospect of death, under circumstances peculiarly dreadful, before him! He tottered on, however, the earth, as he imagined, reeling under him; the heavens, he thought, streaming with fire, and the earth indistinct and discolored. Home, the paradise of the absent—home, the heaven of the affections—with all its tenderness and blessed sympathies, rushed upon his heart. His father's deep but quiet kindness, his mother's sedulous love; his brothers, all that they had been to him—these, with their thousand heart-stirring associations, started into life before him again and again. But he was now ill, and the mother—Ah! the enduring sense of that mother's love placed her brightest, and strongest, and tenderest, in the far and distant group which his imagination bodied forth.

"Mother!" he exclaimed—"Oh, mother, why—why did I ever lave you? Mother! the son you loved is dyin' without a kind word, lonely and neglected, in a strange land! Oh, my *own* mother! why did I ever lave you?"

The conflict between his illness and his affections overcame him; he staggered—he grasped as if for assistance at the vacant air—he fell, and lay for some time in a state of insensibility.

The season was then that of midsummer, and early meadows were falling before the scythe. As the boy sank to the earth, a few laborers were eating their scanty dinner of

bread and milk so near him, that only a dry low ditch ran between him and them. They had heard his words indistinctly, and one of them was putting the milk bottle to his lips when, attracted by the voice, he looked in the direction of the speaker, and saw him fall. They immediately recognized "the poor scholar," and in a moment were attempting to recover him.

"Why thin, my poor fellow, what's *a shaughran* wid you?"

Jemmy started for a moment, looked about him, and asked, "Where am I?"

"Faitha, thin, you're in Rory Connor's field, widin a few perches of the high-road. But what ails you, poor boy? Is it sick you are?"

"It is," he replied; "I have got the faver. I had to lave school; none o' them would take me home, an' I doubt I must die in a Christian counthry under the open canopy of heaven. Oh, for God's sake, don't lave me! Bring me to some hospital, or into the next town, where people may know that I'm sick, an' maybe some kind Christian will relieve me."

The moment he mentioned "faver," the men involuntarily drew back, after having laid him reclining against the green ditch.

"Thin, thundher an' turf, what's to be done?" exclaimed one of them, thrusting his spread fingers into his hair. "Is the poor boy to die widout help among Christyeens like us?"

"But hasn't he the sickness?" exclaimed another: "an' in that case, Pether, what's to be done?"

"Why, you gommoch, isn't that what I'm wantin' to know? You wor ever and always an ass, Paddy, except before you wor born, an' thin you wor like Major M'Curragh, worse nor nothin'. Why the sarra do you be spakin' about the sickness, the Lord protect us, whin you know I'm so timersome of it?"

"But considher," said another, edging off from Jemmy, however, "that he's a poor scholar, an' that there's a great blessin' to thim that assists the likes of him."

"Ay, is there that, sure enough, Dan; but you see—blur-an-age, what's to be done? He can't die this way, wid nobody wid him but himself."

"Let us help him!" exclaimed another, "for *God's* sake, an' we won't be apt to take it thin."

"Ay, but how can we help him, Frank? Oh, bedad, it 'ud be a murdherin' shame, all out, to let the crathur die by himself, widout company, so it would."

"No one will take him in, for fraid o' the sickness. Why, I'll tell you what we'll do:—Let us shkame the remainder o' this day off o' the Major, an' build a shed for him on the road-side here, jist against the ditch. It's as dhry as powdher. Thin we can go through the neighbors, an' git thim to sit near him time about, an' to bring him little *dhreeniens* o' nourishment."

"Divil a purtier! Come thin, let us get a lot o' the neighbors, an' set about it, poor bouchal. Who knows but it may bring down a blessin' upon us aither in this world or the next."

"Amin! I pray Gorra! an' so it will sure! doesn't the Catechiz say it? 'There is but one Church,' says the Catechiz, 'one Faith, an' one Baptism.' Bedad, there's a power o' fine larnin' in the same Catechiz, so there is, an' mighty improvin'."

An Irishman never works for wages with half the zeal which he displays when working for love. Ere many hours passed, a number of the neighbors had assembled, and Jemmy found himself on a bunch of clean straw, in a little shed erected for him at the edge of the road.

Perhaps it would be impossible to conceive a more gloomy state of misery than that in which young M'Evoy found himself. Stretched on the side of the public road, in a shed formed of a few loose sticks covered over with "scraws," that is, the sward of the earth pared into thin stripes—removed above fifty perches from any human habitation—his body racked with a furious and oppressive fever—his mind conscious of all the horrors by which he was surrounded—without the comforts even of a bed or bedclothes—and, what was worst of all, those from whom he might expect kindness, afraid to approach him! Lying helpless, under these circumstances, it ought not to be wondered at, if he wished that death might at once close his extraordinary sufferings, and terminate those struggles which filial piety had prompted him to encounter.

This certainly is a dark picture, but our humble hero knew that even there the power and goodness of God could support him. The boy trusted in God; and when removed into his little shed, and stretched upon his clean straw, he felt that his situation was, in good sooth, comfortable when contrasted with what it might have been, if left to perish behind a ditch, exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day, and the dews of heaven by night. He felt the hand of God even in this, and placed himself, with a short but fervent prayer, under his fatherly protection.

Irishmen, however, are not just that description of persons who can pursue their usual avocations, and see a fellow-creature die, without such attentions as they can af-

ford him; not precisely so bad as that, gentle reader! Jemmy had not been two hours on his straw, when a second shed much larger than his own, was raised within a dozen yards of it. In this a fire was lit; a small pot was then procured, milk was sent in, and such other little comforts brought together, as they supposed necessary for the sick boy. Having accomplished these matters, a kind of guard was set to watch and nurse-tend him; a pitchfork was got, on the prongs of which they intended to reach him bread across the ditch; and a long-shafted shovel was borrowed, on which to furnish him drink with safety to themselves. That inextinguishable vein of humor, which in Ireland mingles even with death and calamity, was also visible here. The ragged, half-starved creatures laughed heartily at the oddity of their own inventions, and enjoyed the ingenuity with which they made shift to meet the exigencies of the occasion, without in the slightest degree having their sympathy and concern for the afflicted youth lessened.

When their arrangements were completed, one of them (he of the scythe) made a little whey, which, in lieu of a spoon, he stirred with the end of his tobacco-pipe; he then extended it across the ditch upon the shovel, after having put it in a tin porringer.

"Do you want a taste o' whay, avourneen?"

"Oh, I do," replied Jemmy; "give me a drink for God's sake."

"There it is, a bouchal, on the shovel. Masha if myself rightly knows what side you're lyin' an, or I'd put it as near your lips as I could. Come, man, be stout, don't be cast down at all at all; sure, bud-an-age, we' shovelin' the way to you, any how."

"I have it," replied the boy—"oh, I have it. May God never forget this to you, whoever you are."

"Faith, if you want to know who I am, I'm Pether Connor the mower, that never seen to-morrow. Be Gorra, poor boy, you mustn't let your spirits down at all at all. Sure the neighbors is all bint to watch an' take care of you.—May I take away the shovel?—an' they've built a brave snug shed here beside yours, where they'll stay wid you time about until you get well. We'll feed you wid whay enough, bekase we've made up our minds to stale lots o' sweet milk for you. Ned Branagan an' I will milk Rody Hartigan's cows to-night, wid the help o' God. Divil a bit sin in it, so there isn't, an' if there is, too, be my sowl there's no harm in it any way—for he's but a nager himself, the same Rody. So, acushla, keep a light heart, for, be Gorra, you're sure o' the thin pair o' throwsers, any how. Don't think you're desarted—for you're not. It's all in regard o' bein' afeard o' this faver, or it's not this way you'd be; but, as I said a while agone, when you want anything, spake, for you'll still find two or three of us beside you here, night an' day. Now, won't you promise to keep your mind asy, when you know that we're beside you?"

"God bless you," replied Jemmy, "you've taken a weight off of my heart. I thought I'd die wid nobody near me at all."

"Oh, the sorra fear of it. Keep your heart up. We'll stale lots o' milk for you. Bad scran to the baste in the parish but we'll milk, sooner nor you'd want the whay, you crathur you."

The boy felt relieved, but his malady increased; and were it not that the confidence of being thus watched and attended to supported him, it is more than probable he would have sunk under it.

When the hour of closing the day's labor arrived, Major—— came down to inspect the progress which his mowers had made, and the goodness of his crop upon his meadows. No sooner was he perceived at a distance, than the scythes were instantly resumed, and the mowers pursued their employment with an appearance of zeal and honesty that could not be suspected.

On arriving at the meadows, however, he was evidently startled at the miserable day's work they had performed.

"Why, Connor," said he, addressing the nurse-tender, "how is this? I protest you have not performed half a day's labor! This is miserable and shameful."

"Bedad, Major, it's thrue for your honor, sure enough. It's a poor day's work, the never a doubt of it. But be all the books that never was opened or shut, busier men than we wor since mornin' couldn't be had for love or money. You see, Major, these meadows, bad luck to them!—God pardon me for cursin' the harmless crathurs, for sure 'tisn't their fau't, sir: but you see, Major, I'll insinse you into it. Now look here, your honor. Did you ever see deeper meadow nor that same, since you war foal—hem—since you war born, your honor? Maybe, your honor, Major, 'ud just take the scythe an' sthrive to cut a swaythe?"

"Nonsense, Connor; don't you know I cannot."

"Thin, be Gorra, sir, I wish you could thry it. I'd kiss the book, we did more labor, an' worked harder this day, nor any day for the last fortnight. If it was light grass, sir—see here, Major, here's a light bit—now, look at how the scythe runs through it! Thin look at here agin—just observe this, Major—why, murdher alive, don't you see how slow she goes through *that* where the

grass is *heavy!* Bedad, Major, you'll be made up thisason wid your hay, any how. Divil carry the finer meadow ever I put the scythe in nor this same meadow, God bless it!"

"Yes, I see it, Connor; I agree with you as to its goodness. But the reason of that is, Connor, that I always direct my steward myself in laying it down for grass. Yes, you're right, Connor; if the meadow were light, you could certainly mow comparatively a greater space in a day."

"Be the livin' farmer, God pardon me for swearin', it's a pleasure to have dalins wid a gintleman like you, that knows things as cute as if you war a mower yourself, your honor. Bedad, I'll go bail, sir, it wouldn't be hard to tache you that same."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Connor, you have hit me off pretty well. I'm beginning to get a taste for agriculture."

"But," said Connor, scratching his head, "won't your honor allow us the price of a glass, or a pint o' porther, for our hard day's work. Bad cess to me, sir, but this meadow 'ill play the puck wid us afore we get it finished. — Atween ourselves, sir — if it wouldn't be takin' freedoms—if you'd look to *your own* farmin' *yourself*. The steward, sir, is a dacent kind of a man; but, sowl, he couldn't hould a candle to your honor in seein' to the best way of doin' a thing, sir. Won't you allow us glasses apiece, your honor? Faix, we're kilt entirely, so we are."

"Here is half-a-crown among you, Connor; but don't get drunk."

"Dhrunk! Musha, long may you reign, sir! Be the scythe in my hand, I'd rather—Och, faix, you're one o' the ould sort, sir—the raal Irish gintleman, your honor. An' sure your name's far and near for that, any how."

Connor's face would have done the heart of Brooke or Cruikshank good, had either of them seen it charged with humor so rich as that which beamed upon it, when the Major left them to enjoy their own comments upon what had happened.

"Oh, be the livin' farmer," said Connor, "are we all alive at all afther *doin'* the Major! Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon you, Major, darlin', but you are a *Manus!** The damn' rip o' the world, that wouldn't give the breath he breathes to the poor for God's sake, and he'll *threwn* a man half-a-crown that'll blarney him for farmin', and him doesn't know the differ atween a Cork-red an' a Yellow-leg."†

"Faith, he's the boy that knows how to make a Judy of himself any way, Pether," exclaimed another. "The divil a hapurth asier nor to give these Quality the bag to hould, so there isn't. An' they think themselves so cute, too!"

"Augh!" said a third, "couldn't a man find the soft side o' them as asy as make out the way to his own nose, widout being led to it. Divil a sin it is to *do them*, any way. Sure, he thinks we wor tooth an' nail at the meadow all day; an' me thought I'd never recover it, to see Pether here—the rise he tuck out of him! Ha, ha, ha—och, och, murdher, oh!"

"Faith," exclaimed Connor, "'twas good, you see, to help the poor scholar; only for it we couldn't get shkamin' the half-crown out of him. I think we ought to give the crathur half of it, an' him so sick: he'll be wantin' it worse nor ourselves."

"Oh, be Gorra, he's fairly entitled to that. I vote him fifteen pince."

"Surely!" they exclaimed unanimously. "Tundher-an'-turf! wasn't he the manes of gettin' it for us?"

"Jemmy, a bouchal," said Connor, across the ditch to M'Evoy, "are you sleepin'?"

"Sleepin'! Oh, no," replied Jemmy; "I'd give the wide world for one wink of asy sleep."

"Well, aroon, here's fifteen pince for you, that we skham—Will I tell him how we got it?"

"No, don't," replied his neighbors; "the boy's given to devotion, and maybe might scruple to take it."

"Here's fifteen pince, avourneen, on the shovel, that we're givin' you *for God's sake*. If you *over** this, won't you offer up a prayer for us? Won't you, avick?"

"I can never forget your kindness," replied Jemmy; "I will always pray for you, and may God for ever bless you and yours!"

"Poor crathur! May the Heavens above have prosthration on him! Upon my sowl, it's good to have his blessin' an' his prayer. Now don't fret, Jemmy; we're lavin' you wid a lot o' neighbors here. They'll watch you time about, so that whin you want anything, call, avourneen, an' there'll still be some one here to answer. God bless you, an' restore you, till we come wid the milk we'll stale for you, wid the help o' God. Bad cess to me, but it 'ud be a mortual sin, so it would, to let the poor boy die at all, an' him so far from home. For, as the Catechiz says 'There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism!' Well, the readin' that's in that Catechiz is mighty improvin', glory be to God!"

* A soft booby easily hoaxed.
† Different kinds of potatoes.

* That is—to get over—to survive.

It would be utterly impossible to detail the affliction which our poor scholar suffered in this wretched shed, for the space of a fortnight, notwithstanding the efforts of those kind-hearted people to render his situation comfortable.

The little wigwam they had constructed near him was never, even for a moment, during his whole illness, without two or three persons ready to attend him. In the evening their numbers increased; a fire was always kept burning, over which a little pot for making whey or gruel was suspended. At night they amused each other with anecdotes and laughter, and occasionally with songs, when certain that their patient was not asleep. Their exertions to steal milk for him were performed with uncommon glee, and related among themselves with great humor. These thefts would have been unnecessary, had not the famine which then prevailed through the province been so excessive. The crowds that swarmed about the houses of wealthy farmers, supplicating a morsel to keep body and soul together, resembled nothing which our English readers ever had an opportunity of seeing. Ragged, emaciated creatures, tottered about with an expression of wildness and voracity in their gaunt features; fathers and mothers reeled under the burthen of their beloved children, the latter either sick, or literally expiring for want of food; and the widow, in many instances, was compelled to lay down her head to die, with the wail, the feeble wail, of her withered orphans mingling with her last moans! In such a state of things it was difficult to procure a sufficient quantity of milk to allay the unnatural thirst even of one individual, when parched by the scorching heat of a fever. Notwithstanding this, his wants were for the most part anticipated, so far as their means would allow them; his shed was kept waterproof; and either shovel or pitchfork always ready to be extended to him, by way of substitution for the right hand of fellowship.

When he called for anything, the usual observation was, "Hushit! the crathur's callin'. I must take the shovel an' see what he wants."

There were times, it is true, when the mirth of the poor fellows was very low, for hunger was generally among themselves; there were times when their own little shed presented a touching and melancholy spectacle—perhaps we ought also to add, a noble one; for, to contemplate a number of men, considered rude and semi-barbarous, devoting themselves, in the midst of privations the most cutting and oppressive, to the care and preservation of a strange lad, merely because they knew him to be without friends and protection, is to witness a display of virtue truly magnanimous. The food on which some of the persons were occasionally compelled to live, was blood boiled up with a little oatmeal; for when a season of famine occurs in Ireland, the people usually bleed the cows and bullocks to preserve themselves from actual starvation. It is truly a sight of appalling misery to behold feeble women gliding across the country, carrying their cans and pitchers, actually trampling upon fertility and fatness, and collected in the corner of some grazier's farm waiting, gaunt and ravenous as Ghouls, for their portion of blood. During these melancholy periods of want, everything in the shape of an esculent disappears. The miserable creatures will pick up chicken-weed, nettles, sorrell, bugloss, preshagh, and sea-weed, which they will boil and eat with the voracity of persons writhing under the united agonies of hunger and death! Yet singular to say, the very country thus groaning under such a terrible sweep of famine is actually pouring from all her ports a profusion of food, day after day; flinging it from her fertile bosom, with the wanton excess of a prodigal oppressed by abundance.

Despite, however, of all the poor scholar's nurse-guard suffered, he was attended with a fidelity of care and sympathy which no calamity could shake. Nor was this care fruitless; after the fever had passed through its usual stages he began to recover. In fact, it has been observed very truly, that scarcely any person has been known to die under circumstances similar to those of the poor scholar. These sheds, the erection of which is not unfrequent in case of fever, have the advantage of pure free air, by which the patient is cooled and refreshed. Be the cause of it what it may, the fact has been established, and we feel satisfaction in being able to adduce our humble hero as an additional proof of the many recoveries which take place in situations apparently so unfavorable to human life. But how is it possible to detail what M'Evoy suffered during this fortnight of intense agony? Not those who can command the luxuries of life—not those who can reach its comforts—nor those who can supply themselves with its bare necessaries—neither the cotter who struggles to support his wife and helpless children—the mendicant who begs from door to door—nor even the felon in his cell—can imagine what he felt in the solitary misery of his feverish bed. Hard is the heart that cannot *feel* his sorrows, when, stretched beside the common way, without a human face to look on, he called upon the mother whose brain,

had she known his situation, would have been riven—whose affectionate heart would have been broken by the knowledge of his affliction. It was a situation which afterwards appeared to him dark and terrible. The pencil of the painter could not depict it, nor the pen of the poet describe it, except like a dim vision, which neither the heart nor the imagination are able to give to the world as a tale steeped in the sympathies excited by reality.

His whole heart and soul, as he afterwards acknowledged, were, during his trying illness, *at home*. The voices of his parents, of his sisters, and of his brothers, were always in his ears; their countenances surrounded his cold and lonely shed; their hands touched him; their eyes looked upon him in sorrow—and their tears bedewed him. Even there, the light of his mother's love, though she herself was distant, shone upon his sorrowful couch; and he has declared, that in no past moment of affection did his soul ever burn with a sense of its presence so strongly as it did in the heart-dreams of his severest illness. But God is love, "and tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb."

Much of all his sufferings would have been alleviated, were it not that his two best friends in the parish, Thady and the curate, had been both prostrated by the fever at the same time with himself. There was consequently no person of respectability in the neighborhood cognizant of his situation. He was left to the humbler class of the peasantry, and honorably did they, with all their errors and ignorance, discharge those duties which greater wealth and greater knowledge would, probably, have left unperformed.

On the morning of the last day he ever intended to spend in the shed, at eleven o'clock he heard the sounds of horses' feet passing along the road, The circumstance was one quite familiar to him; but these horsemen, whoever they might be, stopped, and immediately after, two respectable looking men, dressed in black, approached him. His forlorn state and frightfully wasted appearance startled them, and the younger of the two asked, in a tone of voice which went directly to his heart, how it was that they found him in a situation so desolate.

The kind interest implied by the words, and probably a sense of his utterly destitute state, affected him strongly, and he burst into tears. The strangers looked at each other, then at him; and if looks could express sympathy, theirs expressed it.

"My good boy," said the first, "how is it that we find you in a situation so deplorable and wretched as this? Who are you, or why is it that you have not a friendly roof to shelter you?"

"I'm a poor scholar," replied Jemmy, "the son of honest but reduced parents: I came to this part of the country with the intention of preparing myself for Maynooth, and, if it might plase God, with the hope of being able to raise them out of their distress."

The strangers looked more earnestly at the boy; sickness had touched his fine intellectual features into a purity of expression almost ethereal. His fair skin appeared nearly transparent, and the light of truth and candor lit up his countenance with a lustre which affliction could not dim.

The other stranger approached him more nearly, stooped for a moment, and felt his pulse.

"How long have you been in this country?" he inquired.

"Nearly three years."

"You have been ill of the fever which is so prevalent; how did you come to be left to the chance of perishing upon the highway?"

"Why, sir, the people were afeard to let me into their houses in consequence of the faver. I got ill in school, sir, but no boy would venture to bring me home, an' the master turned me out, to die, I believe. May God forgive him!"

"Who was your master, my child?"

"The great Mr.——, sir. If Mr. O'Brien, the curate of the parish, hadn't been ill himself at the same time, or if Mr. O'Rorke's son, Thady, hadn't been laid on his back, too, sir, I wouldn't suffer what I did."

"Has the curate been kind to you?"

"Sir, only for him and the big boys I couldn't stay in the school, on account of the master's cruelty, particularly since my money was out."

"You are better now—are you not?" said the other gentleman.

"Thank God, sir!—oh, thanks be to the Almighty, I am! I expect to be able to lave this place to-day or to-morrow."

"And where do you intend to go when you recover?"

The boy himself had not thought of this, and the question came on him so unexpectedly, that he could only reply—

"Indeed, sir, I don't know."

"Had you," inquired the second stranger, "testimonials from your parish priest?"

"I had, sir: they are in the hands of Mr. O'Brien. I also had a character from my father's landlord."

"But how," asked the other, "have you existed here during your illness? Have you been long sick?"

"Indeed I can't tell you, sir, for I don't

know how the time passed at all; but I know, sir, that there were always two or three people attendin' me. They sent me whatever they thought I wanted, upon a shovel or a pitchfork, across the ditch, because they were afraid to come near me."

During the early part of the dialogue, two or three old hats, or caubeens, might have been seen moving steadily over from the wigwam to the ditch which ran beside the shed occupied by M'Evoy. Here they remained stationary, for those who wore them were now within hearing of the conversation, and ready to give their convalescent patient a good word, should it be necessary.

"How were you supplied with drink and medicine?" asked the younger stranger.

"As I've just told you, sir," replied Jemmy; "the neighbors here let me want for nothing that they had. They kept me in more whey than I could use; and they got me medicine, too, some way or other. But indeed, sir, during a great part of the time I was ill, I can't say how they attended me: I wasn't sensible, sir, of what was goin' on about me."

One of those who lay behind the ditch now arose, and after a few hems and scratchings of the head, ventured to join in the conversation.

"Pray have you, my man," said the elder of the two, "been acquainted with the circumstances of this boy's illness?"

"Is it the poor scholar, my Lord?* Oh thin bedad it's myself that has that. The poor crathur was in a terrible way all out, so he was. He caught the faver in the school beyant, one day, an' was turned out by the nager o' the world that he was larnin' from."

"Are you one of the persons who attended him?"

"Och, och, the crathur! what could unsignified people like us do for him, barrin' a thrifle? Any how, my Lord, it's the meracle o' the world that he was ever able to *over* it at all. Why, sir, good luck to the one of him but suffered as much, wid the help o' God, as 'ud overcome fifty men!"

"How did you provide him with drink at such a distance from any human habitation?"

"Throth, hard enough we found it, sir, to do that same: but sure, whether or not, my Lord, we couldn't be sich nagers as to let him die all out, for want o' somethin' to moisten his throath wid."

"I hope," inquired the other, "you had nothing to do in the milk-stealing which has produced such an outcry in this immediate neighborhood?"

"Milk-stalin'! Oh, bedad, sir, there never was the likes known afore in the country. *The Lord forgive them that did it!* Be gorra, sir, the wickedness o' the people's mighty improvin', if one 'ud take warnin' by it, glory be to God!"

"Many of the farmers' cows have been milked at night, Connor—perfectly drained. Even my own cows have not escaped; and we who have suffered are certainly determined, if possible, to ascertain those who have committed the theft. I, for my part, have gone even beyond my ability in relieving the wants of the poor, during this period of sickness and famine; I therefore deserved this the less."

"By the powdhers, your honor, if any gintleman desarved to have his cows *unmilked*, it's yourself. But, as I said this minute, there's no end to the wickedness o' the people, so there's not, although the Catechiz is against them; for, says it, 'there is but one Faith, one Church, an' one Baptism.' Now, sir, isn't it quare that people, wid sich words in the book afore them, won't be guided by it? I suppose they thought it only a *while* sin, sir, to take the milk, the thieves o' the world."

"Maybe, your honor," said another, "that it was only to keep the life in some poor sick crathur that wanted it more nor you or the farmers, that they did it. There's some o' the same farmers desarve worse, for they're keepin' up the prices o' their male and praties upon the poor, an' did so all along, that they might make money by our outher destitution."

"That is no justification for theft," observed the graver of the two. "Does any one among you suspect those who committed it in this instance? If you do, I command you, as your Bishop, to mention them."

"How, for instance," added the other, "were you able to supply this sick boy with whey during his illness?"

"Oh thin, gintlemen," replied Connor, dexterously parrying the question, "but it's a mighty improvin' thing to see our own Bishop,—God spare his Lordship to us!—an' the Protestant minister o' the parish joinin' together to relieve an' give good advice to the poor! Bedad, it's settin' a fine example, so it is, to the Quality, if they'd take patthern by it."

"Reply," said the Bishop, rather sternly, "to the questions we have asked you."

"The quistions, your Lordship? It's proud an' happy we'd be to do what you want; but the sarra man among us *can* do it, barrin' we'd say what we *ought not* to say. That's the thruth, my Lord; an' surely 'tisn't your Gracious Reverence that 'ud want us to go beyant *that?*"

* The peasantry always address a Roman Catholic Bishop as "My Lord."

"Certainly not," replied the Bishop. "I warn you both against falsehood and fraud; two charges which might frequently be brought against you in your intercourse with the gentry of the country, whom you seldom scruple to deceive and mislead, by gliding into a character, when speaking to them, that is often the reverse of your real one; whilst at the same time you are both honest and sincere to persons of your own class. Put away this practice, for it is both sinful and discreditable."

"God bless your Lordship! an' many thanks to your Gracious Reverence for advisin' us! Well we know that it's the blessed thing to folly your words."

"Bring over that naked, starved-looking man, who is stirring the fire under that pot," said the Rector. "He looks like Famine itself."

"Paddy Dunn! will you come over here to his honor, Paddy! He's goin' to give you somethin," said Connor, adding of his own accord the last clause of his message.

The tattered creature approached him with a gleam of expectation in his eyes that appeared like insanity.

"God bless your honor for your goodness," exclaimed Paddy. "It's me that's in it, sir!—Paddy Dunn, sir, sure enough; but, indeed, I'm the next thing to my own ghost, sir, now God help me!"

"What, and for whom are you cooking?"

"Jist the smallest dhrop in life, sir, o' gruel, to keep the sowl in that lonely crathur, sir, the poor scholar."

"Pray how long is it since you have eaten anything yourself?"

The tears burst from the eyes of the miserable creature as he replied—

"Before God in glory, your honor, an' in the presence of his Lordship here, I only got about what 'ud make betther nor half a male widin the last day, sir. 'Twas a weeshy grain o' male that I got from a friend; an' as Ned Connor here tould me that this crathur had nothin' to make the gruel for him, why I shared it wid him, bekase he couldn't even beg it, sir, if he wanted it, an' him not able to walk yit."

The worthy pastor's eyes glistened with a moisture that did him honor. Without a word of observation he slipped a crown into the hand of Dunn, who looked at it as if he had been paralyzed.

"Oh thin," said he, fervently, "may every hair on your honor's head become a mould-candle to light you into glory! The world's goodness is in your heart, sir; an' may all the blessin's of Heaven rain down upon you an' yours!"

The two gentlemen then gave assistance to the poor scholar, whom the Bishop addressed in kind and encouraging language:

"Come to me, my good boy," he added, "and if, on further inquiry, I find that your conduct has been such as I believe it to have been, you may rest assured, provided also you *continue* worthy of my good opinion, that I shall be a friend and protector to you. Call on me when you get well, and I will speak to you at greater length."

"Well," observed Connor, when they were gone, "the divil's own hard puzzle the Bishop had me in, about stalin' the milk. It went agin' the grain wid me to tell *him* the lie, so I had to invint a bit o' truth to keep my conscience clear; for sure there was *not* a man among us that *could* tell him, barrin' we said that we *oughtn't* to say. Doesn't all the world know that a man oughtn't *to condimn himself?* That was *thruth*, any way; but divil a scruple I'd have in *bammin'* the other—not but that he's one o' the best of his sort. Paddy Dunn, quit lookin' at that crown, but get the shovel an' give the boy his dhrink—he's wantin' it."

The agitation of spirits produced by Jemmy's cheering interview with the Bishop was, for three days afterwards, somewhat prejudicial to his convalescence. In less than a week, however, he was comfortably settled with Mr. O'Rorke's family, whose kindness proved to him quite as warm as he had expected.

When he had remained with them a few days, he resolved to recommence his studies under his tyrant master. He certainly knew that his future attendance at the school would be penal to him, but he had always looked forward to the accomplishment of his hopes as a task of difficulty and distress. The severity to be expected from the master could not, he thought, be greater than that which he had already suffered; he therefore decided, if possible, to complete his education under him.

The school, when Jemmy appeared in it, had been for more than an hour assembled, but the thinness of the attendance not only proved the woful prevalence of sickness and distress in the parish, but sharpened the pedagogue's vinegar aspect into an expression of countenance singularly peevish and gloomy. When the lad entered, a murmur of pleasure and welcome ran through the scholars, and joy beamed forth from every countenance but that of his teacher. When the latter noticed this, his irritability rose above restraint, and he exclaimed:—

"Silence! and apply to business, or I shall cause some of you to denude immediately. No school ever can prosper in which that *hirudo*, called a poor scholar, is permitted

toleration. I thought, sarra, I told you to nidificate and hatch your wild project undher some other wing than mine."

"I only entrate you," replied our poor hero, "to suffer me to join the class I left while I was sick, for about another year. I'll be very quiet and humble, and, as far as I can, will do everything you wish me."

"Ah! you are a crawling reptile," replied the savage, "and, in my opinion, nothing but a chate and impostor. I think you have imposed yourself upon Mr. O'Brien for what you are not; that is, the son of an honest man. I have no doubt, but many of your nearest relations died after having seen their own funerals. Your mother, you runagate, wasn't your father's wife, I'll be bail."

The spirit of the boy could bear this no longer; his eyes flashed, and his sinews stood out in the energy of deep indignation.

"It is false," he exclaimed; "it is as false as your own cruel and cowardly heart, you wicked and unprincipled tyrant! In everything you have said of my father, mother, and friends, and of myself, too, you are a liar, from the hat on your head to the dirt undher your feet—a liar, a coward, and a villain!"

The fury of the miscreant was ungovernable:—he ran at the still feeble lad, and, by a stroke of his fist, dashed him senseless to the earth. There were now no large boys in the school to curb his resentment, he therefore kicked him in the back when he fell. Many voices exclaimed in alarm—"Oh, masther! sir; don't kill him! Oh, sir! dear, don't kill him! Don't kill poor Jemmy, sir, an' him still sick!"

"Kill him!" replied the master; "kill him, indeed! Faith, he'd be no common man who could kill him; he has as many lives in him as a cat! Sure, he can live behind a ditch, wid the faver on his back, widout dying; and he would live if he was stuck on the spire of a steeple."

In the meantime the boy gave no symptoms of returning life, and the master, after desiring a few of the scholars to bring him out to the air, became pale as death with apprehension. He immediately withdrew to his private apartment, which joined the schoolroom, and sent out his wife to assist in restoring him to animation. With some difficulty this was accomplished. The unhappy boy at once remembered what had just occurred; and the bitter tears gushed from his eyes, as he knelt down, and exclaimed "Merciful Father of heaven and earth, have pity on me! You see my heart, great God! and that what I did, I did for the best!"

"Avourneen," said the woman, "he's passionate, an' never mind him. Come in an' beg his pardon for callin' him a liar, an' I'll become spokesman for you myself. Come, acushla, an' I'll get lave for you to stay in the school still."

"Oh, I'm hurted!" said the poor youth: "I'm hurted inwardly—somewhere about the back, and about my ribs!" The pain he felt brought the tears down his pale cheeks. "I wish I was at home!" said he. "I'll give up all and go home!" The lonely boy then laid his head upon his hands, as he sat on the ground, and indulged in a long burst of sorrow.

"Well," said a manly-looking little fellow, whilst the tears stood in his eyes, "I'll tell my father this, anyhow. I know he won't let me come to this school any more. Here, Jemmy, is a piece of my bread, maybe it will do you good."

"I couldn't taste it, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "God bless you; but I couldn't taste it."

"Do," said Frank; "maybe it will bate back the pain."

"Don't ask me, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "I couldn't ate it: I'm hurted inwardly."

"Bad luck to me!" exclaimed the indignant boy, "if ever my ten toes will darken this school door agin. By the livin' farmer, if they ax me at home to do it, I'll run away to my uncle's, so I will. Wait, Jemmy, I'll be big yit; an', be the blessed Gospel that's about my neck, I'll give the same masther a shirtful of sore bones, the holy an' blessed minute I'm able to do it."

Many of the other boys declared that they would acquaint their friends with the master's cruelty to the poor scholar; but Jemmy requested them not to do so, and said that he was determined to return home the moment he should be able to travel.

The affrighted woman could not prevail upon him to seek a reconciliation with her husband, although the expressions of the other scholars induced her to press him to it, even to entreaty. Jemmy arose, and with considerable difficulty reached the Curate's house, found him at home, and, with tears in his eyes, related to him the atrocious conduct of the master.

"Very well," said this excellent man, "I am glad that I can venture to ride as far as Colonel B——'s to-morrow. You must accompany me; for decidedly such brutality cannot be permitted to go unpunished."

Jemmy knew that the curate was his friend; and although he would not himself have thought of summoning the master to answer for his barbarity, yet he acquiesced in the curate's opinion. He stopped that night in the house of the worthy man to whom Mr. O'Brien had recommended him on his first entering

the town. It appeared in the morning, however, that he was unable to walk; the blows which he had received were *then* felt by him to be more dangerous than had been supposed. Mr. O'Brien, on being informed of this, procured a jaunting-car, on which they both sat, and at an easy pace reached the Colonel's residence.

The curate was shown into an ante-room, and Jemmy sat in the hall: the Colonel joined the former in a few minutes. He had been in England and on the continent, accompanied by his family, for nearly the last three years, but had just returned, in order to take possession of a large property in land and money, to which he succeeded at a very critical moment, for his own estates were heavily encumbered. He was now proprietor of an additional estate, the rent-roll of which was six thousand per annum, and also master of eighty-five thousand pounds in the funds.

Mr. O'Brien, after congratulating him upon his good fortune, introduced the case of our hero as one which, in his opinion, called for the Colonel's interposition as a magistrate.

"I have applied to you, sir," he proceeded, "rather than to any other of the neighboring gentlemen, because I think this friendless lad has a peculiar claim upon any good offices you could render him."

"A claim upon me! How is that, Mr. O'Brien?"

"The boy, sir, is not a native of this province. His father was formerly a tenant of yours, a man, as I have reason to believe, remarkable for good conduct and industry. It appears that his circumstances, so long as he was your tenant, were those of a comfortable independent farmer. If the story which his son relates be true—and I, for one, believe it—his family have been dealt with in a manner unusually cruel and iniquitous. Your present agent, Colonel, who is known in his own neighborhood by the nickname of *Yellow Sam*, thrust him out of his farm, when his wife was sick, for the purpose of putting into it a man who had married his illegitimate daughter. If this be found a correct account of the transaction, I have no hesitation in saying, that you, Colonel B ——, as a gentleman of honor and humanity, will investigate the conduct of your agent, and see justice done to an honest man, who must have been oppressed in your name, and under color of your authority."

"If my agent has dared to be unjust to a worthy tenant," said the Colonel, "in order to provide for his bastard, by my sacred honor, he shall cease to be an agent of mine! I admit, certainly, that from some circumstances which transpired a few years ago, I have reason to suspect his integrity. That, to be sure, was only so far as he and I were concerned; but, on the other hand, during one or two visits I made to the estate which he manages, I heard the tenants thank and praise him with much gratitude, and all that sort of thing. There was 'Thank your honor!'—'Long may you reign over us, sir!'—and, 'Oh, Colonel, you've a mighty good man to your agent!' and so forth. I do not think, Mr. O'Brien, that he has acted so harshly, or that he would dare to do it. Upon my honor, I heard those warm expressions of gratitude from the lips of the tenants themselves."

"If you knew the people in general, Colonel, as well as I do," replied the curate, "you would admit, that such expressions are often either cuttingly ironical, or the result of fear. You will always find, sir, that the independent portion of the people have least of this forced dissimulation among them. A dishonest and inhuman agent has in his own hands the irresponsible power of harassing and oppressing the tenantry under him. The class most hateful to the people are those low wretches who spring up from nothing into wealth, accumulated by dishonesty and rapacity. They are proud, overbearing, and jealous, even to vindictiveness, of the least want of respect. It is to such upstarts that the poorer classes are externally most civil; but it is also such persons whom they most hate and abhor. They flatter them to their faces, 'tis true even to *nausea;* but they seldom spare them in their absence. Of this very class, I believe, is your agent, Yellow Sam; so that any favorable expressions you may have heard from your tenantry towards him, were most probably the result of dissimulation and fear. Besides, sir, here is a testimonial from M'Evoy's parish priest, in which his father is spoken of as an honest, moral, and industrious man."

"If what you say, Mr. O'Brien, be correct," observed the Colonel, "you know the Irish peasantry much better than I do. Decidedly. I have always thought them in conversation exceedingly candid and sincere. With respect to testimonials from priests to landlords in behalf of their tenants, upon my honor I am sick of them. I actually received, about four years ago, such an excellent character of two tenants, as induced me to suppose them worthy of encouragement. But what was the fact? Why, sir, they were two of the greatest firebrands on my estate, and put both me and my agent to great trouble and expense. No, sir, I wouldn't give a curse for a priest's testimonial upon such an occasion. These fellows were subsequently convicted of arson on the clearest evidence, and transported."

"Well, sir, I grant that you may have been misled in that instance. However, from what I've observed, the two great faults of Irish landlords are these:—In the first place, they suffer themselves to remain ignorant of their tenantry; so much so, indeed, that they frequently deny them access and redress when the poor people are anxious to acquaint them with their grievances; for it is usual with landlords to refer them to those very agents against whose cruelty and rapacity they are appealing. This is a *carte blanche* to the agent to trample upon them if he pleases. In the next place, Irish landlords too frequently employ ignorant and needy men to manage their estates; men who have no character, no property, or standing in society, beyond the reputation of being keen shrewd, and active. These persons, sir, make fortunes; and what means can they have of accumulating wealth, except by cheating either the landlord or his tenants, or both? A history of their conduct would be a black catalogue of dishonesty, oppression, and treachery. Respectable men, resident on or near the estate, possessing both character and property, should always be selected for this important trust. But, above all things, the curse of a tenantry is a *percentage* agent. He racks, and drives, and oppresses, without consideration either of market or produce, in order that his receipts may be ample, and his own income large."

"Why, O'Brien, you appear to be better acquainted with all this sort of thing than I, who am a landed proprietor."

"By the by, sir, without meaning you any disrespect, it is the landlords of Ireland who know least about the great mass of its inhabitants; and I might also add, about its history, its literature, the manners of the people, their customs, and their prejudices. The peasantry know this, and too often practise upon their ignorance. There is a landlord's *Vade mecum* sadly wanted in Ireland, Colonel."

"Ah! very good, O'Brien, very good! Well, I shall certainly inquire into this case, and if I find that Yellow Sam has been playing the oppressor, out he goes. I am now able to manage him, which I could not readily do before, for, by the by, he had mortgages on my property."

"I would take it, Colonel, as a personal favor, if you would investigate the transaction I have mentioned."

"Undoubtedly I shall, and that very soon. But about this outrage committed against the boy himself? We had better take his informations, and punish the fellow."

"Certainly; I think that is the best way. His conduct to the poor youth has been merciless and detestable. We must put him out of this part of the country."

"Call the lad in. In this case I shall draw up the informations myself, although Gregg usually does that."

Jemmy, assisted by the curate, entered the room, and the humane Colonel desired him, as he appeared ill, to sit down.

"What is your name?" asked the Colonel.

"James M'Evoy," he replied. "I'm the son, sir, of a man who was once a tenant of yours."

"Ay! and pray how did he cease to be a tenant of mine?"

"Why, sir, your agent, Yallow Sam, put him out of our farm, when my poor mother was on her sick-bed. He chated my father, sir, out of some money—part of our rent it was, that he didn't give him a receipt for. When my father went to him afterwards for the receipt, Yallow Sam abused him, and called him a rogue, and that, sir, was what no man ever called my father either before or since. My father, sir, threatened to tell you about it, and you came to the country soon after; but Yallow Sam got very great wid my father at that time, and sent him to sell bullocks for him about fifty miles off, but when he come back again, you had left the country. Thin, sir, Yallow Sam said nothing till the next half-year's rent became due, whin he came down on my father for all—that is, what he hadn't got the receipt for, and the other gale—and, without any warning in the world, put him out. My father offered to pay all; but he said he was a rogue, and that you had ordered him off the estate. In less than a week after this he put a man that married a bastard daughter of his own into our house and place. That's God's truth, sir; and you'll find it so, if you inquire into it. It's a common trick of his to keep back receipts, and make the tenants pay double." *

"Sacred Heaven, O'Brien! can this be possible?"

"Your best way, Colonel, is to inquire into it."

"Was not your father able to educate you at home, my boy?"

"No, sir. We soon got into poverty after we left your farm; and another thing, sir, there was no Latin school in our neighborhood."

"For what purpose did you become a poor scholar?"

"Why, sir, I hoped one day or other to be able to raise my father and mother out

* This is the fact. The individual here alluded to, frequently kept back receipts when receiving rents, under pretence of hurry, and afterwards compelled the tenants to pay the same gale twice!

of the distress that Yallow Sam brought on us."

"By Heaven! a noble aim, and a noble sentiment. And what has this d—d fellow of a schoolmaster done to you?"

"Why, sir, yesterday, when I went back to the school, he abused me, and said that he supposed that most of my relations were hanged; spoke ill of my father; and said that my mother"—Here the tears started to his eyes—he sobbed aloud.

"Go on, and be cool," said the Colonel. "What did he say of your mother?"

"He said, sir, that she was never married to my father. I know I was wrong, sir; but if it was the king on his throne that said it of my mother, I'd call him a liar. I called *him* a liar, and a coward, and a villain: ay, sir, and if I had been able, I would have tramped him under my feet."

The Colonel looked steadily at him, but the open clear eye which the boy turned upon him was full of truth and independence.

"And you will find," said the soldier, "that this spirited defence of your mother will be the most fortunate action of your life. Well; he struck you then, did he?"

"He knocked me down, sir, with his fist—then kicked me in the back and sides. I think some of my ribs are broke."

"Ay!—no doubt, no doubt," said the Colonel. "And you were only after recovering from this fever which is so prevalent?"

"I wasn't a week out of it, sir."

"Well, my boy, we shall punish him for you."

"Sir, would you hear me for a word or two, if it would be pleasing to you?"

"Speak on," said the Colonel.

"I would rather change his punishment to—I would—that is—if it would be agreeable to you—It's this, sir—I wouldn't throuble you now against the master, if you'd be pleased to rightify my father, and punish Yallow Sam. Oh, sir, for God's sake, put my heart-broken father into his farm again! If you would, sir, I could shed my blood, or lay down my life for you, or for any belonging to you. I'm but a poor boy, sir, low and humble; but they say there's a greater Being than the greatest in this world, that listens to the just prayers of the poor and friendless. I was never happy, sir, since we left it—neither was any of us; and when we'd sit cowld and hungry, about our hearth, we used to be talking of the pleasant days we spent in it, till the tears would be smothered in curses against him that put us out of it. Oh, sir, if you could know all that a poor and honest family suffers, when they are thrown into distress by want of feeling in their landlords, or by the dishonesty of agents, you would consider my father's case. I'm his favorite son, sir, and good right have I to speak for him. If you could know the sorrow, the misery, the drooping down of the spirits, that lies upon the countenances and the hearts of such people, you wouldn't, as a man and a Christian, think it below you to spread happiness and contentment among them again. In the morning they rise to a day of hardship, no matter how bright and cheerful it may be to others—nor is there any hope of a brighter day for *them*: and at night they go to their hard beds to strive to sleep away their hunger in spite of cowld and want. If you could see how the father of a family, after striving to bear up, sinks down at last; if you could see the look he gives at the childhre that he would lay down his heart's blood for, when they sit naked and hungry about him; and the mother, too, wid her kind word and sorrowful smile, proud of them in all their destitution, but her heart breaking silently all the time, her face wasting away her eye dim, and her strength gone:—Sir, make one such family happy—for all this has been in my father's house! Give us back our light spirits, our pleasant days, and our cheerful hearts again! We lost them through the villainy of your agent. Give them back to us, for you *can* do it; but you can *never* pay us for what we suffered. Give us, sir, our farm, our green fields, our house, and every spot and nook that we had before. We love the place, sir, for its own sake;—it is the place of our fathers, and our hearts are in it. I often think I see the smooth river that runs through it, and the meadows that I played in when I was a child;—the glen behind our house, the mountains that rose before us when we left the door, the thorn-bush at the garden, the hazels in the glen, the little beach-green beside the river—Oh, sir, don't blame me for crying, for they are all before my eyes, in my ears, and in my heart! Many a summer evening have I gone to the march-ditch of the farm that my father's now in, and looked at the place I loved, till the tears blinded me, and I asked it as a favor of God to restore us to it! Sir, we are in great poverty at home; before God we are; and my father's heart is breaking."

The Colonel drew his breath deeply, rubbed his hands, and as he looked at the fine countenance of the boy—expressing, as it did, enthusiasm and sorrow—his eye lightened with a gleam of indignation. It could not be against the poor scholar; no, gentle reader, but against his own agent.

"O'Brien," said he, "what do you think? And this noble boy is the son of a man who belongs to a class of which I am ignorant!

By Heaven, we landlords are, I fear, a guilty race."

"Not all, sir," replied the Curate. "There are noble exceptions among them; their faults are more the faults of omission than commission."

"Well, well, no matter. Come, I will draw up the informations agaiust this man; afterwards I have something to say to you, my boy," he added, addressing Jemmy, "that will not, I trust, be unpleasant."

He then drew up the informations as strongly as he could word them, after which Jemmy deposed to their truth and accuracy, and the Colonel, rubbing his hands again, said—

"I will have the fellow secured. When you go into town, Mr. O'Brien, I'll thank you to call on Meares, and hand him these. He will lodge the miscreant in limbo this very night."

Jemmy then thanked him, and was about to withdraw, when the Colonel desired him to remain a little longer.

"Now," said he, "your father has been treated inhumanly, I believe; but no matter. That is not the question. Your sentiments, and conduct, and your affection for your parents, are noble, my boy. At present, I say, the question is not whether the history of your father's wrongs be true or false; you, at least, *believe* it to be true. From this forward—but by the by, I forgot; how could your becoming a poor scholar relieve your parents?"

"I intended to become a priest, sir, and then to help them."

"Ay! so I thought; and, provided your father were restored to the farm, would you be still disposed to become a priest?"

"I would, sir; next to helping my father, that is what I wish to be."

"O'Brien, what would it cost to prepare him respectably for the priesthood?—I mean to defray his expenses until he completes his preparatory education, in the first place, and afterwards during his residence in Maynooth?"

"I think two hundred pounds, sir, would do it easily and respectably."

"I do not think it would. However, do you send him—but first let me ask what progress he has already made?"

"He has read—in fact he *is* nearly prepared to enter Maynooth. His progress has been very rapid."

"Put him to some respectable boarding-school for a year; then let him enter Maynooth, and I will bear the expense. But remember I do not adopt this course in consequence of his father's history. Not I, by Jupiter; I do it on his own account. He is a noble boy, and full of fine qualities, if they be not nipped by neglect and poverty. I loved my father myself, and fought a duel on his account; and I honor the son who has spirit to defend his absent parent."

"This is a most surprising turn in the boy's fortunes, Colonel."

"He deserves it. A soldier, Mr. O'Brien, is not without his enthusiasm, nor can he help admiring it in others, when nobly and virtuously directed. To see a boy in the midst of poverty, encountering the hardships and difficulties of life, with the hope of raising up his parents from distress to independence, has a touch of sublimity in it."

"Ireland, Colonel, abounds with instances of similar virtue, brought out, probably, into fuller life and vigor by the sad changes and depressions which are weighing down the people. In her glens, on her bleak mountain sides, and in her remotest plains, such examples of pure affection, uncommon energy, and humble heroism, are to be seen; but, unfortunately, few persons of rank or observation mingle with the Irish people, and their many admirable qualities pass away without being recorded in the literature of their country. They are certainly a strange people, Colonel, almost an anomaly in the history of the human race. They are the only people who can rush out from the very virtues of private life to the perpetration of crimes at which we shudder. There is, to be sure, an outcry about their oppression; but that is wrong. Their indigence and ignorance are rather the result of neglect;—of neglect, sir, from the government of the country—from the earl to the squireen. They have been taught little that is suitable to their stations and duties in life, either as tenants who cultivate our lands, or as members of moral or Christian society."

"Well, well: I believe what you say is too true. But touching the records of virtue in human life, pray who would record it when nothing goes down now-a-days but what is either monstrous or fashionable?"

"Very true, Colonel; yet in my humble opinion, a virtuous Irish peasant is far from being so low a character as a profligate man of rank."

"Well, well, well! Come, O'Brien, we will drop the subject. In the meantime, touching this boy, as I said, he must be looked to, for he has that in him which ought not to be neglected. We shall now see that this d—d pedagogue be punished for his cruelty."

The worthy Colonel in a short time dismissed poor Jemmy with an exulting heart; but not until he had placed a sufficient sum in the Curate's hands for enabling him to

make a respectable appearance. Medical advice was also procured for him, by which he sooner overcame the effects of his master's brutality.

On their way home Jemmy related to his friend the conversation which he had had with his Bishop in the shed, and the kind interest which that gentleman had taken in his situation and prospects. Mr. O'Brien told him that the Bishop was an excellent man, possessing much discrimination and benevolence; "and so," said he, "is the Protestant clergyman who accompanied him. They have both gone among the people during this heavy visitation of disease and famine, administering advice and assistance; restraining them from those excesses which they sometimes commit, when, driven by hunger, they attack provision-carts, bakers' shops, or the houses of farmers who are known to possess a stock of meal or potatoes. God knows, it is an excusable kind of robbery; yet it is right to restrain them."

"It is a pleasant thing, sir, to see clergymen of every religion working together to make the people happy."

"It is certainly so," replied the curate; "and I am bound to say, in justice to the Protestant clergy, that there is no class of men in Ireland, James, who do *so much* good without distinction of creed or party. They are generally kind and charitable to the poor; so are their wives and daughters. I have often known them to cheer the sick-bed—to assist the widow and the orphan—to advise and admonish the profligate, and, in some instances, even to reclaim them. But now about your own prospects; I think you should go and see your family as soon as your health permits you."

"I would give my right hand," replied Jemmy, "just to see them, if it was only for five minutes: but I cannot go. I vowed that I would never enter my native parish until I should become a Catholic clergyman. I vowed that, sir, to God—and with his assistance I will keep my vow."

"Well," said the curate, "you are right. And now let me give you a little advice. In the first place, learn to speak as correctly as you can; lay aside the vulgarisms of conversation peculiar to the common people; and speak precisely as you would write. By the by, you acquitted yourself to admiration with the Colonel. A little stumbling there was in the beginning; but you got over it. You see, James, the force of truth and simplicity. I could scarcely restrain my tears while you spoke."

"If I had not been in earnest, sir, I could never have spoken as I did."

"You never could. Truth, James, is the foundation of all eloquence; he who knowingly speaks what is not true, may dazzle and perplex; but he will never touch with that power and pathos which spring from truth. Fiction is successful only by borrowing her habiliments. Now, James, for a little more advice. Don't let the idea of having been a poor scholar deprive you of self-respect; neither let your unexpected turn of fortune cause you to forget what you have suffered. Hold a middle course; be firm and independent; without servility on the one hand, or vanity on the other. You have also too much good sense, and, I hope, too much religion, to ascribe what this day has brought forth in your behalf, to any other cause than God. It has pleased him to raise you from misery to ease and comfort; to him, therefore, be it referred, and to him be your thanks and prayers directed. You owe him much, for you now can perceive the value of what he has done for you! May his name be blessed!"

Jemmy was deeply affected by the kindness of his friend, for such, in friendship's truest sense, was he to him. He expressed the obligations which he owed him, and promised to follow the excellent advice he had just received.

The schoolmaster's conduct to the poor scholar had, before the close of the day on which it occurred, been known through the parish. Thady O'Rorke, who had but just recovered from the epidemic, felt so bitterly exasperated at the outrage, that he brought his father to the parish priest, to whom he gave a detailed account of all that our hero and the poorer children of the school had suffered. In addition to this, he went among the more substantial farmers of the neighborhood, whose co-operation he succeeded in obtaining, for the laudable purpose of driving the tyrant out of the parish.

Jemmy, who still lived at the "House of Entertainment," on hearing what they intended to do, begged Mr. O'Brien to allow him, provided the master should be removed from the school, to decline prosecuting him.

"He has been cruel to me, no doubt," he added; "still I cannot forget that his cruelty has been the means of changing my condition in life so much for the better. If he is put out of the parish it will be punishment enough; and, to say the truth, sir, I can *now* forgive everybody. Maybe, had I been still *neglected* I might punish him; but, in the meantime, to show him and the world that I didn't deserve his severity, I forgive him."

Mr. O'Brien was not disposed to check a sentiment that did the boy's heart so much honor; he waited on the Colonel the next

morning, acquainted him with Jemmy's wishes, and the indictment was quashed immediately after the schoolmaster's removal from his situation.

Our hero's personal appearance was by this time incredibly changed for the better. His countenance, naturally expressive of feeling, firmness, and intellect, now appeared to additional advantage; so did his whole person, when dressed in a decent suit of black. No man acquainted with life can be ignorant of the improvement which genteel apparel produce in the carriage, tone of thought, and principles of an individual. It gives a man confidence, self-respect, and a sense of equality with his companions; it inspires him with energy, independence, delicacy of sentiment, courtesy of manner, and elevation of language. The face becomes manly, bold, and free; the brow open, and the eye clear; there is no slinking through narrow lanes and back streets: but, on the contrary, the smoothly dressed man steps out with a determination not to spare the earth, or to walk as if he trod on eggs or razors. No; he brushes onward; is the first to accost his friends; gives a careless bow to this, a bluff nod to that, and a patronizing "how dy'e do" to a third, who is worse dressed than himself. Trust me, kind reader, that good clothes are calculated to advance a man in life nearly as well as good principles, especially in a world like this, where external appearance is taken as the exponent of what is beneath it.

Jemmy, by the advice of his friend, now waited upon the Bishop, who was much surprised at the uncommon turn of fortune which had taken place in his favor. He also expressed his willingness to help him forward, as far as lay in his power, towards the attainment of his wishes. In order to place the boy directly under suitable patronage, Mr. O'Brien suggested that the choice of the school should be left to the Bishop. This, perhaps, flattered him a little, for who is without his weaknesses? A school near the metropolis was accordingly fixed upon, to which Jemmy, now furnished with a handsome outfit, was accordingly sent. There we will leave him, reading with eagerness and assiduity, whilst we return to look after Colonel B. and his agent.

One morning after James's departure, the Colonel's servant waited upon Mr. O'Brien with a note from his master, intimating a wish to see him. He lost no time in waiting upon that gentleman, who was then preparing to visit the estate which he had so long neglected.

"I am going," said he, "to see how my agent, Yellow Sam, as they call him, and my tenants agree. It is my determination, Mr. O'Brien, to investigate the circumstances attending the removal of our *protégé's* father. I shall, moreover, look closely into the state and feelings of my tenants in general. It is probable I shall visit many of them, and certain that I will inquire into the character of this man."

"It is better late than never, Colonel; but still, though I am a friend to the people, yet I would recommend you to be guided by great caution, and the evidence of respectable and disinterested men only. You must not certainly entertain all the complaints you may hear, without clear proof, for I regret to say, that too many of the idle and political portion of the peasantry are apt to throw the blame of their own folly and ignorance—yes, and of their crimes, also—upon those who in no way have occasioned either their poverty or their wickedness. They are frequently apt to consider themselves oppressed, if concessions are not made, to which they, as idle and indolent men, who neglected their own business, have no fair claim. Bear this in mind, Colonel—be cool, use discrimination, take your proofs from others besides the parties concerned, or their friends, and, depend upon it, you will arrive at the truth."

"O'Brien, you would make an excellent agent."

"I have studied the people, sir, and know them. I have breathed the atmosphere of their prejudices, habits, manners, customs, and superstitions. I have felt them all myself, as they feel them; but I trust I have got above their influence where it is evil, for there are many fine touches of character among them, which I should not willingly part with. No, sir, I should make a bad agent, having no capacity for transacting business. I could direct and overlook, but nothing more."

"Well, then, I shall set out to-morrow; and in the meantime, permit me to say that I am deeply sensible of your kindness in pointing out my duty as an Irish landlord, conscious that I have too long neglected it."

"Kindness, Colonel, is the way to the Irish heart. There is but one man in Ireland who can make an Irishman ungrateful, and that is his priest. I regret that in times of political excitement, and especially during electioneering struggles, the interference of the clergy produces disastrous effects upon the moral feelings of the people. When a tenant meets the landlord whom he has deserted in the critical moment of the contest—the landlord to whom he has solemnly promised his support, and who, perhaps, as a member of the legislature, has advocated his claims and his rights, and who, probably, has been kind

and indulgent to him—I say, when he meets him afterwards, his shufflings, excuses, and evasions are grievous. He is driven to falsehood and dissimulation in explaining his conduct; he expresses his repentance, curses himself for his ingratitude, promises well for the future, but seldom or never can be prevailed upon to state candidly that he acted in obedience to the priest. In some instances, however, he admits this, and inveighs bitterly against his interference—but this is only whilst in the presence of his landlord. I think, Colonel, that no clergyman, set apart as he is for the concerns of a better world, should become a firebrand in the secular pursuits and turmoils of this."

"I wish, Mr. O'Brien, that every clergyman of your church resembled you, and acted up to your sentiments: our common country would be the better for it."

"I endeavor to act, sir, as a man who has purely spiritual duties to perform. It is not for us to be agitated and inflamed by the political passions and animosities of the world. Our lot is differently cast, and we ought to abide by it. The priest and politician can no more agree than good and evil. I speak with respect to *all* churches."

"And so do I."

"What stay do you intend to make, Colonel?"

"I think about a month. I shall visit some of my old friends there, from whom I expect a history of the state and feelings of the country."

"You will hear both sides of the question before you act?"

"Certainly. I have written to my agent to say that I shall look very closely into my own affairs on *this* occasion. I thought it fair to give him notice."

"Well, sir, I wish you all success."

"Farewell, Mr. O'Brien; I shall see you immediately after my return."

The Colonel performed his journey by slow stages, until he reached "the hall of his fathers,"—for it was such, although he had not for years resided in it. It presented the wreck of a fine old mansion, situated within a crescent of stately beeches, whose moss-covered and ragged trunks gave symptoms of decay and neglect. The lawn had been once beautiful, and the demesne a noble one; but that which blights the industry of the tenant—the curse of absenteeism—had also left the marks of ruin stamped upon every object around him. The lawn was little better than a common; the pond was thick with weeds and sluggish water-plants, that almost covered its surface; and a light, elegant bridge, that spanned a river which ran before the house, was also moss-grown and dilapidated. The hedges were mixed up with briers, the gates broken, or altogether removed, the fields were rank with the ruinous luxuriance of weeds, and the grass-grown avenues spoke of solitude and desertion. The still appearance, too, of the house itself, and the absence of smoke from its time-tinged chimneys—all told a tale which constitutes one, perhaps the *greatest*, portion of Ireland's misery! Even then he did not approach it with the intention of residing there during his sojourn in the country. It was not habitable, nor had it been so for years. The road by which he travelled lay near it, and he could not pass without looking upon the place where a long line of gallant ancestors had succeeded each other, lived their span, and disappeared in their turn.

He contemplated it for some time in a kind of reverie. There it stood, sombre and silent;—its gray walls mouldering away—its windows dark and broken;—like a man forsaken by the world, compelled to bear the storms of life without the hand of a friend to support him, though age and decay render him less capable of enduring them. For a moment fancy repeopled it;—again the stir of life, pastime, mirth, and hospitality echoed within its walls; the train of his long departed relatives returned; the din of rude and boisterous enjoyment peculiar to the times; the cheerful tumult of the hall at dinner; the family feuds and festivities; the vanities and the passions of those who now slept in dust;—all—all came before him once more, and played their part in the vision of the moment!

As he walked on, the flitting wing of a bat struck him lightly in its flight; he awoke from the remembrances which crowded on him, and, resuming his journey, soon arrived at the inn of the nearest town, where he stopped that night. The next morning he saw his agent for a short time, but declined entering upon business. For a few days more he visited most of the neighboring gentry, from whom he received sufficient information to satisfy him that neither he himself nor his agent was popular among his tenantry. Many flying reports of the agent's dishonesty and tyranny were mentioned to him, and in every instance he took down the names of the parties, in order to ascertain the truth. M'Evoy's case had occurred more than ten years before, but he found that the remembrance of the poor man's injury was strongly and bitterly retained in the recollections of the people—a circumstance which extorted from the blunt, but somewhat sentimental soldier, a just observation:—"I think," said he, "that there are no people in the world who remember either

an injury or a kindness so long as the Irish."

When the tenants were apprised of his presence among them, they experienced no particular feeling upon the subject. During all his former visits to his estate, he appeared merely the creature and puppet of his agent, who never acted the bully, nor tricked himself out in his brief authority more imperiously than he did before him. The knowledge of this damped them, and rendered any expectations of redress or justice from the landlord a matter not to be thought of.

"If he wasn't so great a man," they observed, "who thinks it below him to speak to his tenants, or hear their complaints, there 'ud be some hope. But that rip of hell, Yallow Sam, can wind him round his finger like a thread, an' does, too. There's no use in thinkin' to petition him, or to lodge a complaint against Stony Heart, for the first thing he'd do 'ud be to put it into the yallow-boy's hands, an' thin, God be marciful to thim that 'ud complain. No, no; the best way is to wait till Sam's masther * takes him; an' who knows but that 'ud be sooner nor we think."

"They say," another would reply, "that the Colonel is a good gintleman for all that, an' that if he could *once* know the truth, he'd pitch the 'yallow boy' to the 'ould boy.'"

No sooner was it known by his tenantry that the head landlord was disposed to redress their grievances, and hear their complaints, than the smothered attachment, which long neglect had nearly extinguished, now burst forth with uncommon power.

"Augh! by this an' by that the thrue blood's in him still. The rale gintleman to dale wid, for ever! We knew he ouly wanted to come at the thruth, an' thin he'd back us agin the villaiu that harrished us! To the divil wid skamin' upstarts, that hasn't the ould blood in thim! What are they but sconces an' chates, every one o' thim, barrin' an odd one, for a wondher!"

The Colonel's estate now presented a scene of gladness and bustle. Every person who felt in the slightest degree aggrieved, got his petition drawn up; and, but that we fear our sketch is already too long, we could gratify the reader's curiosity by submitting a few of them. It is sufficient to say, that they came to him in every shape—in all the variety of diction that the poor English language admits of—in the schoolmaster's best copy-hand, and choicest sesquipedalianism of pedantry—in the severer, but more Scriptural terms of the parish clerk—in the engrossing hand and legal phrase of the attorney—in the military form, evidently redolent of the shrewd old pensioner—and in the classical style of the young priest:—for each and all of the foregoing were enlisted in the cause of those who had petitions to send in "to the Colonel himself, God bless him!"

Early in the morning of the day on which the Colonel had resolved to compare the complaints of his tenantry with the character which his agent gave him of the complainants, he sent for the former, and the following dialogue took place between them.

"Good morning, Mr. Carson! Excuse me for requesting your presence to-day earlier than usual. I have taken it into my head to know something of my own tenantry, and as they have pestered me with petitions, and letters, and complaints, I am anxious to have your opinion, as you know them better than I do."

"Before we enter on business, Colonel, allow me to inquire if you feel relieved of that bilious attack you complained of the day before yesterday? Tm of a bilious habit myself, and know something about the management of digestion!"

"A good digestion is an excellent thing, Carson; as for me, I drank too much claret with my friend B——y; and there's the secret. I don't like cold wines, they never agree with me."

"Nor do I; they are not constitutional. Your father was celebrated for his wines, Colonel: I remember an anecdote told me by Captain Ferguson—by the by, do you know where Ferguson could be found, now, sir?"

"Not I. What wines do *you* drink, Carson?"

"A couple of glasses of sherry, sir, at dinner; and about ten o'clock, a glass of brandy and water."

"Carson, you are sober and *prudent*. Well about these cursed petitions; you must help me to dispose of them. Why, a man would think by the tenor of them, that these tenants of mine are ground to dust by a tyrant."

"Ah! Colonel, you know little about these fellows. They would make black white. Go and take a ride, sir, return about four o'clock, and I will have everything as it ought to be."

"I wish to heaven, Carson, I had your talents for business. Do you think my tenants attached to me?"

"Attached! sir, they are ready to cut your throat or mine, on the first convenient opportunity. You could not conceive their knavishness and dishonesty, except you happened to be an agent for a few years.

* The devil;—a familiar name for him when mentioned in connection with a villain.

"So I have been told, and I am resolved to remove every dishonest tenant from my estate. Is there not a man, for instance, called Brady? He has sent me a long-winded petition here. What do you think of him?"

"Show me the petition, Colonel."

"I cannot lay my hand on it just now; but you shall see it. In the mean time, what's your opinion of the fellow?"

"Brady! Why, I know the man particularly well. He is one of my favorites. What the deuce could the fellow petition about, though? I promised the other day to renew his lease for him."

"Oh, then, if he be a favorite of yours, his petition may go to the devil, I suppose? Is the man honest?"

"Remarkably so; and has paid his rents very punctually. He is one of our safest tenants."

"Do you know a man called Cullen?"

"The most litigious scoundrel on the estate."

"Indeed? Oh, then, we must look into the merits of *his* petition, as he is *not* honest. Had he been honest like Brady, Carson, I should have dismissed it."

"Cullen, sir, is a dangerous fellow. Do you know, that rascal has charged me with keeping back his receipts, and with making him pay double rent!—ha, ha, ha! Upon my honor, it's fact."

"The scoundrel! We shall sift him to some purpose, however."

"If you take my advice, sir, you will send him about his business; for if it be once known that you listen to malicious petitions, my authority over such villains as Cullen is lost."

"Well, I set him aside for the present. Here's a long list of others, all of whom have been oppressed, forsooth. Is there a man called M'Evoy on my estate?—Dominick M'Evoy, I think."

"M'Evoy! Why that rascal, sir, has not been your tenant for ten years? *His* petition, Colonel, is a key to the nature of their grievances in general."

"I believe you, Carson—most implicitly do I *believe* that. Well, about that rascal?"

"Why, it is so long since, that upon my honor, I cannot exactly remember the circumstances of his misconduct. He ran away."

"Who is in his farm now, Carson?"

"A very decent man, sir. One Jackson, an exceedingly worthy, honest, industrious fellow. I take some credit to myself for bringing Jackson on your estate."

"Is Jackson married? Has he a family?"

"Married! Let me see! Why—yes—I *believe* he is. Oh, by the by, now I think of it, he *is* married, and to a very respectable woman, too. Certainly, I remember—she usually accompanies him when he pays his rents."

"Then your system must be a good one, Carson; you weed out the idle and profligate, to replace them by the honest and industrious."

"Precisely so, sir; that is my system."

"Yet there are agents who invert your system in some cases; who drive out the honest and industrious, and encourage the idle and profligate; who connive at them, Carson, and fill the estates they manage with their own dependents, or relatives, as the case may be. You have been always opposed to this, and I'm glad to hear it."

"No man, Colonel B——, filling the situation which I have the honor to hold under you, could study your interests with greater zeal and assiduity. God knows, I have had so many quarrels, and feuds, and wranglings, with these fellows, in order to squeeze money out of them to meet your difficulties, that, upon my honor, I think if it required five dozen oaths to hang me, they could be procured upon your estate. An agent, Colonel, who is faithful to the landlord, is seldom popular with the tenants."

"I can't exactly see that, Carson; and I have known an unpopular landlord rendered highly popular by the judicious management of an enlightened and honest agent, who took no bribes, Carson, and who neither extorted from nor ground the tenantry under him—something like a counterpart of yourself. But you may be right in general."

"Is there anything particular, Colonel, in which I can assist you now?"

"Not now. I was anxious to hear the character of those fellows from you who know them. Come down about eleven or twelve o'clock; these petitioners will be assembled, and you may be able to assist me."

"Colonel, remember I forewarn you, that you are plunging into a mesh of difficulties, which you will never be able to disentangle. Leave the fellows to me, sir; I know how to deal with them. Besides, upon my honor, you are not equal to it, in point of health. You look ill. Pray allow me to take home their papers, and I shall have all clear and satisfactory before two o'clock. They know my method, sir."

"They do, Carson, they *do;* but I am anxious they should also know *mine.* Besides, it will amuse me, for I want excitement. Good day, for the present; you will be down about twelve, or one at the farthest."

"Certainly, sir. Good morning, Colonel."

The agent was too shrewd a man not to per-

ceive that there were touches of cutting irony in some of the Colonel's expressions, which he did not like. There was a dryness, too, in the tone of his voice and words, blended with a copiousness of good humor, which, taken altogether, caused him to feel uncomfortable. He could have wished the Colonel at the devil: yet had the said Colonel never been more familiar in his life, nor, with one or two exceptions, readier to agree with almost every observation made to him.

"Well," thought he, "*he* may act as he pleases; *I* have feathered my nest, at all events, and disregard him."

Colonel B——, in fact, ascertained with extreme regret, that something was necessary to be done, to secure the good-will of his tenants; that the conduct of his agent had been marked by rapacity and bribery almost incredible. He had exacted from the tenantry in general the performance of duty-labor to such an extent, that his immense agricultural farms were managed with little expense to himself. If a poor man's corn were drop ripe, or his hay in a precarious state, or his turf undrawn, he must suffer his oats, hay, and turf, to be lost, in order to secure the crops of the agent. If he had spirit to refuse, he must expect to become a martyr to his resentment. In renewing leases his extortions were exorbitant; ten, thirty, forty, and fifty guineas he claimed as a fee for his favor, according to the ability of the party; yet this was quite distinct from the renewal fine, and went into his own pocket. When such "glove money" was not to be had, he would accept of a cow or horse, to which he usually made a point to take a fancy; or he wanted to purchase a firkin of butter at that particular time; and the poor people usually made every sacrifice to avoid his vengeance. It is due to Colonel B—— to say, that he acted in the investigation of his agent's conduct with the strictest honor and impartiality. He scrutinized every statement thoroughly, pleaded for him as temperately as he could; found, or pretended to find, extenuating motives for his most indefensible proceedings; but all would not do. The cases were so clear and evident against him, even in the opinion of the neighboring gentry, who had been for years looking upon the system of selfish misrule which he practised, that at length the generous Colonel's blood boiled with indignation in his veins at the contemplation of his villany. He accused himself bitterly for neglecting his duties as a landlord, and felt both remorse and shame for having wasted his time, health, and money, in the fashionable dissipation of London and Paris; whilst a cunning, unprincipled upstart played the vampire with his tenants, and turned his estate into a scene of oppression and poverty. Nor was this all: he had been endeavoring to bring the property more and more into his own clutches, a point which he would ultimately have gained, had not the Colonel's late succession to so large a fortune enabled him to meet his claims.

At one o'clock the tenants were all assembled about the inn door, where the Colonel had resolved to hold his little court. The agent himself soon arrived, as did several other gentlemen, the Colonel's friends, who knew the people and could speak to their character.

The first man called was Dominick M'Evoy. No sooner was his name uttered, than a mild, poor-looking man, rather advanced in years, came forward.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel," said Carson, "here is some mistake; this man is not one of your tenants. You may remember I told you so this morning."

"I remember it," replied the Colonel; "this is 'the rascal' you spoke of—is he not? M'Evoy," the Colonel proceeded, "you will reply to my questions with strict truth. You will state nothing but what has occurred between you and my agent; you must not even turn a circumstance in your own favor, nor against Mr. Carson, by either adding to, or taking away from it, more or less than the truth. I say this to you, and to all present; for, upon my honor, I shall dismiss the first case in which I discover a falsehood."

"Wid the help o' the Almighty, sir, I'll state nothing but the bare thruth."

"How long are you off my estate?"

"Ten years, your honor, or a little more."

"How came you to run away out of your farm?"

"Run away, your honor! God, he knows, I didn't run away, sir. The whole counthry knows that."

"Yes, run away! Mr. Carson, here, stated to me this morning, that you ran away. He is a gentleman of integrity, and would not state a falsehood."

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, not positively. I told you I did not exactly remember the circumstances; I said I thought so; but I may be wrong, for, indeed, my memory of facts is not good. M'Evoy, however, is a very *honest man*, and I have no doubt will state everything as it happened, fairly and without malice."

"An honest '*rascal*,' I suppose you mean, Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, bitterly. "Proceed, M'Evoy."

M'Evoy stated the circumstances precisely as the reader is already acquainted with them,

after which the Colonel turned round to his agent and inquired what he had to say in reply.

"You cannot expect, Colonel B——," he replied, "that with such a multiplicity of business on my hands, I could remember, after a lapse of ten years, the precise state of this particular case. Perhaps I may have some papers, a memorandum or so, at home, that may throw light upon it. At present I can only say, that the man failed in his rents, I ejected him, and put a better tenant in his place. I cannot see a crime in that."

"Plase your honor," replied M'Evoy, "I can prove by them that's standin' to the fore this minute, as well as by this written affidavit, sir, that I offered him the full rint, havin', at the same time, as God is my judge, ped part of it afore."

"That is certainly false—an untrue and malicious statement," said Carson. "I now remember that the cause of my resentment—yes, of my just resentment against you, was your reporting that I received your rent and withheld your receipt."

"Then," observed the Colonel, "There has been *more than one* charge of that nature brought against you? You mentioned *another* to me this morning if I mistake not."

"I have made my oath, your honor, of the thruth of it; an' here is a decent man, sir, a Protestant, that lent me the money, an' was present when I offered it to him. Mr. Smith, come forrid, sir, an' spake up for the poor man, as you're always willin' to do."

"I object to *his* evidence," said Carson: "he is my open enemy."

"I am your enemy, Mr. Carson, or rather the enemy of your corruption and want of honesty," said Smith: "but, as you say, an *open* one. I scorn to say behind your back what I wouldn't say to your face. Right well you know I was present when he tendered you his rent. I lent him part of it. But why did you and your bailiffs turn him out, when his wife was on her sick bed? Allowing that he could not pay his rent, was that any reason you should do so barbarous an act as to drag a woman from her sick bed, and she at the point of death? But we know your reasons for it."

"Gentlemen," said the Colonel, "pray what character do M'Evoy and Smith here bear in the country?"

"We have known them both for years to be honest, conscientious men," said those whom he addressed: "such is their character, and in our opinion they well deserve it."

"God bless you, gintlemen!" said M'Evoy—"God bless your honors, for your kind words! I'm sure for my own part, I hope I'll always desarve your good opinion, although but a poor man *now*, God help me!"

"Pray, who occupies the farm at present, Mr. Carson?"

"The man I mentioned to you this morning, sir. His name is Jackson."

"And pray, Mr. Carson, who is his wife?"

"Oh, by the by, Colonel, that's a little too close! I see the gentlemen smile; but they know I must beg to decline answering that question—not that it matters much. We have all sown our wild oats in our time—myself as well as another—ha, ha, ha!"

"The fact, under other circumstances," observed the Colonel, "could never draw an inquiry from me; but as it is connected with, or probably has occasioned, a gross, unfeeling, and an unjust act of oppression towards an honest man, I therefore alluded to it, as exhibiting the motives from which you acted. She is your illegitimate daughter, sir!"

"She's one o' the baker's dozen o' them, plase your honor," observed a humorous little Presbyterian, with a sarcastic face, and sharp northern accent—"for feth, sir, for my part, A thenk he hes one on every hill head. A'll count, your honor, on my fingers a roun' half-dozen, aall on your estate, sir, featherin' their nests as fast as they can."

"Is this Jackson a good tenant, Mr. Carson?"

"I gave you his character this morning, Colonel B."

"Hout, Colonel!" said the Presbyterian, "deil a penny rent the man pays, at aall, at aall. A'll swear A hev it from Jackson's own lips. He made him a Bailey, sir; he suts rent free. Ask the man, sir, for his receipts, an' A'll warrant the truth will come out."

"I have secured Jackson's attendance," said the Colonel; "let him be called in."

The man in a few minutes entered.

"Jackson," said the Colonel, "how long is it since you paid Mr. Carson here any rent?"

Jackson looked at Carson for his cue; but the Colonel rose up indignantly: "Fellow!" he proceeded, "if you tamper with me a single moment, you shall find Mr. Carson badly able to protect you. If you speak falsehood, be it at your peril."

"By Jing, sir," said Jackson, "A'll say nothin' aginst my father-in-laa, an' A don't care who teks it well or ull. A was jist tekin' a *gun** with a fren' or two—an' d——me, A say, A'll stick to my father-in-laa, for he hes stuck to me."

* A half-tumbler of punch.

"You appear to be a hardened, drunken wretch," observed the Colonel. "Will you be civil enough to show your last receipt for rent?"

"Wull A show it? A dono whether A wull or not, nor A dono whether A hev it or not; but ef aall the receipts in Europe wur burnt, d—— my blood, but A'll stick to my father-in-laa."

"Your father-in-law may be proud of you," said the Colonel.

"By h——, A'll back you en that," said the fellow nodding his head, and looking round him confidently. "By h——, A say that, too!"

"And I am sorry to be compelled to add," continued the Colonel, "that you may be equally proud of your father-in-law."

"A say, right agane! D—— me, bit A'll back that too!" and he nodded confidently, and looked around the room once more. "A wull, d—— my blood, bit no man can say agane it. A'm married to his daughter; an', by the sun that shines A'll still stan' up for my father-in-laa."

"Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, "can you disprove these facts? Can you show that you did not expel M'Evoy from his farm, and put the husband of your illegitimate daughter into it? That you did not receive his rent, decline giving him a receipt, and afterwards compel him to pay twice, because he could not produce the receipt which you withheld?"

"Gentlemen," said Carson, not directly replying to the Colonel, "there is a base conspiracy got up against me; and I can perceive, moreover, that there is evidently some unaccountable intention on the part of Colonel B. to insult my feelings and injure my character. When paltry circumstances that have occurred above ten years ago, are raked up in my teeth, I have little to say, but that it proves how very badly off the Colonel must have been for an imputation against my conduct and discretion as his agent, since he finds himself compelled to hunt so far back for a charge."

"That is by no means the heaviest charge I have to bring against you," replied the Colonel. "There is no lack of them; nor shall you be able to complain that they are not *recent*, as well as of longer standing. Your conduct in the case of poor honest M'Evoy here is black and iniquitous. He must be restored to his farm, but by other hands than yours, and that ruffian instantly expelled from it. From this moment, sir, you cease to be my agent. You have betrayed the confidence I reposed in you; you have misled me as to the character of my tenants; you have been a deceitful, cringing, cunning, selfish, and rapacious tyrant. My people you have ground to dust; my property you have lessened in value nearly one-half, and for your motives in doing this, I refer you to certain transactions and legal documents which passed between us. There is nothing cruel or mercenary which you did not practice, in order to enrich yourself. The whole tenor of your conduct is before me. Your profligacy is not only discovered, but already proved; and you played those villainous pranks, I suppose, because I have been mostly an absentee. Do not think, however, that you shall enjoy the fruits of your extortion? I will place the circumstances, and the proofs of the respective charges against you, in the hands of my solicitor, and, by the sacred heaven above me! you shall disgorge the fruits of your rapacity. My good people, I shall remain among you for another fortnight, during which time I intend to go through my estate, and set everything to rights as well as I can, until I may appoint a humane and feeling *gentleman* as my agent—such a one as will have, at least, a *character* to lose. I also take this opportunity of informing you, that in future I shall visit you often, will redress your grievances, should you have any to complain of, and will give such assistance to the honest and industrious among you—but to *them only*—as I trust may make us better pleased with each other than we have been.—Do not you go, M'Evoy, until I speak to you."

During these observations Carson sat with a smile, or rather a sneer upon his lips. It was the sneer of a purse-proud villain confident that his wealth, no matter how ill-gotten, was still wealth, and worth its value.

"Colonel," said he, "I have heard all you said, but you see me 'so strong in honesty,' that I am not moved. In the course of a few weeks I shall have purchased an estate of my own, *which I shall manage differently*, for my fortune is made, sir. I intend also to give up my other agencies: I am rather old and must retire to enjoy a little of the *otium cum dignitate*. I wish you all good-morning!"

The Colonel turned away in abhorrence, but disdained any reply.

"A say, Sam," said the Presbyterian, "bring your son-in-laa wuth you."

"An' I say that, too," exclaimed the drunken ruffian—"A say that; A do. A'm married to his daughter; an' A say stull, that d—— my blood, bit A'll stick to my father-in-laa! That's the point!"—and again he nodded his head, and looked round him with a drunken swagger:—A'll stick to my father-in-laa! A'll do that; feth, A wull!"*

* This dialect is local.

It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader, that the Colonel's address to Carson soon got among the assembled tenantry, and a vehement volley of groans and hisses followed the discarded agent up the street.

"Ha! bad luck to you for an ould villain. You were made to hear on the deaf side o' your head at last! You may take the black wool out o' your ears now, you rip! The cries an' curses o' the widows an' orphans that you made and oppressed, hasris up agin you at the long run! Ha! you beggarly nager! maybe you'll make us neglect our own work to do yours agin! Go an' gather the dhry cow-cakes, you misert, an' bring them home in your pocket, to throw on the dunghill!"

"Do you remimber the day," said others, "you met Mr. M., an' you goin' up the street wid a cake of it in your fists, undher your shabby skirts; an' whin the gintlemen wint to shake hands wid you, how he discovered your maneness? Three groans for Yallow Sam, the extortioner! a short coorse to him! Your corner's warm for you, you villain!"

"But now, boys, for the Colonel!" they exclaimed.—"Huzza for noble Colonel B——, the rale Irish gintlemen, that wouldn't see his tenants put upon by a villain!—Huzza! Hell resave yees, shout! Huzza! Huzza! Huzza! Huz—tundher-an'-ounze, my voice is cracked! Where's his coach?—where's his honor's coach? Come, boys, out wid it,—out wid it! Tattheration to yees, come! We'll dhraw it to the divil, to hell an' back agin, if it plases him! Success to Colonel B——! Blood-an-turf! what'll we do for a fight? Long life to noble Colonel B——, the poor man's friend!—long life to him for ever an' a day longer! Whoo! my drums! Huzza!" etc.

The warm interest which the Colonel took in M'Evoy's behalf, was looked upon by the other tenants as a guarantee of his sincerity in all he promised. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They got out his carriage from the Inn-Yard, and drew it through the town, though the Colonel himself, beyond the fact of their shouting, remained quite ignorant of what was going forward.

After Carson's departure, the Colonel's friends, having been first asked to dine with him at the inn, also took their leave, and none remained but M'Evoy, who waited with pleasing anxiety to hear what the Colonel proposed to say—for he felt certain that it would be agreeable.

"M'Evoy," said the Colonel, "I am truly sorry for what you have suffered through the villany of my agent; but I will give you redress, and allow you for what you have lost by the transaction. It is true, as I have been lately told by a person who pleaded your cause nobly and eloquently, that I can never repay you for what you have suffered. However, what we can, we will do. You are poor, I understand?"

"God he sees that, sir; and afflicted, too, plase your honor."

"Afflicted? How is that?"

"I had a son, sir—a blessed boy! a darlin' boy!—once our comfort, an' once we thought he'd be our pride an' our staff, but"—

The poor man's tears here flowed fast; he took up the skirt of his "Cotha More," or great-coat, and, after wiping his eyes, and clearing his voice, proceeded:—

"He was always, as I said, a blessed boy, and we looked up to him always, sir. He saw our poverty, your honor, an' he felt it, sir, keen enough, indeed, God help him! How an'-iver, he took it on him to go up to Munster, sir, undher hopes of risin' us—undher the hopes, poor child—an' God knows, sir,—if—oh, Jemmy avourneen machree!—doubt—I doubt you sunk undher what proved too many for you!—I doubt my child's dead, sir—him that all our hearts wor fixed upon; and if that 'ud happen to be the case, nothin'—not even your kindness in doin' us justice, could make us happy. We would rather beg wid him, sir, nor have the best in the world widout him. His poor young heart, sir, was fixed upon the place your honor is restorin' us to; an I'm afear'd his mother, sir, would break her heart if she thought he couldn't share our good fortune! And we don't know whether he's livin' or dead! That, sir, is what's afflictin' us. I had some notion of goin' to look for him; but he tould us he would never write, or let us hear from him, till he'd be either one thing or other."

"I can tell you, for your satisfaction, that your son is well, M'Evoy. Believe me, he is well—I know it."

"Well! Before God, does your honor spake truth? Well! Oh, sir, for His sake that died for us, an' for the sake of his blessed mother, can you tell me is my darlin' son alive?"

"He is living; is in excellent health; is as well dressed as I am; and has friends as rich and as capable of assisting him as myself. But how is this? What's the matter with you? You are pale! Good God! Here, waiter! Waiter! Waiter, I say!".

The Colonel rang the bell violently, and two or three waiters entered at the same moment.

"Bring a little wine and water, one of you, and let the other two remove this man to the open window. Be quick. What do you stare at?"

In a few minutes the old man recovered, and untying the narrow coarse cravat which he wore, wiped the perspiration off his pale face.

"Pray, don't be too much affected," said the Colonel. "Waiter, bring up refreshment—bring wine—be quiet and calm—you are weak, poor fellow—but we will strengthen you by-and-by."

"I am wake, sir," he replied; "for, God help us! this was a hard year upon us; and we suffered what few could bear. But he's livin', Colonel. Our darlin' is livin! Oh, Colonel, your kindness went to my heart this day afore, but that was nothin'—he's livin' an' well! On my two knees, before God, I thank you for them words! I thank you a thousand an' a thousand times more for them words, nor for what your honor did about Yallow Sam."

"Get up," said the Colonel—"get up. The proceedings of the day have produced a revulsion of feeling which has rendered you incapable of sustaining intelligence of your son. He is well, I assure you. Bring those things to this table, waiter."

"But can your honor tell me anything in particular about him, sir? What he's doin'—or what he intends to do?"

"Yes! he is at a respectable boarding-school."

"Boordin'-school! But isn't boordin'-schools Protestants, sir?"

"Not at all; he is at a Catholic boarding-school, and reading hard to be a priest, which, I hope, he will soon be. He has good friends, and you may thank *him* for being restored to your farm."

"Glory be to my Maker for that! Oh, sir, your tenants wor desaved in you! They thought, sir, that you wor a hard-hearted gintleman, that didn't care whether they lived or died."

"I feel that I neglected them too long, M'Evoy. Now take some refreshment: eat something, and afterwards drink a few glasses of wine. Your feelings have been much excited, and you will be the better for it. Keep up your spirits. I am going to ride, and must leave you: but if you call on me to-morrow, at one o'clock, I shall have more good news for you. We must stock your farm, and enable you to enter upon it creditably."

"Sir," said M'Evoy, "you are a Protestant; but, as I hope to enther glory, I an' my wife an' childhre will pray that your bed may be made in heaven, this night; and that your honor may be led to see the truth an' the right coorse."

The Colonel then left him; and the simple man, on looking at the cold meat, bread, and wine before him, raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, to thank God for his goodness, and to invoke a blessing upon his noble and munificent benefactor.

But how shall we describe the feelings of his family, when, after returning home, he related the occurrences of that day. The severe and pressing exigencies under which they labored had prevented his sons from attending the investigation that was to take place in town. Their expectations, however, were raised, and they looked out with intense anxiety for the return of their father.

At length he was seen coming slowly up the hill; the spades were thrown aside, and the whole family assembled to hear "what was done."

The father entered in silence, sat down, and after wiping his brow and laying down his hat, placing his staff across it upon the floor, he drew his breath deeply.

"Dominick," said the wife, "what news? What was done?"

"Vara," replied Dominick, "do you remimber the day—fair and handsome you wor then—when I first kissed your lips, as my own darlin' wife?"

"Ah, avourneen, Dominick, don't spake of them times. The happiness we had then is long gone, acushla, in one sense."

"It's before me like yestherday, Vara—the delight that went through my heart, jist as clear as yestherday, or the blessed sun that's shinin' through the broken windy on the floor there. I remimber, Vara, saying to you that day—I don't know whether *you* remimber it or not—but *I* remimber sayin' to you, that if I lived a thousand years, I could never feel sich happiness as I did when I first pressed you to my heart as my own wife."

"Well, but we want to hear what happened, Dominick, achora."

"Do you remimber the words, Vara?"

"Och! I do, avourneen. *Didn't they go into my heart at the time*, an' *how* could I *forget* them? But I can't bear, somehow, to look back at what we wor then, bekase I feel my heart brakin', acushla!"

"Well, Vara, look at me. Amn't I a poor wasted crathur now, in comparishment to what I was thin?"

"God he sees the change that's in you, darlin'! But sure 'twasn't your fau't, or mine either, Dominick, avilish!"

"Well, Vara, you see me now—I'm happier—before God, I'm happier—happier, a thousand degrees than I was thin! Come to my arms, asthore machree—my heart's breakin'—but it's wid happiness—don't be frightened—it's wid joy I'm sheddin' these tears—it's wid happiness an' delight I'm cryin'! Jemmy is livin', an' well, childhre—

he's livin' an' well, Vara—the star of our hearts is livin', an' well, an' happy! Kneel down, childhre—kneel down! Bend before the great God, an' thank him for his kindness to your blessed brother—to our blessed son. Bless the Colonel, childhre; bless him whin you're down, Protestant an' all, as he is. Oh, bless him as if you prayed for myself, or for Jemmy, that's far away from us!"

He paused for a few minutes, bent his head upon his hands as he knelt in supplication at the chair, then resumed his seat, as did the whole family, deeply affected.

"Now, childhre," said he, "I'll tell yez all; but don't any of you be so poor a crathur as I was to-day. Bear it mild an' asy, Vara, acushla, for I know it will take a start out of you. Sure we're to go back to our own ould farm! Ay, an' what's more—oh, God of heaven, bless him!—what's more, the Colonel is to stock it for us, an' to help us; an' what is more, Yallow Sam is *out!* out!!"

"Out!" they exclaimed: "Jemmy well, an' Yallow Sam out! Oh, father, surely"—

"Now behave, I say. Ay, and never to come in again! But who do you think got him out?"

"Who?—why God he knows. Who *could* get him out?"

"Our son, Vara—our son, childhre: Jemmy got him out, an' got ourselves back to our farm! I had it partly from the noble Colonel's own lips, an' the remainder from Mr. Moutray, that I met on my way home. But there's more to come:—sure Jemmy has friends aquil to the Colonel himself: an' sure he's at a Catholic boordin'-school, among gintlemen's childhre, an' in a short time he'll be a priest in full ordhers."

We here draw a veil over the delight of the family. Questions upon questions, replies upon replies, sifting and cross-examinations, followed in rapid succession, until all was known that the worthy man had to communicate.

Another simple scene followed, which, as an Irishman, I write with sorrow. When the joy of the family had somewhat subsided, the father, putting his hand in his coat-pocket, pulled out several large slices of mutton.

"Along wid all, childhre," said he, "the Colonel ordhered me my dinner. I ate plinty myself, an' slipped these slices in my pocket for you: but the devil a one o' me knows what kind o' mate it is. An' I got wine, too! Oh!—Well, they may talk, but wine *is* the drink! Bring me the ould knife, till I make a fair divide of it among ye. Musha, what kind o' mate can it be, for myself doesn't remimber atin' any sort, barrin' bacon an' a bit o' slink-veal of an odd time?"

They all ate it with an experimental air of sagacity that was rather amusing. None, however, had ever tasted mutton before, and consequently the name of the meat remained, on that occasion, a profound secret to M'Evoy and his family.* It is true, they *supposed* it to be mutton; but not one of them could pronounce it to be such, from any positive knowledge of its peculiar flavor.

"Well," said Dominick, "it's no matther what the name of it is, in regard that it's good mate, any way, for them that has enough of it."

With a fervent heart and streaming eyes did this virtuous family offer up their grateful prayers to that God whose laws they had not knowingly violated, and to whose providence they owed so much. Nor was their benefactor forgotten. The strength and energy of the Irish language, being that in which the peasantry usually pray, were well adapted to express the depth of their gratitude towards a man who had, as they said, "humbled himself to look into their wants, as if he was like one of themselves!"

For upwards of ten years they had not gone to bed free from the heaviness of care, or the wasting grasp of poverty. Now their hearth was once more surrounded by peace and contentment; their burthens were removed, their pulses beat freely, and the language of happiness again was heard under their humble roof. Even sleep could not repress the vivacity of their enjoyments: they dreamt of their brother—for in the Irish heart domestic affections hold the first place;—they dreamt of the farm to which those affections had so long yearned. They trod it again as its legitimate possessors. Its fields were brighter, its corn waved with softer murmurs to the breeze, its harvests were richer, and the song of their harvest home more cheerful than before. Their delight was tumultuous, but intense; and when they arose in the morning to

A sober certainty of waking bliss,

they again knelt in worship to God with exulting hearts, and again offered up their sincere prayers in behalf of the just man who had asserted their rights against the oppressor.

Colonel B. was a man who, without having been aware of it, possessed an excellent capacity for business. The neglect of his property resulted not from want of feeling, but merely from want of consideration. There had, moreover, been no precedent for him to follow. He had seen no Irishman of rank

* There are hundreds of thousands—yes, millions—of the poorer classes in Ireland, who have never tasted mutton!

ever bestow a moment's attention on his tenantry. They had been, for the most part, absentees like himself, and felt satisfied if they succeeded in receiving their half-yearly remittance in due course, without ever reflecting for a moment upon the situation of those from whom it was drawn.

Nay, what was more—he had not seen even the *resident* gentry enter into the state and circumstances of those who lived upon their property. It was a mere accident that determined him to become acquainted with his tenants; but no sooner had he seen his duty, and come to the resolution of performing it, than the decision of his character became apparent. It is true, that, within the last few years, the Irish landlords have advanced in knowledge. Many of them have introduced more improved systems of agriculture, and instructed their tenants in the best methods of applying them; but during the time of which we write, an Irish landlord only saw his tenants when canvassing them for their votes, and instructed them in dishonesty and perjury, not reflecting that he was then teaching them to practise the arts of dissimulation and fraud against himself. This was the late system: let us hope that it will be superseded by a better one; and that the landlord will think it a duty, but neither a trouble nor a condescension, to look into his own affairs, and keep an eye upon the morals and habits of his tenantry.

The Colonel, as he had said, remained more than a fortnight upon his estate; and, as he often declared since, the recollections arising from the good which he performed during that brief period, rendered it the portion of his past life upon which he could look with most satisfaction. He did not leave the country till he saw M'Evoy and his family restored to their farm, and once more independent;—until he had redressed every well-founded complaint, secured the affections of those who had before detested him, and diffused peace and comfort among every family upon his estate. From thenceforth he watched the interests of his tenants, and soon found that in promoting their welfare, and instructing them in their duties, he was more his own benefactor than theirs. Before many years had elapsed, his property was wonderfully improved; he himself was called the "Lucky Landlord," "bekase," said the people, "ever since he spoke to, an' advised his tenants, we find that it's *lucky* to live undher him. The people has heart to work wid a gintleman that won't grind thim; an' so sign's on it, every one thrives upon his land: an' dang my bones, but I believe a rotten stick 'ud grow on it, set in case it was thried."

In sooth, his popularity became proverbial; but it is probable, that not even his justice and humanity contributed so much to this, as the vigor with which he prosecuted his suit against "Yellow Sam," whom he compelled literally to "disgorge" the fruits of his heartless extortion. This worthy agent died soon after his disgrace, without any legitimate issue; and his property, which amounted to about fifty thousand pounds, is now inherited by a gentleman of the strictest honor and integrity. To this day his memory is detested by the people, who, with that bitterness by which they stigmatized a villain, have erected him into a standard of dishonesty. If a man become remarkable for want of principle, they usually say—"he's as great a rogue as Yallow Sam;" or, "he is the greatest sconce that ever was in the country, *barrin'* Yallow Sam."

We now dismiss him, and request our readers, at the same time, not to suppose that we have held him up as a portrait of Irish agents in general. On the contrary, we believe that they constitute a most respectable class of men, who have certainly very difficult duties to perform. The Irish landlords, we are happy to say, taught by experience, have, for the most part, both seen and felt the necessity of appointing gentlemen of property to situations so very important, and which require so much patience, consideration, and humanity, in those who fill them. We trust they will persevere in this plan;* but we can assure them, that all the virtues of the best agent can never compensate, in the opinion of the people, for neglect in the "Head Landlord." One visit, or act, even of nominal kindness, for *him*, will at any time produce more attachment and gratitude among them, than a whole life spent in good offices by an agent. Like Sterne's French Beggar, they would prefer a pinch of snuff from the one, to a guinea from the other. The agent only renders them a favor, but the Head Landlord does them an honor.

Colonel B., immediately after his return home, sent for Mr. O'Brien, who waited on him with a greater degree of curiosity than perhaps he had ever felt before. The Colonel smiled as he extended his hand to him.

"Mr. O'Brien," said he, "I knew you would feel anxious to hear the result of my visit to the estate which this man with the nickname managed for me."

"*Managed*, sir? Did you say managed?"

"I spoke in the past time, O'Brien: he is out."

* This tale has been written nearly twelve years, but the author deeply regrets that the Irish landlords have disentitled themselves to the favorable notice taken of them in the text.

"Then your *protégé's* story was correct, sir?"

"True to a title. O'Brien, there is something extraordinary in that boy; otherwise, how could it happen that a sickly, miserable-looking creature, absolutely in tatters, could have impressed us both so strongly with a sense of the injustice done ten years ago to his father? It is, indeed, remarkable."

"The boy, Colonel, deeply felt that act of injustice, and the expression of it came home to the heart."

"I have restored his father, however. The poor man and his family are once more happy. I have stocked their old farm for them; in fact, they now enjoy comfort and independence."

"I am glad, sir, that you have done them justice. That act, alone, will go far to redeem your character from the odium which the conduct of your agent was calculated to throw upon it."

"There is not probably in Ireland a landlord so popular as I am this moment—at least among my tenants on *that* property. Restoring M'Evoy, however, is but a small part of what I have done. Carson's pranks were incredible. He was a rack-renter of the first water. A person named Brady had paid him twenty-five guineas as a *douceur*—in other words, as a bribe—for renewing a lease for him; yet, after having received the money, he kept the poor man dangling after him, and at length told him that he was offered a larger sum by another. In some cases he kept back the receipts, and made the poor people pay twice, which was still more iniquitous. Then, sir, he would not take bank notes in payment. No; he was so wonderfully concientious, and so zealously punctual in fulfilling *my wishes*, as he told them on the subject, that nothing would pass in payment but gold. This gold, sir, they were compelled to receive from himself, at a most oppressive premium; so that he actually fleeced them under my name, in every conceivable manner and form of villainy. He is a usurer, too; and, I am told, worth forty or fifty thousand pounds: but, thank heaven! he is no longer an agent of mine."

"It gives me sincere pleasure, sir, that you have at length got correct habits of thinking upon your duties as an Irish landlord; for believe me, Colonel B., as a subject involving a great portion of national happiness or national misery, it is entitled to the deepest and most serious consideration, not only of the class to which you belong, but of the legislature. Something should be done, sir, to improve the condition of the poorer classes. A rich country and poor inhabitants is an anomaly; and whatever is done should be prompt and effectual. If the Irish landlords looked directly into the state of their tenantry, and set themselves vigorously to the task of bettering their circumstances, they would, I am certain, establish the tranquillity and happiness of the country at large. The great secret, Colonel, of the dissensions that prevail among us is the poverty of the people. They are poor, and therefore the more easily wrought up to outrage; they are poor, and think that *any* change must be for the better; they are not only poor, but imaginative, and the fittest recipients for those vague speculations by which they are deluded. Let their condition be improved, and the most fertile source of popular tumult and crime is closed. Let them be taught *how* to labor: let them not be bowed to the earth by rents so far above the real value of their lands. The pernicious maxims which float among them must be refuted—not by theory, but by practical lessons performed before their eyes for their own advantage. Let them be taught how to discriminate between their real interests and their prejudices; and none can teach them all this so effectually as their landlords, if they could be roused from their apathy, and induced to undertake the task. Who ever saw a poor nation without great crimes?"

"Very true, O'Brien; quite true. I am resolved to inspect personally the condition of those who reside on my other estates. But now about our *protégé?* How is he doing?"

"Extremely well. I have had a letter from him a few days ago, in which he alludes to the interest you have taken in himself and his family, with a depth of feeling truly affecting."

"When you write to him, let him know that I have placed his father in his old farm; and that Carson is out. Say I am sure he will conduct himself properly, in which case I charge myself with his expenses until he shall have accomplished his purpose. After that he may work his own way through life, and I have no doubt but he will do it well and honorably."

Colonel B——'s pledge on this occasion was nobly redeemed. Our humble hero pursued his studies with zeal and success. In due time he entered Maynooth, where he distinguished himself not simply for smartness as a student, but as a young man possessed of a mind far above the common order. During all this time nothing occurred worthy of particular remark, except that, in fulfilment of his former vow, he never wrote to any of his friends; for the reader should have been told, that this was originally comprehended in the determination he had

formed. He received ordination at the hands of his friend the Bishop, whom we have already introduced to the reader, and on the same day he was appointed by that gentleman to a curacy in his own parish. The Colonel, whose regard for him never cooled, presented him with fifty pounds, together with a horse, saddle, and bridle; so that he found himself in a capacity to enter upon his duties in a decent and becoming manner. Another circumstance that added considerably to his satisfaction, was the appointment of Mr. O'Brien to a parish adjoining that of the Bishop. James's afflictions had been the means of bringing the merits of that excellent man before his spiritual superior, who became much attached to him, and availed himself of the earliest opportunity of rewarding his unobtrusive piety and benevolence.

No sooner was his ordination completed, than the long suppressed yearnings after his home and kindred came upon his spirit with a power that could not be restrained. He took leave of his friends with a beating heart, and set out on a delightful summer morning to revisit all that had been, notwithstanding his long absence and severe trials, so strongly wrought into his memory and affections. Our readers may, therefore, suppose him on his journey home, and permit themselves to be led in imagination to the house of his former friend, Lanigan, where we must lay the scene for the present.

Lanigan's residence has the same comfortable and warm appearance which always distinguishes the habitation of the independent and virtuous man. What, however, can the stir, and bustle, and agitation which prevail in it mean? The daughters run out to a little mound, or natural terrace, beside the house, and look anxiously towards the road; then return, and almost immediately appear again, with the same intense anxiety to catch a glimpse of some one whom they expect. They look keenly; but why is it that their disappointment appears to be attended with such dismay? They go into their father's house once more, wringing their hands, and betraying all the symptoms of affliction. Here is their mother, too, coming to peer into the distance, she is rocking with that motion peculiar to Irishwomen when suffering distress. She places her open hand upon her brows that she may collect her sight to a particular spot; she is blinded by her tears; breaks out into a low wail, and returns with something like the darkness of despair on her countenance. She goes into the house, passes through the kitchen, and enters into a bed-room; seats herself on a chair beside the bed, and renews her low but bitter wail of sorrow. Her husband is lying in that state which the peasantry know usually precedes the agonies of death.

"For the sake of the livin' God," said he, on seeing her, "is there any sign o' them?"

"Not yet, *a suillish*;* but they will soon—they must soon, asthore, be here, an' thin your mind will be asy."

"Oh, Alley, Alley, if you could know what I suffer for 'fraid I'd die widout the priest, you'd pity me!"

"I do pity you, asthore: but don't be cast down, for I have my trust in God that he won't desart you in your last hour. You did what you could, my heart's pride; you bent before him night an' mornin', and sure the poor neighbor never wint from your door widout lavin' his blessin' behind him."

The dying man raised his hands feebly from the bed-clothes; "Ah!" he exclaimed, "I thought I did a great dale, Alley: but now—but now—it appears nothin' to what I ought to a' done when I could. Still, avourneen, my life's not unpleasant when I look back at it; for I can't remimber that I ever purposely offinded a livin' mortal. All I want to satisfy me is the priest."

"No, avourneen, you did not; for it wasn't in you to offind a child."

"Alley, you'll pardon me an' forgive me acushla, if ever—if ever I did what was displasin' to you! An' call in the childhre, till I see them about me—I want to have their forgiveness, too. I know I'll have it—for they wor good childhre, an' ever loved me."

The daughters now entered the room, exclaiming—"*Ahir dheelish* (beloved father), Pether is comin' by himself, but no priest! Blessed Queen of Heaven, what will we do! Oh! father darlin', are you to die widout the Holy Ointment?"

The sick man clasped his hands, looked towards heaven and groaned aloud.

"Oh, it's hard, this," said he. "It's hard upon me! Yet I won't be cast down. I'll trust in my good God; I'll trust in his blessed name!"

His wife, on hearing that her son was returned without the priest, sat, with her face shrouded by her apron, weeping in grief that none but they who know the dependence which those belonging to her church place in its last rites can comprehend. The children appeared almost distracted; their grief had more of that stunning character which attends unexpected calamity, than of sorrow for one who is gradually drawn from life.

At length the messenger entered the room,

* My light.

and almost choked with tears, stated that both priests were absent that day at Conference, and would not return till late.

The hitherto moderated grief of the wife arose to a pitch much wilder than the death of her husband could, under ordinary circumstances, occasion. To die without absolution—to pass away into eternity "unanointed, unaneled"—without being purified from the inherent stains of humanity—was to her a much deeper affliction than her final separation from him. She cried in tones of the most piercing despair, and clapped her hands, as they do who weep over the dead. Had he died in the calm confidence of having received the *Viaticum*, or Sacrament before death, his decease would have had nothing remarkably calamitous in it, beyond usual occurrences of a similar nature. Now the grief was intensely bitter in consequence of his expected departure without the priest. His sons and daughters felt it as forcibly as his wife; their lamentations were full of the strongest and sharpest agony.

For nearly three hours did they remain in this situation; poor Lanigan sinking by degrees into that collapsed state from which there is no possibility of rallying. He was merely able to speak, and recognize his family; but every moment advanced him, with awful certainty, nearer and nearer to his end.

A great number of the neighbors were now assembled, all participating in the awful feeling which predominated, and anxious to compensate by their prayers for the absence of that confidence derived by Roman Catholics during the approach of death, from the spiritual aid of the priest. They were all at prayer; the sick-room and kitchen were crowded with his friends and acquaintances, many of whom knelt out before the door, and joined with loud voices in the Rosary which was offered up in his behalf.

In this crisis were they, when a horseman, dressed in black, approached the house. Every head was instantly turned round, with a hope that it might be the parish priest or his curate; but, alas! they were doomed to experience a fresh disappointment. The stranger, though clerical enough in his appearance, presented a countenance with which none of them was acquainted. On glancing at the group who knelt around the door, he appeared to understand the melancholy cause which brought them together.

"How is this?" he exclaimed. "Is there any one here sick or dying?"

"Poor Misther Lanigan, sir, is jist departin', glory be to God! An' what is terrible all out upon himself and family, he's dyin' widout the priest. They're both at Conwhirence, sir, and can't come—Mr. Dogherty an' his curate."

"Make way!" said the stranger, throwing himself off his horse, and passing quickly through the people. "Show me to the sick man's room—be quick, my friends—I am a Catholic clergyman."

In a moment a passage was cleared, and the stranger found himself beside the bed of death. Grief in the room was loud and bitter; but his presence stilled it despite of what they felt.

"My dear friends," said he, "you know there should be silence in the apartment of a dying man. For shame!—for shame! Cease this clamor, it will but distract him for whom you weep, and prevent him from composing his mind for the great trial that is before him."

"Sir," said Lanigan's wife, seizing his hand in both hers, and looking distractedly in his face, "are you a priest? For heaven's sake tell us?"

"I am," he replied; "leave the room every one of you. I hope your husband is not speechless?"

"Sweet Queen of Heaven, not yet, may her name be praised! but near it, your Reverence—widin little or no time of it."

Whilst they spoke, he was engaged in putting the stole about his neck, after which he cleared the room, and commenced hearing Lanigan's confession.

The appearance of a priest, and the consolation it produced, rallied the powers of life in the benevolent farmer. He became more collected; made a clear and satisfactory confession; received the sacrament of Extreme Unction; and felt himself able to speak with tolerable distinctness and precision. The effects of all this were astonishing. A placid serenity, full of hope and confidence, beamed from the pale and worn features of him who was but a few minutes before in a state of terror altogether indescribable. When his wife and family, after having been called in, observed this change, they immediately participated in his tranquillity. Death had been deprived of its sting, and grief of its bitterness; their sorrow was still deep, but it was not darkened by the dread of future misery. They felt for him as a beloved father, a kind husband, and a dear friend, who had lived a virtuous life, feared God, and was now about to pass into happiness.

When the rites of the church were administered, and the family again assembled round the bed, the priest sat down in a position which enabled him to see the features of this good man more distinctly.

"I would be glad," said Lanigan, "to know who it is that God in his goodness has

sent to smooth my bed in death, if it 'ud be plasin', sir, to you to tell me?"

"Do you remember," replied the priest, "a young lad whom you met some years ago on his way to Munster, as a poor scholar! You and your family were particularly kind to him; so kind that he has never since forgotten your affectionate hospitality."

"We do, your Reverence, we do. A mild, gentle crathur he was, poor boy. I hope God prospered him."

"You see him now before you," said the priest. "I am that boy, and I thank God that I can testify, however slightly, my deep sense of the virtues which you exercised towards me; although I regret that the occasion is one of such affliction."

The farmer raised his eyes and feeble hands towards heaven. "Praise an' glory to your name, good God!" he exclaimed. "Praise an' glory to your holy name! Now I know that I'm not forgotten, when you brought back the little kindness I did that boy for *your sake*, wid so many blessins to me in the hour of my affliction an' sufferin'! Childher remimber this, now that I'm goin' to lave yez for ever! Remimber always to help the stranger, an' thim that's poor an' in sorrow. If you do, God won't forget it to you; but will bring it back to yez when you stand in need of it, as he done to me this day. You see, childhre dear, how small thrifles o' that kind depend on one another. If I hadn't thought of helpin' his Reverence here when he was young and away from his own, he wouldn't think of callin' upon us this day as he was passin'. You see the hand of God is in it, childhre: which it is, indeed, in every thing that passes about us, if we could only see it as we ought to do. Thin, but I'd like to look upon your face, sir, if it's plasin' to you? A little more to the light, sir. There, I now see you. Ay, indeed, it's changed for the betther it is—the same mild, clear countenance, but not sorrowful, as when I seen it last. Suffer me to put my hand on your head, sir; I'd like to bless you before I die, for I can't forget what you undertook to do for your parents."

The priest sat near him; but finding he was scarcely able to raise his hand to his head, he knelt down, and the farmer, before he communicated the blessing inquired—

"Musha, sir, may I ax, wor you able to do anything to help your family as you expected?"

"God," said the priest, "made me the instrument of raising them from their poverty; they are now comfortable and happy."

"Ay! Well I knew at the time, an' I said it, that a blessin' would attind your endayvors. An' now resave *my* blessin'. May you never depart from the right way! May the blessin' of God rest upon you for ever—Amin! Childhre, I'm gettin' wake; come near me, till, till I bless you, too, for the last time! They were good childhre, sir—they were ever an' always good to me, an' to their poor mother, your Reverence; an'—God forgive me if it's a sin!—but I feel a great dale o' my heart an' my love fixed upon them. But sure I'm their father, an' God, I hope, will look over it! Now, darlins, afore I bless yez, I ax your forgiveness if ever I was harsher to yez than I ought!"

The children with a simultaneous movement encircled his bed, and could not reply for some minutes.

"Never, father darlin'! Oh, never did yon offind us! Don't speak in that way, or you'll break our hearts; but forgive *us*, father asthore! Oh, forgive an' bless us, an' don't remimber against us, our folly an' disobedience, for it's only now that we see we warn't towards you as we ought to be. Forgive us an' pardon us!"

He then made them all kneel around his bed, and with solemn words, and an impressive manner, placed his hand upon their heads, and blessed them with a virtuous father's last blessing.

He then called for his wife, and the scene became not only more touching, but more elevated. There was an exultation in her manner, and an expression of vivid hope in her eye, arising from the fact of her husband having received, and been soothed by, the rites of her church, that gave evident proof of the unparalleled attachment borne by persons of her class to the Catholic religion. The arrival of our hero had been so unexpected, and the terrors of the tender wife for her husband's soul so great, that the administration of the sacrament almost superseded from her heart every other sensation than that of devotional triumph. Even now, in the midst of her tears, that triumph kindled in her eye with a light that shone in melancholy beauty upon the bed of death. In proportion, however, as the parting scene—which was to be their *last*—began to work with greater power upon her sorrow, so did this expression gradually fade away. Grief for his loss resumed its dominion over her heart so strongly, that their last parting was afflicting even to look upon.

When it was over, Lanigan once more addressed the priest:—

"Now, sir," he observed, but with great difficulty, "let me have *your* blessin' an' your prayers; an' along wid that, your Reverence, if you remimber a request I once made to you"—

"I remember it well," replied the priest;

"you allude to the masses which you wished me to say for you, should I ever receive Orders. Make your mind easy on that point. I not only *shall* offer up mass for the repose of your soul, but I can assure you that I *have* mentioned you *by name* in every mass which I celebrated since my ordination."

He then proceeded to direct the mind of his dying benefactor to such subjects as were best calculated to comfort and strengthen him.

About day-break the next morning, this man of many virtues, after struggling rather severely for two hours preceding his death, passed into eternity, there to enjoy the recompense of a well-spent life.

When he was dead, the priest, who never left him during the night, approached the bed, and after surveying his benevolent features, now composed in the stillness of death, exclaimed—

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them!"

Having uttered the words aloud, he sat down beside the bed, buried his face in his handkerchief, and wept.

He was now only a short day's journey from home, and as his presence, he knew, would be rather a restraint upon a family so much in affliction, he bade them farewell, and proceeded on his way. He travelled slowly, and, as every well-known hill or lake appeared to him, his heart beat quickly, his memory gave up its early stores, and his affections prepared themselves for the trial that was before them.

"It is better for me not to arrive," thought he, "until the family shall have returned from their daily labor, and are collected about the hearth."

In the meantime, many an impression of profound and fervid piety came over him, when he reflected upon the incontrovertible proofs of providential protection and interference which had been, during his absence from home, under his struggles, and, in his good fortune, so clearly laid before him. "Deep," he exclaimed, "is the gratitude I owe to God for this; may I never forget to acknowledge it!"

It was now about seven o'clock; the evening was calm, and the sun shone with that clear amber light which gives warmth, and the power of exciting tenderness to natural scenery. He had already gained the ascent which commanded a view of the rich sweep of country that reposed below. There it lay—his native home—his native parish—bathed in the light and glory of the hour. Its fields were green—its rivers shining like loosened silver, its meadows already studded with hay-cocks, its green pastures covered with sheep, and its unruffled lakes reflecting the hills under which they lay. Here and there a gentleman's residence rose among the distant trees, and well did he recognize the church spire that cut into the western sky on his right. It is true, nothing of the grandeur and magnificence of nature was there; everything was simple in its beauty. The quiet charm, the serene light, the air of happiness and peace that reposed upon all he saw, stirred up a thousand tender feelings in a heart whose gentle character resembled that of the prospect which it felt so exquisitely. The smoke of a few farm-houses and cottages rose in blue, graceful columns to the air, giving just that appearance of life which was necessary; and a figure or two, with lengthened shadows, moved across the fields and meadows a little below where he stood.

But our readers need not to be told, that there was *one* spot which, beyond all others, riveted his attention. On that spot his eager eye rested long and intensely. The spell of its remembrance had clung to his early heart: he had never seen it in his dreams without weeping; and often had the agitation of his imaginary sorrow awoke him with his eye-lashes steeped in tears. He looked down on it steadily. At length he was moved with a strong sensation like grief: he sobbed twice or thrice, and the tears rolled in showers from his eyes. His gathering affections were relieved by this: he felt lighter, and in the same slow manner rode onward to his father's house.

To this there were two modes of access: one by a paved bridle-way, or *boreen*, that ran up directly before the door—the other by a green lane, that diverged from the *boreen* about a furlong below the house. He took the latter, certain that the family could not notice his approach, nor hear the noise of his horse's footsteps, until he could arrive at the very threshold. On dismounting, he felt that he could scarcely walk. He approached the door, however, as steadily as he could. He entered—and the family, who had just finished their supper, rose up, as a mark of their respect to the stranger.

"Is this," he inquired, "the house in which Dominick M'Evoy lives?"

"That's my name, sir," replied Dominick.

"The family, I trust, are—all—well? I have been desired——but—no—no—I cannot—I cannot—FATHER!—MOTHER!"

"It's *him!*" shrieked the mother—"It's himself!—Jemmy!"

"Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" shouted the father, with a cry of joy which might be heard far beyond the house.

"Jemmy!—our poor Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" exclaimed his brothers and sisters.

"Asy, childhre," said the father—"asy; let the mother to him—let *her* to him. Who has the right that *she* has? Vara, asthore—Vara, think of yourself. God of heaven! what is comin' over her?—Her brain's turned!"

"Father, don't remove her," said the son. "Leave her arms where they are: it's long since they encircled my neck before. Often—often would I have given the wealth of the universe to be encircled in my blessed and beloved mother's arms! Yes, yes!—Weep, my father—weep, each of you. You see those tears:—consider them as a proof that I have never forgotten you! Beloved mother! recollect yourself: she knows me not—her eyes wander!—I fear the shock has been too much for her. Place a chair at the door, and I will bring her to the air."

After considerable effort, the mother's faculties were restored so far as to be merely conscious that our hero was her son. She had not yet shed a tear, but now she surveyed his countenance, smiled and named him, placed her hands upon him, and examined his dress with a singular blending of conflicting emotions, but still without being thoroughly collected.

"I will speak to her," said Jemmy, "in Irish, it will go directly to her heart:—*Mhair, avourneen, tha ma, laht, ansh!*—Mother, my darling, I am with you at last."

"*Shamus, aroon, vick machree, wuil thu thum? wuil thu—wuil thu thum?*—Jemmy, my beloved, son of my heart, are you with me?—are you—are you with me?"

Ish maheen a tha in, a vair dheelish machree.—It is *I* who am with you, beloved mother of my heart!"

She smiled again—but only for a moment. She looked at him, laid his head upon her bosom, bedewed his face with her tears, and muttered out, in a kind of sweet, musical cadence, the Irish cry of joy.

We are incapable of describing the scene further. Our readers must be contented to know, that the delight and happiness of our hero's whole family were complete. Their son, after many years of toil and struggle, had at length succeeded, by a virtuous course of action, in raising them from poverty to comfort, and in effecting his own object, which was, to become a member of the Catholic priesthood. During all his trials he never failed to rely on God; and it is seldom that those who rely upon Him, when striving to attain a laudable purpose, are ever ultimately disappointed.

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We regret to inform our readers, that the poor scholar is dead! He did not, in fact, long survive the accomplishment of his wishes. But as we had the particulars of his story from his nearest friends, we thought his virtues of too exalted a nature to pass into oblivion without some record, however humble. He died as he had lived—the friend of God and of man.

END OF VOLUME II.

THE BLACK PROPHET:

A TALE OF IRISH FAMINE.

CHAPTER I.

Gendhu, or the Black Glen; Scene of Domestic Affection.

SOME twenty and odd years ago there stood a little cabin at the foot of a round hill, that very much resembled a cupola in shape, and which, from its position and height, commanded a prospect of singular beauty. This hill was one of a range that ran from north to southwest; but in consequence of its standing, as it were, somewhat out of the ranks, its whole appearance and character as a distinct feature of the country were invested with considerable interest to a scientific eye, especially to that of a geologist. An intersection or abrupt glen divided it from those which constituted the range or group alluded to; through this, as a pass in the country, and the only one for miles, wound a road into an open district on the western side, which road, about half a mile after its entering the glen, was met by a rapid torrent that came down from the gloomy mountains that rose to the left. The foot of this hill, which on the southern side was green and fertile to the top, stretched off and was lost in the rich land that formed the great and magnificent valley it helped to bound, and to which the chasm we have described was but an entrance; the one bearing to the other, in size and position, much the same relation that a small bye-lane in a country town bears to the great leading street which constitutes its principal feature.

Noon had long passed, and the dim sun of a wet autumnal day was sloping down towards the west through clouds and gloom, when a young girl of about twenty-one or twenty-two years of age came out of the cabin we have mentioned, and running up to the top of a little miniature hill or knob that rose beside it, looked round in every direction, as if anxious to catch a glimpse of some one whom she expected. It appeared, however, that she watched in vain; for after having examined the country in every direction with an eye in which might be read a combined expression of eagerness, anger and disappointment, she once more returned to the cabin with a slow and meditating step. This she continued to do from time to time for about an hour and a half, when at length a female appeared approaching, whom she at once recognized.

The situation of this hovel, for such, in fact, it must be termed, was not only strikingly desolate, but connected also with wild and supernatural terrors. From the position of the glen itself, a little within which it stood, it enjoyed only a very limited portion of the sun's cheering beams. As the glen was deep and precipitous, so was the morning light excluded from it by the north-eastern hills, as was that of evening by those which rose between it and the west. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a spot marked by a character of such utter solitude and gloom. Naturally barren, it bore not a single shrub on which a bird could sit or a beast browse, and little, of course, was to be seen in it but the bare gigantic projections of rock which shot out of its steep sides in wild and uncouth shapes, or the grey, rugged expanses of which it was principally composed. Indeed, we feel it difficult to say whether the gloom of winter or the summer's heat fell upon it with an air of lonelier desolation. It mattered not what change of season came, the place presented no appearance of man or his works. Neither bird or beast was seen or heard, except rarely, within its dreary bosom, the only sounds it knew being the monotonous murmurs of the mountain torrent, or the wild echoes of the thunder storms that pealed among the hills about it. Silence and solitude were the characteristics which predominated in it, and it would not be easy to say whether they were felt more during the gloom of November or the glare of June.

In the mouth of this glen, not far from the cabin we have described, two murders had been committed about twenty years before the period of our narrative, within the

lapse of a month. The one was that of a carman, and the other of a man named Sullivan, who also had been robbed, as it was supposed the carman had been, for the bodies of both had been made way with and were never found. This was evident—in the one case by the horse and cart of the carman remaining by the grey stone in question, on which the traces of blood were long visible; and in the other by the circumstance of Sullivan's hat and part of his coat having been found near the cabin in question on the following day, in a field through which his path home lay, and in which was a pool of blood, where his foot-marks were deeply imprinted, as if in a struggle for life and death. For this latter murder a man named Dalton had been taken up, under circumstances of great suspicion, he having been the last person seen in the man's company. Both had been drinking together in the market, a quarrel had originated between them about money matters, blows had been exchanged, and Dalton was heard to threaten him in very strong language. Nor was this all. He had been observed following or rather dogging him on his way home, and although the same road certainly led to the residence of both, yet when his words and manner were taken into consideration, added to the more positive proof that the footmarks left on the place of struggle exactly corresponded with his shoes, there could be little doubt that he was privy to Sullivan's murder and disappearance, as well probably as to his robbery. At all events the glen was said to be haunted by Sullivan's spirit, which was in the habit, according to report, of appearing near the place of murder, from whence he was seen to enter this chasm—a circumstance which, when taken in connection with its dark and lonely aspect, was calculated to impress upon the place the reputation of being accursed, as the scene of crime and supernatural appearances. We remember having played in it when young, and the feeling we experienced was one of awe and terror, to which might be added, on contemplating the "dread repose" and solitude around us, an impression that we were removed hundreds of miles from the busy ongoings and noisy tumults of life, to which, as if seeking protection, we generally hastened with a strong sense of relief, after having tremblingly gratified our boyish curiosity.

The young girl in question gave the female she had been expecting any thing but a cordial or dutiful reception. In personal appearance there was not a point of resemblance between them, although the *tout ensemble* of each was singularly striking and remarkable. The girl's locks were black as the raven's wing: her figure was tall and slender, but elastic and full of symmetry. The ivory itself was not more white nor glossy than her skin; her teeth were bright and beautiful, and her mouth a perfect rosebud. It is unnecessary to say that her eyes were black and brilliant, for such ever belong to her complexion and temperament; but it is necessary to add, that they were piercing and unsettled, and you felt that they looked into you rather than at you or upon you. In fact, her features were all perfect, yet it often happened that their general expression was productive of no agreeable feeling on the beholder. Sometimes her smile was sweet as that of an angel, but let a single impulse or whim be checked, and her face assumed a character of malignity that made her beauty appear like that which we dream of in an evil spirit.

The other woman, who stood to her in the relation of step-mother, was above the middle size. Her hair was sandy, or approaching to a pale red; her features were coarse, but regular; and her whole figure that of a well-made and powerful woman. In her countenance might be read a peculiar blending of sternness and benignity, each evidently softened down by an expression of melancholy—perhaps of suffering—as if some secret care lay brooding at her heart. The inside of the hovel itself had every mark of poverty and destitution about it. Two or three stools, a pot or two, one miserable standing bed, and a smaller one gathered up under a rug in the corner, were almost all that met the eye on entering it; and simple as these meagre portions of furniture were, they bore no marks of cleanliness or care. On the contrary, everything appeared to be neglected, squalid and filthy—such, precisely, as led one to see at a glance that the inmates of this miserable hut were contented with their wretched state of life, and had no notion whatsoever that any moral or domestic duty existed, by which they might be taught useful notions of personal comfort and self respect.

"So," said the young woman, addressing her step-mother, as she entered, "you're come back at last, an' a purty time you tuck to stay away!"

"Well," replied the other, calmly, "I'm here now at any rate; but I see you're in one of your tantrums, Sally, my lady. What's wrong, I say? In the mean time don't look as if you'd ait us widout salt."

"An' a bitter morsel you'd be," replied the younger, with a flashing glance—"divil a more so. Here am I, sittin', or running out an' in, these two hours, when I ought to be at the dance in Kilnahushogue, before I

go to Barny Gormly's wake; for I promised to be at both. Why didn't you come home in time?"

"Bekaise, achora, it wasn't agreeable to me to do so. I'm beginnin' to get ould an' stiff, an' its time for me to take care of myself."

"Stiffer may you be, then, soon, an' oulder may you never be, an' that's the best *I* wish you!"

"Aren't you afeard to talk to me in that way?" said the elder of the two.

"No—not a bit. You won't flake me now as you used to do. I am able an' willin' to give blow for blow at last, thank goodness; an' will, too, if ever you thry that thrick."

The old woman gazed at her angrily, and appeared for a moment to meditate an assault. After a pause, however, during which the brief but vehement expression of rising fury passed from her countenance, and her face assumed an expression more of compassion than of anger, she simply said, in a calm tone of voice—

"I don't know that I ought to blame you so much for your temper, Sarah. The darkness of your father's sowl is upon yours; his wicked spirit is in you, an' may Heaven above grant that you'll never carry about with you, through this unhappy life, the black an' heavy burden that weighs down *his* heart! If God hasn't said it, you have his coorse, or something nearly as bad, before you. Oh! go to the wake as soon as you like, an' to the dance, too. Find some one that'll take you off of my hands; that'll put a house over your head—give you a bit to ait, an' a rag to put on you; an' may God pity him that's doomed to get you! If the woeful state of the country, an' the hunger an' sickness that's abroad, an' that's comin' harder an' faster on us every day, can't tame you or keep you down, I dunna what will. I'm sure the black an' terrible summer we've had ought to make you think of how we'll get over all that's before us! God pity you, I say again, an' whatever poor man is to be cursed wid you!"

"Keep your pity for them that wants it," replied the other, "an' that's not me. As for God's pity, it isn't yours to give, and even if it was, you stand in need of it yourself more than I do. You're beginning to praich to us now that you're not able to bait us; but for your praichments an' your baitins, may the divil pay you for all alike!—as he will—an' that's my prayer."

A momentary gush of the step-mother's habitual passion overcame her; she darted at her step-daughter, who sprung to her limbs, and flew at her in return. The conflict at first was brief, for the powerful strength of the elder female soon told. Sarah, however, quickly disengaged herself, and seizing an old knife which lay on a shelf that served as a dresser, she made a stab at the very heart of her step-mother, panting as she did it with an exulting vehemence of vengeance that resembled the growlings which a savage beast makes when springing on its prey.

"Ha!" she exclaimed, "you have it now—you have it! Call on God's pity now, for you'll soon want it. Ha! ha!"

The knife, however, owing to the thick layers of cloth with which the dress of the other was patched, as well as to the weakness of the thin and worn blade, did not penetrate her clothes, nor render her any injury whatsoever. The contest was again resumed. Sarah, perceiving that she had missed her aim, once more put herself into a posture to renew the deadly attempt; and the consequence was, that a struggle now took place between them which might almost be termed one for life and death. It was indeed a frightful and unnatural struggle. The old woman, whose object was, if possible, to disarm her antagonist, found all her strength—and it was great—scarcely a match for the murderous ferocity which was now awakened in her. The grapple between them consequently became furious; and such was the terrible impress of diabolical malignity which passion stamped upon the features of this young tigress, that her step-mother's heart, for a moment quailed on beholding it, especially when associated with the surprising activity and strength which she put forth. Her dark and finely-pencilled eye-brows were fiercely knit, as it were, into one dark line; her lips were drawn back, displaying her beautiful teeth, that were now ground together into what resembled the lock of death; her face was pale with over-wrought resentment, and her deep-set eyes glowed with a wild and flashing fire that was fearful, while her lips were encircled with the white foam of revengeful and deadly determination; and what added most to the terrible expression on her whole face was the exulting smile of cruelty which shed its baleful light over it, resolving the whole contest, as it were, and its object—the murder of her step-mother—into the fierce play of some beautiful vampire that was ravening for the blood of its awakened victim.

After a struggle of some two or three minutes, the strength and coolness of the step-mother at length prevailed. She wrested the knife out of Sarah's hands, and, almost at the same moment, stumbled and fell. The other, however, was far from relaxing her hold. On the contrary, she clung to her fiercely, shouting out—

"I won't give you up yet—I love you too well for that—no, no, it's fond of you I'm gettin'. I'll hug you, mother, dear; ay will I, and kiss you too, an' lave my mark behind me!" and, as she spoke, her step-mother felt her face coming in savage proximity to her own.

"If you don't keep away, Sarah," said the other, "I'll stab you. What do you mane, you bloody devil? It is going to tear my flesh with your teeth you are? Hould off! or, as heaven's above us, I'll stab you with the knife."

"You can't," shouted the other; "the knife's bent, or you'd be done for before this. I'll taste your blood for all that!" and, as the words were uttered, the step-mother gave a sudden scream, making at the same time a violent effort to disentangle herself, which she did.

Sarah started to her feet, and flying towards the door, exclaimed with shouts of wild triumphant laughter—

"Ha, ha, ha! do you feel anything? I was near havin' the best part of one of your ears—ha, ha, ha!—but unfortunately I missed it; an' now look to yourself. *Your* day is gone, an' mine is come. I've tasted your blood, an' I like it—ha, ha, ha!—an' if as *you* say it's kind father for me to be fond o' blood, I say you had better take care of yourself. And I tell you more: we'll take care of your fair-haired beauty for you—my father and myself will—an' I'm told to act against her, an' I will too; an' you'll see what we'll bring your pet, *Gra Gal* Sullivan, to yet! There's news for you!"

She then went down to the river which flowed past, in whose yellow and turbid waters—for it was now swollen with rain—she washed the blood from her hands and face with an apparently light heart. Having meditated for some time, she fell a laughing at the fierce conflict that had just taken place, exclaiming to herself—

"Ha, ha, ha! Well now if I had killed her—got the ould knife into her heart—I might lave the counthry. If I had killed her now, throth it 'ud be a good joke, an' all in a fit of passion, bekase she didn't come home in time to let me meet *him*. Well, I'll go back an' spake soft to her, for, after all, she'll give me a hard life of it."

She returned; and, having entered the hut, perceived that the ear and cheek of her step-mother were still bleeding.

"I'm sorry for what I did," she said, with the utmost frankness and good nature. "Forgive me, mother; you know I'm a hasty devil—for a devil's limb I am, no doubt of it. Forgive me, I say—do now—here, I'll get something to stop the blood."

She sprang at the moment, with the agility of a wild cat, upon an old chest that stood in the corner of the hut, exhibiting as she did it, a leg and foot of surpassing symmetry and beauty. By stretching herself up to her full length, she succeeded in pulling down several old cobwebs that had been for years in the corner of the wall; and in the act of doing so, disturbed some metallic substance, which fell first upon the chest, from which it tumbled off to the ground, where it made two or three narrowing circles, and then lay at rest.

"Murdher alive, mother!" she exclaimed, "what is this? Hallo! a tobaccy-box—a fine round tobaccy-box of iron, bedad—an what's this on it!—let me see; two letthers. Wait till I rub the rust off; or stay, the rust shows them as well. Let me see—P. an' what's the other? ay, an' M. P. M.—arra, what can that be for? Well, devil may care! let it lie on the shelf there. Here now—none of your cross looks, I say—put these cobwebs to your face, an' they'll stop the bleedin'. Ha, ha, ha!—well—ha, ha, ha!—but you are a sight to fall in love wid this minute!" she exclaimed, laughing heartily at the blood-stained visage of the other. "You won't spake, I see. Divil may care then, if you don't you'll do the other thing—let it alone; but, at any rate, there's the cobwebs for you, if you like to put them on; an' so *bannatht lathi*, an' let that be a warnin' to you not to raise your hand to me again.

'A sailor courted a farmer's daughter
That lived contageous to the Isle of Man,'" &c.

She then directed her steps to the dance in Kilnahushogue, where one would actually suppose, if mirth, laughter, and extraordinary buoyancy of spirits could be depended on, that she was gifted, in addition to her remarkable beauty, with the innocent and delightful disposition of an angel.

The step-mother having dressed the wound as well as she could, sat down by the fire and began to ruminate on the violent contest which had just taken place, and in which she had borne such an unfortunate part. This was the first open and determined act of personal resistance which she had ever, until that moment, experienced at her step-daughter's hands; but now she feared that, if they were to live, as heretofore, under the same roof, their life would be one of perpetual strife—perhaps of ultimate bloodshed—and that these domestic brawls might unhappily terminate in the death of either. She felt that her own temper was none of the best, and knew that so long as she was incapable of restraining it, or maintaining her coolness under the pro-

vocations to which the violent passions of Sarah would necessarily expose her, so long must such conflicts as that which had just occurred take place between them. She began now to fear Sarah, with whose remorseless disposition she was too well acquainted, and came to the natural conclusion, that a residence under the same roof was by no means compatible with her own safety.

"She has been a curse to me!" she went on, unconsciously speaking aloud; "for when she wasn't able to bate me herself, her father did it for her. The divil is said to be fond of his own; an' so does he dote on her, bekase she's his image in everything that's bad. A hard life I'll lead between them from this out, espeshially now that she's got the upper hand of me. Yet what else can I expect or desarve? This load that is on my conscience is worse. Night and day I'm sufferin' in the sight of God, an' actin' as if I wasn't to be brought in judgment afore him. What am I to do? I wish I was in my grave! But then, agin', how am I to face death?—and that same's not the worst; for afther death comes judgment! May the Lord prepare me for it, and guide and direct me how to act! One thing, I know, must be done—either she or I will have this house; for live undher the same roof wid her I will not."

She then rose up, looked out of the door a moment, and, resuming her seat, went on with her soliloquy—

"No; he said it was likely he wouldn't be home to-night. Wanst he gets upon his ould prophecies, he doesn't care how long he stays away; an' why he can take the delight he does in prophesyin' and foretellin' good or evil, accordin' as it sarves his purpose, I'm sure I don't know—espeshially when he only laughs in his sleeve at the people for believin' him; but what's that about poor *Gra Gal* Sullivan? *She* threatened her, and spoke of her father, too, as bein' in it. Ah, ah! I must watch him there; an' you, too, my lady divil—for it 'ill go hard wid me if either of you injure a hair of her head. No, no, praise God!—none of your evil doins or unlucks prophecies for her, so long, any way, as I can presarve her from them. How black the evenin' is gatherin'! but God knows that it's the awful saison all out for the harvest—it is that—it is that!"

Having given utterance to these sentiments, she took up the tobacco-box which Sarah had, in such an accidental manner, tumbled out of the wall, and surveying it for some moments, laid it hastily on the chest, and, clasping her hands exclaimed—

"Saviour of life! it's the same! Oh, merciful God, it's thrue! it's thrue!—the very same I seen wid *him* that evenin': I know it by the broken hinge and the two letthers. The Lord forgive me my sins!—for I see now that do what we may, or hide it as we like, God is above all! Saviour of life, how will this end? an' what will I do?—or how am I to act? But any way, I must hide this, and put it out of *his* reach."

She accordingly went out, and having ascertained that no person saw her, thrust the box up under the thatch of the roof, in such a way that it was impossible to suspect, by any apparent disturbance of the roof, that it was there; after which, she sat down with sensations of dread that were new to her, and that mingled themselves as strongly with her affections as it was possible for a woman of a naturally firm and undaunted character to feel them.

CHAPTER II.

The Black Prophet Prophesies.

At a somewhat more advanced period of the same evening, two men were on their way from the market-town of Ballynafail, towards a fertile portion of the country, named Aughamaran, which lay in a southern direction from it. One of them was a farmer, of middling, or rather of struggling, circumstances, as was evident from the traces of wear and tear that were visible upon a dress that had once been comfortable and decent, although now it bore the marks of careful, though rather extensive repair. He was a thin placid looking man, with something, however, of a careworn expression in his features, unless when he smiled, and then his face beamed with a look of kindness and goodwill that could not readily be forgotten. The other was a strongly-built man, above the middle size, whose complexion and features were such as no one could look on with indifference, so strongly were they indicative of a twofold character, or, we should rather say, calculated to make a twofold impression. At one moment you might consider him handsome, and at another his countenance filled you with an impression of repugnance, if not of absolute aversion; so stern and inhuman were the characteristics which you read in it. His hair, beard, and eye-brows were an ebon black, as were his eyes; his features were hard and massive; his nose, which was somewhat hooked, but too much pointed, seemed as if, while in a plastic state, it had been sloped by a trowel towards one side of his face, a circumstance which, while taken in connection with his black whiskers that ran to a point near his mouth, and piercing eyes, that were too

deeply and narrowly set, gave him, aided by his heavy eyebrows, an expression at once of great cruelty and extraordinary cunning. This man, while travelling in the same direction with the other, had suffered himself to be overtaken by him: in such a manner, however, that their coming in contact could not be attributed to any particular design on his part.

"Why, then, *Donnel Dhu*," said the farmer, "sure it's a sight for sore eyes to see you in this side of the country; an' now that *I do* see you, how are you?"

"Jist the ould six-an'-eight-pence, Jerry; an' how is the Sullivan blood in you, man alive? good an' ould blood it is, in troth; how is the family?"

"Why we can't—hut, what was I goin' to say?" replied his companion; "we can't—*complain—ershi—mishi!*—why, then, God help us, it's we that *can* complain, Donnel, if there was any use in it; but, *mavrone*, there isn't; so all I can say is, that we're jist mixed middlin', like the praties in a harvest, or hardly that same, indeed, since this woful change that has come on us."

"Ay, ay," replied the other; "but if that change has come on you, you know it didn't come without warnin' to the counthry; there's a man livin' that foretould as much—that seen it comin'—ay, ever since the pope was made prisoner, for that was what brought Bonaparte's fate—that's now the cause of the downfall of everything upon him."

"An' it was the hard fate for *us*, as well as for *himself*," replied Sullivan, "little he thought, or little he cared, for what he made us suffer, an' for what he's makin' us suffer still, by the come-down that the prices have got."

"Well, but he's sufferin' himself more than any of us," replied Donnel; "however, that was prophesied too; it's read of in the ould Chronicles. 'An eagle will be sick,' says St. Columbkill, 'but the bed of the sick eagle is not a tree, but a rock; an' there, he must suffer till the curse of the Father* is removed from him; an' then he'll get well, an' fly over the world.'"

"Is that in the prophecy, Donnel?"

"It's St. Columbkill's words I'm spakin'."

"Throth, at any rate," replied Sullivan, "I didn't care we had back the war prices again; aither that, or that the dear rents were let down to meet the poor prices we have now. This woeful saison, along wid the low prices and the high rents, houlds out a black and terrible look for the counthry, God help us!"

"Ay," returned the Black Prophet, for it was he, "if you only knew it."

"Why, was that, too, prophesied?" inquired Sullivan.

"Was it? No; but ax yourself *is* it. Isn't the Almighty in his wrath, this moment proclaimin' it through the heavens and the airth? Look about you, and say what is it you see that does not foretel famine—famine—famine! Doesn't the dark wet day, an' the rain, rain, rain, foretel it? Doesn't the rotten' crops, the unhealthy air, an' the green damp foretel it? Doesn't the sky without a sun, the heavy clouds, an' the angry fire of the West, foretel it? Isn't the airth a page of prophecy, an' the sky a page of prophecy, where every man may read of famine, pestilence, an' death? The airth is softened for the grave, an' in the black clouds of heaven you may see the death-hearses movin' slowly along—funeral after funeral—funeral after funeral—an' nothing to folly them but lamentation an' wo, by the widow an' orphan—the fatherless, the motherless, an' the childless—wo an' lamentation—lamentation an' wo."

Donnel Dhu, like every prophecy man of his kind—a character in Ireland, by the way, that has nearly, if not altogether, disappeared—was provided with a set of prophetic declamations suited to particular occasions and circumstances, and these he recited in a voice of high and monotonous recitative, that caused them to fall with a very impressive effect upon the minds and feeling of his audience. In addition to this, the very nature of his subject rendered a figurative style and suitable language necessary, a circumstance which, aided by a natural flow of words, and a felicitious illustration of imagery—for which, indeed, all prophecy-men were remarkable—had something peculiarly fascinating and persuasive to the class of persons he was in the habit of addressing. The gifts of these men, besides, were exercised with such singular delight, that the constant repetition of their oracular exhibitions by degrees created an involuntary impression on themselves, that ultimately rose to a kind of wild and turbid enthusiasm, partaking at once of imposture and fanaticism. Many of them were, therefore, nearly as much the dupes of the delusions that proceeded from their own heated imaginations as the ignorant people who looked upon them as oracles; for we know that nothing at all events so much generates imposture as credulity.

"Indeed, Donnel," replied Sullivan, "what you say is unfortunately too thrue. Everything we can look upon appears to have the mark of God's displeasure on it; but if we

*This is—the Pope, in consequence of Bonaparte having imprisoned him.

have dearth and sickness now, what'll become of us this time twelve months, when we'll feel this failure most?"

"I have said it," replied the prophet; "an' if my tongue doesn't tell truth, the tongue that never tells a lie will."

"And what tongue is that?" asked his companion.

"The tongue of the death-bell will tell it day afther day to every parish in the land. However, we know that death's before us, an' the grave, afther all, is our only consolation."

"God help us," exclaimed Sullivan, "if we hadn't betther and brighter consolation than the grave. Only for the hopes in our Divine Redeemer an' his mercy, it's little consolation the grave could give us. But indeed, Donnel, as you say, everything about us is enough to sink the heart within one—an' no hope at all of a change for the betther. However, God is good, and, if it's *His* will that we should suffer, it's *our* duty to submit to it."

The prophet looked around him with a gloomy aspect, and, truth to say, the appearance of everything on which the eye could rest, was such as gave unquestionable indications of wide-spread calamity to the country.

The evening, which was now far advanced, had impressed on it a character of such dark and hopeless desolation as weighed down the heart with a feeling of cold and chilling gloom that was communicated by the dreary aspect of every thing around. The sky was obscured by a heavy canopy of low, dull clouds that had about them none of the grandeur of storm, but lay overhead charged with those wintry deluges which we feel to be so unnatural and alarming in autumn, whose bounty and beauty they equally disfigure and destroy. The whole summer had been sunless and wet—one, in fact, of ceaseless rain which fell, day after day, week after week, and month after month, until the sorrowful consciousness had arrived that *any* change for the better must now come *too late*, and that nothing was certain but the terrible union of famine, disease, and death which was to follow. The season, owing to the causes specified, was necessarily late, and such of the crops as *were* ripe had a sickly and unthriving look, that told of comparative failure, while most of the fields which, in our autumns, *would* have been ripe and yellow, were now covered with a thin, backward crop, so unnaturally green that all hope of maturity was out of the question. Low meadows were in a state of inundation, and on alluvial soils the ravages of the floods were visible in layers of mud and gravel that were deposited over many of the prostrate corn fields. The peat turf lay in oozy and neglected heaps, for there had not been sun enough to dry it sufficiently for use, so that the poor had want of fuel, and cold to feel, as well as want of food itself. Indeed, the appearance of the country, in consequence of this wetness in the firing, was singularly dreary and depressing. Owing to the difficulty with which it burned, or rather wasted away, without light or heat, the eye, in addition to the sombre hue which the absence of the sun cast over all things, was forced to dwell upon the long black masses of smoke which trailed slowly over the whole country, or hung, during the thick sweltering calms, in broad columns that gave to the face of nature an aspect strikingly dark and disastrous, when associated, as it was, with the destitution and suffering of the great body of the people. The general appearance of the crops was indeed deplorable. In some parts the grain was beaten down by the rain; in airier situations it lay cut but unsaved, and scattered over the fields, awaiting an occasional glance of feeble sunshine; and in other and richer soils, whole fields, deplorably lodged, were green with the destructive exuberance of a second growth. The season, though wet, was warm; and it is unnecessary to say that the luxuriance of all weeds and unprofitable production was rank and strong, while an unhealthy fermentation pervaded everything that was destined for food. A brooding stillness, too, lay over all nature; cheerfulness had disappeared, even the groves and hedges were silent, for the very birds had ceased to sing, and the earth seemed as if it mourned for the approaching calamity, as well as for that which had been already felt. The whole country, in fact, was weltering and surging with the wet formed by the incessant overflow of rivers, while the falling cataracts, joined to a low monotonous hiss, or what the Scotch term *sugh*, poured their faint but dismal murmurs on the gloomy silence which otherwise prevailed around.

Such was the aspect of the evening in question: but as the men advanced, a new element of desolation soon became visible. The sun, ere he sank among the dark western clouds, shot out over this dim and miserable prospect a light so angry, yet so ghastly, that it gave to the whole earth a wild, alarming, and spectral hue, like that seen in some feverish dream. In this appearance there was great terror and sublimity, for as it fell on the black shifting clouds, the effect was made still more awful by the accidental resemblance which they bore to coffins, hearses, and funeral processions, as observed

by the prophecy-man, all of which seemed to have been lit up against the deepening shades of evening by some gigantic death-light that superadded its fearful omens to the gloomy scenes on which it fell.

The sun, as he then appeared, might not inaptly be compared to some great prophet, who, clothed with the majesty and terror of an angry God, was commissioned to launch his denunciations against the iniquities of nations, and to reveal to them, as they lay under the shadow of his wrath, the terrible calamities with which he was about to visit their transgressions.

The two men now walked on in silence for some time, Donnel Dhu having not deemed it necessary to make any reply to the pious and becoming sentiments uttered by Sullivan. At length the latter spoke.

"Barrin' what we all know, Donnel, an' that's the saison an' the sufferin' that's in it, is there no news stirrin' at all? Is it thrue that ould Dick o' the Grange is drawin' near to his last account?"

"Not so bad as that; but he's still complainin'. It's one day up and another day down wid' him—an' of coorse his laise of life can't be long now."

"Well, well," responded Sullivan, "it's not for us to pass judgment on our fellow-creatures; but by all accounts he'll have a hard reckonin'."

"That's his own affair, you know," said Donnel Dhu; "but his son, master Richard, or 'Young Dick,' as they call him, will be an improvement upon the ould stock."

"As to that, some says ay, an' some says no; but I believe myself, that he has, like his father, both good and bad in him; for the ould man, if the maggot bit him, or that he took the notion, *would* do one a good turn; an' if he took a likin' to you, he'd go any lin'th to serve you; but, then, you were never sure of him—nor he didn't himself know this minute what he'd do the next."

"That's thrue enough," replied Donnel Dhu; "but lavin' him to shift for himself, I'm of opinion that you an' I are likely to get wet jackets before we're much oulder. Ha! Did you see that lightnin'? God presarve us! it was terrible—an'—ay, there it is—the thundher! God be about us, thundher at this hour is very fearful. I would give a thrifle to be in my own little cabin, an' indeed I'm afeard that I won't be worth the washin' when I get there, if I *can* go back sich a night as it's goin' to be."

"The last few years, Donnel, has brought a grievous change upon me and mine," replied Sullivan. "The time was, an' it's not long since, when I could give you a comfortable welcome as well as a willin' one; however, thank God, it isn't come to sich a hard pass wid me yet that I haven't a roof an' a bit to ait to offer you; an' so to sich as it is you're heartily welcome. Home! oh, you mustn't talk of home this night. Blood, you know, is thicker than wather, an' if it was only on your wife Nelly's account, you should be welcome. Second an' third cousins by the mother's side we are, an' that's purty strong. Oh, no, don't talk of goin' home this night."

"Well," replied the other, "I'm thankful to you, Jerry, an' indeed as the night's comin' on so hard and stormy, I'll accept your kind offer; a mouthful of any thing will do me, an' a dry sate at your hearth till mornin'."

"Unfortunately, as I said," replied Sullivan, "it's but poor an' humble treatment I can give you; but if it was betther you should be jist as welcome to it, an' what more can I say?"

"What more can you say, indeed! I know your good heart, Jerry, as who doesn't? Dear me, how it's poorin' over there towards the south—ha, there it is again, that thundher! Well, thank goodness, we haven't far to go, at any rate, an' the shower hasn't come round this far yet. In the mean time let us step out an' thry to escape it if we can."

"Let us cross the fields, then," said Sullivan, "an' get up home by the *Slang*, an' then behind our garden: to be sure, the ground is in a sad plash, but then it will save a long twist round the road, an' as you say, we may escape the rain yet."

Both accordingly struck off the highway, and took a short path across the fields, while at every step the water spurted up out of the spongy soil, so that they were soon wet nearly to their knees, so thoroughly saturated was the ground with the rain which had incessantly fallen. After toiling thro' plashy fields, they at length went up, as Sullivan had said, by an old unfrequented footpath, that ran behind his garden, the back of which consisted of a thick elder hedge, through which scarcely the heaviest rain could penetrate. At one end of this garden, through a small angle, forming a *cul de sac*, or point, where the hedge was joined by one of white thorn, ran the little obsolete pathway alluded to, and as another angle brought them at once upon the spot we are describing, it would so happen that if any one had been found there when they appeared, it would be impossible to leave it if they wished to do so, without directly meeting them, there being no other mode of egress from it except by the footpath in question.

In that sheltered nook, then, our travellers

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"IT IS FALSE," REPLIED THE YOUNG FELLOW, WITH KINDLING EYE.—*The Black Phophet*, chap. ii, *p.* 785.

found a young man about two or three and twenty, holding the unresisting hand of a very beautiful and bashful-looking girl, not more than nineteen, between his. From their position, and the earnestness with which the young peasant addressed her, there could be but little doubt as to the subject matter of their conversation. If a bolt from the thunder which had been rolling a little back among the mountains, and which was still faintly heard in the distance, had fallen at the feet of the young persons in question, it could not have filled them with more alarm than the appearance of Sullivan and the prophet. The girl, who became pale and red by turns, hung her head, then covered her face with her hands; and after a short and ineffectual struggle, burst into tears, exclaiming—

"Oh, my God, it is my father!"

The youth, for he seemed scarcely to have reached maturity, after a hesitating glance at Sullivan, seemed at once to have determined the course of conduct he should pursue. His eye assumed a bold and resolute look—he held himself more erect—and, turning towards the girl, without removing his gaze from her father, he said in a loud and manly tone—

"Dear Mave, it is foolish to be frightened. What have you done that ought to make you aither ashamed or afeared? If there's blame anywhere, it's mine, not yours, and I'll bear it."

Sullivan, on discovering this stolen interview—for such it was—felt precisely as a man would feel, who found himself unexpectedly within the dart of a rattlesnake, with but one chance of safety in his favor and a thousand against him. His whole frame literally shook with the deadly depth of his resentment; and in a voice which fully betrayed its vehemence, he replied—

"Blame! ay, shame an' blame—sin an' sorrow there is an' ought to rest upon her for this unnatural and cursed meetin'! Blame! surely, an' as I stand here to witness her shame, I tell her that there would not be a just God in Heaven, if she's not yet punished for holdin' this guilty discoorse with the son of the man that has her uncle's blood—my brother's blood—on his hand of murdher——"

"It's false," replied the young fellow, with kindling eye; "it's false, from your teeth to your marrow. I know my father's heart an' his thought—an' I say that whoever charges him with the murder of your brother, is a liar—a false and damnable li——"

He checked himself ere he closed the sentence.

"Jerry Sullivan," said he, in an altered voice, "I ax your pardon for the words—it's but natural you should feel as you do; but if it was any other man than yourself that brought the charge of blood against my father, I would tramp upon him where he stands."

"An' maybe murdher him, as my poor brother was murdhered. Dalton, I see the love of blood in your eye," replied Sullivan, bitterly.

"Why," replied the other, "you have no proof that the man was murdered at all. His body was never found; and no one can say what became of him. For all that any one knows to the contrary, he may be alive still."

"Begone, sirra," said Sullivan, in a burst of impetuous resentment which he could not restrain, "if I ever know you to open your lips to that daughter of mine—if the mane crature *can* be my daughter—I'll make it be the blackest deed but one that ever a Dalton did; and as for you—go in at wonst—I'll make you hear me by and by."

Dalton looked at him once more with a kindling but a smiling eye.

"Speak what you like," said he—"I'll curb myself. Only, if you wish your daughter to go in, you had better leave the way and let her pass."

Mave—for such was her name—with trembling limbs, burning blushes and palpitating heart, then passed from the shady angle where they stood; but ere she did, one quick and lightning glance was bestowed upon her lover, which, brief though it was, he felt as a sufficient consolation for the enmity of her father.

The prophet had not yet spoken; nor indeed had time been given him to do so, had he been inclined. He looked on, however, with surprise, which soon assumed the appearance, as well as the reality, of some malignant satisfaction which he could not conceal.

He eyed Dalton with a grin of peculiar bitterness.

"Well," said he, "it's the general opinion that if any one knows or can tell what the future may bring about, I can; an', if my knowledge doesn't desave me, Dalton, I think, while you're before me, that I'm lookin' at a man that was never born to be drowned at any rate. I prophecy that, die when you may, you'll live to see your own funeral."

"If you're wise," replied the young man, "you'll not provoke me now. Jerry Sullivan may say what he wishes—he's safe, an' he knows why; but I warn you, Donnel Dhu, to take no liberty with me; I'll not bear it."

"Troth, I don't blame Jerry Sullivan," re-

joined the prophet. "Of coorse no man would wish to have a son-in-law hanged. It's in the prophecy that you'll go to the surgeons yet."

"Did you foresee in your prophecies this mornin' that you'd get yourself well drubbed before night?" asked Dalton, bristling up.

"No," said the other; "my prophecy seen no one able to do it."

"You and your prophecy are liars, then," retorted the other: "an' in the doom you're kind enough to give me, don't be too sure but you meant yourself. There's more of murdher an' the gallows in your face than there is in mine. That's all I'll say, Donnel. Any thing else you'll get from me will be a blow; so take care of yourself."

"Let him alone, Donnel," said Sullivan; "it's not safe to meddle with one of his name. You don't know what harm he may do you."

"I'm not afeard of him," said the prophet, with a sneer; "he'll find himself a little mistaken, if he tries his hand. It won't be for me you'll hang, my lad."

The words were scarcely uttered when a terrific blow on the eye, struck with the rapidity of lightning, shot him to the earth, where he lay for about half a minute, apparently insensible. He then got up, and after shaking his head, as if to rid himself of a sense of confusion and stupor, looked at Dalton for some time.

"Well," said he, "it's all over now—but the truth is, the fault was my own. I provoked him too much, an' without any occasion. I'm sorry you struck me, Condy, for I was only jokin' all the time. I never had ill-will against you; an' in spite of what has happened, I haven't now."

A feeling of generous regret, almost amounting to remorse, instantly touched Dalton's heart; he seized the hand of Donnel, and expressed his sorrow for the blow he had given him.

"My God," he exclaimed, "why did I strike you? But sure no one could for a minute suppose that you weren't in earnest."

"Well, well," said the other, "let it be a warnin' to both of us; to me, in the first place, never to carry a joke too far; and to you, never to allow your passion to get the bether of you, afaird that you might give a blow in anger that you'd have cause to repent of all the days of your life. My eye and cheek is in a frightful state; but no matther, Condy, I forgive you, especially in the hope that you'll mark my advice."

Dalton once more asked his pardon, and expressed his unqualified sorrow at what had occurred; after which he again shook hands with Dalton and departed.

Sullivan felt surprised at this rencontre especially at the nature of its singular termination; he seemed, however, to fall into a meditative and gloomy mood, and observed when Dalton had gone—

"If I ever had any doubt, Donnel, that my poor brother owed his death to a Dalton, I haven't it now."

"I don't blame you much for sayin' so," replied Donnel. "I'm sorry myself for what has happened, and especially as you were present. I'm afeard, indeed, that a man's life would be but little in that boy's hands under a fit of passion. I provoked him too much, though."

"I think so," said Sullivan. "Indeed, to tell you the truth, I had as little notion that you wor jokin' as he had."

"That's my drame out last night, at all events," said Donnel.

"How is that?" asked Sullivan, as they approached the door.

"Why," said he, "I dreamed that I was lookin' for a hammer at your house, an' I thought that you hadn't one to give me; but your daughter Mave came to me, and said, 'here's a hammer for you, Donnel, an' take care of it, for it belongs to Condy Dalton.' I thought I took it, an' the first thing I found myself doin' was drivin' a nail in what appeared to be my own coffin. The same dhrame would alarm me but that I know that dhrames goes by contrairies, as I've reason to think this will."

"No man understands these things better than yourself, Donnel," said Sullivan; "but, for my part, I think there's a dangerous kick in the boy that jist left us; and I'm much mistaken or the world will hear of it an' know it yet."

"Well, well," said Donnel Dhu, in a very Christian-like spirit, "I fear you're right, Jerry; but still let us hope for the best."

And as he spoke, they entered the house.

CHAPTER III.

A Family on the Decline—Omens.

Jerry Sullivan's house and place had about them all the marks and tokens of gradual decline. The thatch on the roof had begun to get black, and in some places was sinking into rotten ridges; the yard was untidy and dirty; the walls and hedges were broken and dismantled; and the gates were lying about, or swinging upon single hinges. The whole air of the premises was uncomfortable to the spectator, who could not avoid feeling that there existed in the owner either wilful neg-

lect or unsuccessful struggle. The chimneys, from which the thatch had sank down, stood up with the incrustations of lime that had been trowelled round their bases, projecting uselessly out from them; some of the quoins had fallen from the gable; the plaster came off the walls in several places, and the white-wash was sadly discolored.

Inside, the aspect of everything was fully as bad, if not worse. Tables and chairs, and the general furniture of the house, had all that character of actual cleanliness and apparent want of care which poverty superinduces upon the most strenuous efforts of industry. The floor was beginning to break up into holes; tables and chairs were crazy; the dresser, though clean, had a cold, hungry, unfurnished look; and, what was unquestionably the worst symptom of all, the inside of the chimney brace, where formerly the sides and flitches of deep, fat bacon, grey with salt, were arrayed in goodly rows, now presented nothing but the bare and dust-covered hooks, from which they had depended in happier times. About a dozen of herrings hung at one side of a worn salt-box, and at the other a string of onions that was nearly stripped, both constituting the principal *kitchen*, varied, perhaps, with a little buttermilk,—which Sullivan's family were then able to afford themselves with their potatoes.

We cannot close our description here, however; for sorry we are to say, that the severe traces of poverty were as visible upon the inmates themselves as upon the house and its furniture. Sullivan's family consisted of his eldest daughter, aged nineteen, two growing boys, the eldest about sixteen, and several younger children besides. These last were actually ragged—all of them were scantily and poorly clothed; and if any additional proof were wanting that poverty, in one of its most trying shapes, had come among them, it was to be found in their pale, emaciated features, and in that languid look of care and depression, which any diminution in the natural quantity of food for any length of time uniformly impresses upon the countenance. In fact, the whole group had a sickly and wo-worn appearance, as was evident from the unnatural dejection of the young, who, instead of exhibiting the cheerfulness and animation of youth, now moped about without gayety, sat brooding in corners, or struggled for a warm place nearest to the dull and cheerless fire.

"The day was, Donnel," said Sullivan, whilst he pointed, with a sigh, to the unfurnished chimney, "when we could give you—as I said awhile agone—a bether welcome—in one sense—I mane bether tratement—than we can give you now; but you know the times that is in it, an' you know the downcome we have got, an' that the whole country has got—so you must only take the will for the deed now—to such as we have you're heartily welcome. Get us some dinner, Bridget," he added, turning to his wife; "but, first and foremost, bring that girl into the room here till she hears what I have to say to her; and, Donnel, as you wor a witness to the disgraceful sight we seen a while agone, come in an' hear, too, what I'm goin' to say to her. I'll have no black thraisin in my own family against my own blood, an' against the blood of my loving brother, that was so traicherously shed by that boy's father."

The persons he addressed immediately passed into the cold, damp room as he spoke—Mave, the cause of all this anxiety, evidently in such a state of excitement as was pitiable. Her mother, who, as well as every other member of the family, had been ignorant of this extraordinary attachment, seemed perfectly bewildered by the language of her husband, at whom, as at her daughter, she looked with a face on which might be read equal amazement and alarm.

Mave Sullivan was a young creature, shaped with extraordinary symmetry, and possessed of great natural grace. Her stature was tall, and all her motions breathed unstudied ease and harmony. In color, her long, abundant hair was beautifully fair—precisely of that delightful shade which generally accompanies a pale but exquisitely clear and almost transparent complexion. Her face was oblong, and her features so replete with an expression of innocence and youth, as left on the beholder a conviction that she breathed of utter guilelessness and angelic purity itself. This was principally felt in the bewitching charm of her smile, which was irresistible, and might turn the heart of a demon into love. All her motions were light and elastic, and her whole figure, though not completely developed, was sufficiently rounded by the fulness of health and youth to give promise of a rich and luxurious maturity. On this occasion she became deadly pale, but as she was one of those whose beauty only assumes a new phase of attraction at every change, her paleness now made her appear, if possible, an object of greater interest.

"In God's name, Jerry," asked her mother, looking from father to daughter in a state of much distress, "what is wrong, or what has happened to put you in such a condition? I see by the anger in your eye an' the whiteness of your cheeks, barrin' the little red spot in the middle, that something out o' the way all out has happened to vex you."

"You may well say so, Bridget," he re-

plied; "but when I tell you that I came upon that undutiful daughter of ours coortin' wid the son of the man that murdhered her uncle—my only brother—you won't be surprised at the state you see me in—coortin' wid a fellow that Dan M'Gowan here knows will be hanged yet, for he's jist afther tellin' him so."

"You're ravin', Jerry," exclaimed his wife, who appeared to feel the matter as incredible; "you don't mane to tell me that she'd spake to, or know, or make any freedoms whatsomever wid young Condy Dalton, the son of her uncle's murdherer? Hut, no, Jerry, don't say that, at all events—any disgrace but that—death, the grave—or—or anything—but sich an unnatural curse as that would be."

"I found them together behind the garden not many minutes ago," replied Sullivan. "Donnel here seen them as well as I did—deny it she can't; an' now let her say what brought her there to meet him, or rather what brought him all the way to meet her? Answer me that, you disgrace to the name—answer me at wanst!"

The poor girl trembled and became so weak as to be scarcely able to stand: in fact, she durst not raise her eye to meet that of either parent, but stood condemned and incapable of utterance.

The night had now nearly set in, and one of her little sisters entered with a rush candle in her hand, the light of which, as it fell dimly and feebly on the group, gave to the proceedings a wild and impressive appearance. The prophecy-man, with his dark, stern look, peculiar nose, and black raven hair that fell thickly over his shoulders, contrasted strongly with the fair, artless countenance and beautiful figure of the girl who stood beside him, whilst over opposite them were Sullivan himself and his wife, their faces pale with sorrow, anxiety, and indignation.

"Give me the candle," proceeded her father; "hand it to me, child, and leave the room; then," he proceeded, holding it up to a great-coat of frieze which hung against the wall—"there's his coat—there's my lovin' brother's coat; look upon it now, an' ax yourself what do you desarve for meeting against our will an' consint the son of him that has the murdher of the man that owned it on his hands an' on his heart? What do you desarve, I say?"

The girl spoke not, but the black prophet, struck by the words and the unexpected appearance of the murdered man's coat, started; in a moment, however, he composed himself, and calmly turned his eyes upon Sullivan, who proceeded to address his daughter.

"You have nothing to say, then? You're guilty, an' of coorse you have no excuse to make; however, I'll soon put an end to all this. Bring me a prayerbook. If your book oath can bind you down against ever——"

He could proceed no further. On uttering the last words, his daughter tottered, and would have fallen to the ground, had not Donnel Dhu caught her in his arms. She had, in fact, become almost insensible from excess of shame and over excitement, and, as Donnel carried her towards a bed that was in the corner of the room, her head lay over against his face.

It is unnecessary to say that Sullivan's indignation was immediately lost in alarm. On bringing the candle near her, the first thing they observed were streaks of blood upon Donnel Dhu's face, that gave to it, in connection with the mark of the blow he had received, a frightful and hideous expression.

"What is this?" exclaimed her mother, seizing the candle and holding it to the beautiful features of her trembling daughter, which were now also dabbled with blood. "In God's name, what ails my child? O Mave, Mave, my darlin', what's come over you? Blessed mother of marcy, what blood is this? Achora, machree, Mave, spake to me—to the mother that 'ud go distracted, an' that will, too, if anything's wrong wid you. It was cruel in you, Jerry, to spake to her so harsh as you did, an' to take her to task before a sthranger in such a cuttin' manner. Saiver of Airth, Mave, darlin', won't you spake to me, to your own mother?"

"Maybe I did spake to her too severely," said the father, now relenting, "an' if I did, may God forgive me; for sure you know, Bridget, I wouldn't injure a hair of my darlin's head. But this blood! this blood! oh, where did it come from?"

Her weakness, however, proved of but short duration, and their apprehension was soon calmed. Mave looked around her rather wildly, and no sooner had her eyes rested on Donnel Dhu than she shrieked aloud, and turning her face away from him, with something akin to fear and horror, she flung herself into her mother's arms, exclaiming, as she hid her face in her bosom:

"Oh save me from that man; don't let him near me; don't let him touch me. I can't tell why, but I'm deadly afraid of him. What blood is that upon his face? Father, stand between us!"

"Foolish girl!" exclaimed her father, "you don't know what you're sayin'. Of coorse, Donnel, you'll not heed her words·

for, indeed, she hasn't come to herself yet. But, in God's name, where *did* this blood come from that's upon you and her?"

"You can't suppose, Jerry," said Donnel, "that the poor girl's words would make me take any notice of them. She has been too much frightened, and won't know, maybe in a few minutes, that she spoke them at all."

"That's thrue," said her mother; "but with regard to the blood——"

She was about to proceed, when Mave rose up, and requested to be taken out of the room.

"Bring me to the kitchen," said she, "I'm afraid; and see this blood, mother."

Precisely as she spoke, a few drops of blood fell from her nose, which, of course, accounted for its appearance on Donnel's face, and probably for her terror also at his repulsive aspect.

"What makes you afeard of poor Donnel, asthore?" asked her mother—"a man that wouldn't injure a hair of your head, nor of one belongin' to you, an' never did."

"Why, when my father," she returned, "spoke about the coat there, an' just as Donnel started, I looked at it, an' seen it movin', I don't know why, but I got afeard of him."

Sullivan held up the candle mechanically, as she spoke, towards the coat, upon which they all naturally gazed; but, whether from its dim flickering light, or the force of imagination, cannot be determined, one thing was certain, the coat appeared actually to move again, as if disturbed by some invisible hand. Again, also, the prophet involuntary started, but only for a single moment.

"Tut," said he, "it's merely the unsteady light of the candle; show it here."

He seized the rushlight from Sullivan, and approaching the coat, held it so close to it, that had there been the slightest possible motion, it could not have escaped their observation.

"Now," he added, "you see whether it moves or not; but, indeed, the poor girl is so frightened by the great scowldin' she got, that I don't wondher at the way she's in."

Mrs. Sullivan kept still gazing at the coat, in a state of terror almost equal to that of her daughter.

"Well," said she, "I've often heard it said that one is sometimes to disbelieve their own eyes; an' only that I known the thing couldn't happen, I would swear on the althar that I seen it movin'."

"I thought so myself, too," observed Sullivan, who also seemed to have been a good deal perplexed and awed by the impression; "but of coorse I agree wid Donnel, that it was the unsteady light of the rush that made us think so; howaniver, it doesn't matther now; move or no move, it won't bring him that owned it back to us, so God rest him!—and now, Bridget, thry an' get us somethin' to ait."

"Before the girl leaves the room," said the prophecy man, "let me spake what I think an' what I know. I've lost many a weary day an' night in studyin' the further, an' in lookin' into what's to come. I must spake, then, what I think an' what I know, regardin' her. I must; for when the feelin' is on me, I can't keep the prophecy back."

"Oh! let me go, mother," exclaimed the alarmed girl; "let me go; I can't bear to look at him."

"One minute, acushla, till you hear what he has to say to you," and she held her back with a kind of authoritative violence, as Mave attempted to leave the room.

"Don't be alarmed my purty creature," spoke the prophet; "don't be alarmed at what I'm goin' to say to you, an' about you, for you needn't. I see great good fortune before you. I see a grand an' handsome husband at your side, and a fine house to live in. I see stairs, an' carpets, an' horses, an' hounds, an' yourself, with jewels in your white little ears, an' silks, an' satins on your purty figure. That's a wakin' dhrame I had, an' you may all mark my words, if it doesn't come out thrue; it's on the leaf, an' the leaf was open to me. Grandeur an' wealth is before her, for *her beauty an' her goodness will bring it all about*, an' so I read it."

"An' what about the husband himself?" asked the mother, whose affections caused her to feel a strong interest in anything that might concern the future interest of her daughter; "can you tell us nothing about his appearance, that we might give a guess at him?"

"No," replied M'Gowan, for such was the prophet's name, "not to you; to none but herself can I give the marks an' tokens that will enable her to know the man that is to be her husband when she sees him; and to herself, in the mornin', I will, before I go—that is if she'll allow me—for what is written in the dark book ought to be read and expounded. *Her beauty an' her goodness will do it all.*"

The man's words were uttered in a voice so replete with those soft and insinuating tones that so powerfully operate upon the female heart; they breathed, too, such an earnest spirit of good will, joined to an evident admiration of the beauty and goodness he alluded to, that the innocent girl, notwithstanding her previous aversion, felt something like gratification at what he said,

not on account of the prospects held out to her, but because of the singular charm and affectionate spirit which breathed in his voice; or, might it not have been that delicate influence of successful flattery which so gently pervades the heart of woman, and soothes that vanity which unconsciously lurks in the very purest and most innocent of the sex? So far from being flattered by his predictions, she experienced a strong sensation of disappointment, because she knew where her affections at that moment rested, and felt persuaded that if she were destined to enjoy the grandeur shadowed out for her, it never could be with him whom she then loved. Notwithstanding all this, she felt her repugnance against the prophet strongly counterbalanced by the strange influence he began to exercise over her; and with this impression she and they passed to the kitchen, where in a few minutes she was engaged in preparing food for him, with a degree of good feeling that surprised herself.

There is scarcely anything so painful to hearts naturally generous, like those of the Sullivans, as the contest between the shame and exposure of the conscious poverty on the one hand, and the anxiety to indulge in a hospitable spirit on the other. Nobody unacquainted with Ireland could properly understand the distress of mind which this conflict almost uniformly produces. On the present occasion it was deeply felt by this respectable but declining family, and Mave, the ingenuous and kind-hearted girl, felt much of her unaccountable horror of this man removed by its painful exercise. Still her aversion was not wholly overcome, although much diminished; for, ever as she looked at his swollen and disfigured face, and thought of the mysterious motions of the murdered man's coat, she could not avoid turning away her eyes, and wishing that she had not seen him that evening. The scanty meal was at length over; a meal on which many a young eye dwelt with those yearning looks that take their character from the hungry and wolfish spirit which marks the existence of a "*hard year*," as it is called in our unfortunate country, and which, to a benevolent heart, forms such a sorrowful subject for contemplation. Poor Bridget Sullivan did all in her power to prevent this evident longing from being observed by M'Gowan, by looking significantly, shaking her head, and knitting her brows, at the children; and when these failed she had recourse to threatening attitudes, and all kinds of violent gestures: and on these proving also unsuccessful, she was absolutely forced to speak aloud—

"Come, childhre, start out now, an' play yourselves; be off, I say, an' don't stand ready to jump down the daicent man's throat wid every bit he aits."

She then drove them abroad somewhere, but as the rain fell heavily the poor creatures were again forced to return, and resume their pitiable watch until the two men had finished their scanty repast.

Seated around the dull and uncomfortable fire, the whole family now forgot the hunger and care for a time, in the wild legends with which M'Gowan entertained them, until the hour of rest.

"We haven't the best bed in the world," observed Sullivan, "nor the best bed-clothes aither, but, as I said before, I wish, for all our sakes, they were betther. You must take your chance with these two slips o' boys to-night as well as you can. If you wish to tumble in now you may; or, may be you'd join us in our prayers. We sthrive. God help us, to say a Rosary every night; for, afther all, there's nothin' like puttin' oneself undher the holy protection of the Almighty, blessed be His name! Indeed, this sickness that's goin' is so rife and dangerous that it's good to sthrive to be prepared, as it is indeed, whatever comes, whether hunger or plenty, sickness or health; an' may God keep us prepared always!"

M'Gowan seemed for a moment at a loss, but almost immediately said in reply—

"You are right, Jerry, but as for me, I say whatever prayers I *do* say, always by myself; for I can then get my mind fixed upon them betther. I'll just turn into bed, then, for troth I feel a little stiff and tired; so you must only let me have my own way to-night. To-morrow night I'll pray double."

He then withdrew to his appointed place of rest, where, after having partially undressed himself, he lay down, and for some time could hear no other sound than the solemn voices of this struggling and afflicted little fold, as they united in offering up their pious and simple act of worship to that Great Being, in whose providential care they felt such humble and confiding trust.

When their devotions were concluded, they quietly, and in a spirit at once of resignation and melancholy, repaired to their respective sleeping places, with the exception of old Sullivan himself, who, after some hesitation, took down the great coat already so markedly alluded to, and exclaiming, partly to those within hearing—

"I don't know—but still there can't be any harm in it; sure it's betther that it should be doin' some good than hangin' up there idle, against the wall, such a night as this. Here, Dan, for the first time since I put it

up wid my own hands, except to shake the dust off of it, I'm goin' to turn this big coat to some use. There," he added, spreading it over them; "let it help to keep you warm to-night—for God knows, you want it, you an' them poor gorsoons. Your coverin' is but light, an' you may hear the downpowrin' of rain that's in it; an' the wind, too, is risin' fast, every minute—gettin' so strong, indeed, that I doubt it 'ill be a storm before it stops; an' Dan, if it 'udn't be too much, may be you'd not object to offer up one *pather an' avy* for the poor sowl of him that owned it, an' that was brought to his account so suddenly and so terribly. There," he added, fixing it upon them; "it helps to keep you warm at any rate; an' it's surely betther to have it so employed than hangin' idle, as I said, against the wall."

M'Gowan immediately sat up in the bed, and putting down his hands, removed the coat.

"We don't want it at all," he replied; "take it away, Jerry—do, for heaven's sake. The night's not at all so cowld as you think, an' we'll keep one another warm enough wid-out it, never fear."

"Troth you *do* want it," said Sullivan; "for *fareer gair*, it's the light coverin' that's over you an' them, poor boys. Heighho, Dan, see what innocence is—poor things, they're sound already—an' may God pity them an' provide for them, or enable me to do it!" And as he looked down upon the sleeping lads, the tears came so abundantly to his eyes, that he was forced to wipe them away. "Keep the coat, Dan," he added; "you *do* want it."

"No," replied the other. "The truth is, I couldn't sleep under it. I'm very timersome, an' a little thing frightens me."

"Oh," said Sullivan, "I didn't think of that: in troth, if you're timersome, it's more than the world b'lieves of you. Well, well—I'll hang it up again; so good night, an' a sound sleep to you, an' to every man that has a free conscience in the sight of God!"

No response was given to this prayer, and his words were followed by a deep and solemn silence, that was only broken occasionally by the heavy pattering of the descending rain, and the fitful gusts of the blast, as they rushed against the house, and sung wildly among the few trees by which it and the garden were enclosed.

Every one knows that a night of wind and storm, if not rising actually to a tempest or hurricane, is precisely that on which sleep falls with its deepest influence upon men. Sullivan's family, on that which we are describing, were a proof of this; at least until about the hour of three o'clock, when they were startled by a cry for help, so loud and frightful, that in a moment he and the boys huddled on their dress, and hurried to the bed in which the prophet lay. In a minute or two they got a candle lit; and truly the appearance of the man was calculated to drive fear and alarm into their hearts. They found him sitting in the bed, with his eyes so wild and staring that they seemed straining out of their sockets. His hair was erect, and his mouth half open, and drawn back; while the perspiration poured from him in torrents. His hands were spread, and held up, with their palms outwards, as if in the act of pushing something back that seemed to approach him. "Help," he shouted, "he is comin' on me—he will have me powerless in a minute. He is gaspin' now, as he—Stay back, stay back—here—here, help; it's the murdhered man—he's upon me. Oh!—Oh, God! he's comin' nearer and nearer. Help me—save me!"

Sullivan on holding the candle to his face, perceived that he was still asleep; and suspecting the nature of his dream, he awoke him at once. On seeing a portion of the family about him, he started again, and looked for a moment so completely aghast that he resembled horror personified.

"Who—what—what are you? Oh," he exclaimed, recovering, and striving to compose himself, "ha—Good God! what a frightful drame I had. I thought I was murdherin' a man; murdherin' the"—he paused, and stared wildly about him.

"Murdherin' who?" asked Jerry.

"Murdherin'! eh—ha—why, who talks about murdherin'?"

"Compose yourself," added Sullivan; "you did; but you're frightened. You say you thought you were murdherin' some one; who was it?"

"Yes, yes," he replied; "it was myself. I thought the murdhered man was—I mean, that the man was murdherin' myself." And he looked with a terrible shudder of fear towards the great coat.

"Hut," said Sullivan, "it was only a drame; compose yourself; why should you be alarmed?—your hand is free of it. So, as I said, compose yourself; put your trust in God, an' recommend yourself to his care."

"It was a terrible drame," said the other, once more shuddering; "but then it was a drame. Good God, yes! However, I ax pardon for disturbin' you all, an' breaking in upon your sleep. Go to bed now; I'm well enough; only jist set that bit of candle by the bed-side for awhile, till I recover, for I did get a fearful fright."

He then laid himself down once more, and

having wiped the perspiration from his forehead, which was now cadaverous, he bade them good night, and again endeavored to compose himself to rest. In this he eventually succeeded, the candle burning itself out; and in about three-quarters of an hour the whole family were once more wrapped in sound and uninterrupted repose.

The next morning the Sullivan family rose to witness another weary and dismal day of incessant rain, and to partake of a breakfast of thin stirabout, made and served up with that woful ingenuity, which necessity, the mother of invention in periods of scarcity, as well as in matters of a different character, had made known to the benevolent hearted wife of Jerry Sullivan. That is to say, the victuals were made so unsubstantially thin, that in order to impose, if possible, on the appetite, it was deemed necessary to deceive the eye by turning the plates and dishes round and round several times, while the viands were hot, so as by spreading them over a larger surface, to give the appearance of a greater quantity. It is, heaven knows, a melancholy cheat, but one with which the periodical famines of our unhappy country have made our people too well acquainted. Previous, however, to breakfast, the prophet had a private interview with Mave, or the *Gra Gal*, as she was generally termed to denote her beauty and extraordinary power of conciliating affection; *Gra Gal* signifying the fair love, or to give the more comprehensive meaning which it implied, the fair-haired beauty whom all love, or who wins all love. This interview lasted, at least, a quarter of an hour, or it might be twenty minutes, but as the object of it did not then transpire, we can only explain the appearances which followed it, so far at least, as the parties themselves were concerned. The *Gra Gal*, as we shall occasionally call her, seemed pleased, if not absolutely gratified, by the conversation that passed between them. Her eye was elated, and she moved about like one who appeared to have been relieved from some reflection that had embarrassed and depressed her; still it might have been observed that this sense of relief had nothing in it directly affecting the person of the prophet himself, on whom her eyes fell from time to time with a glance that changed its whole expression of satisfaction to one of pain and dislike. On his part there also appeared a calm sedate feeling of satisfaction, under which, however, an eye better acquainted with human nature might easily detect a triumph. He looked, to those who could properly understand him, precisely as an able diplomatist would who had succeeded in gaining a point.

When breakfast was over, and previous to his departure, he brought Jerry Sullivan and his wife out to the barn, and in a tone and manner of much mystery, assuming at the same time that figurative and inflated style so peculiar to him, and also to his rival the *Senachie*, he thus addressed them—

"Listen," said he, "listen, Jerry Sullivan, and Bridget, his wife; a child was born, and a page was written—the moon saw it, and the stars saw it; but the sun did not, for he is dark to fate an' sees nothing but the face of nature. Do you understand that, Jerry Sullivan, an' you Bridget, his wife?"

"Well, troth we can't say we do yet, at all events," they replied; "but how could we, ye know, if it's regardin' prophecy you're spakin'."

"Undherstand it!" he replied, contemptuously, "*you* undherstand it!—no nor Father Philemy Corcoran himself couldn't undherstand it, barrin' he fasted and prayed, and refrained from liquor, for that's the way to get the kay o' knowledge; at least it's the way I got it first—however, let that pass. As I was sayin' a child was born and a page was written—and an angel from heaven was sent to Nebbychodanazor, the prophet, who was commanded to write. What will I write? says Nebbychodanazor, the prophet. Write down the fate of a faymale child, by name Mave Sullivan, daughter to Jerry Sullivan and his wife Bridget, of Aughmaurrin. Amin, says the prophet; fate is fate, what's before is not behind, neither is what's behind before, and every thing will come to pass that's to happen. Amin, agin, says the prophet, an' what am I to write? Grandeur an' wealth—up stairs and down stairs—silks an' satins—an inside car—bracelets, earrings, and Spanish boots, made of Morroccy leather, tanned at Cordovan. Amin, agin, says Nebbychodanazor, the prophet; this is not that, neither is that the other, but every is everything—naither can something be nothing, nor nothing something, to the end of time; and time itself is but cousin jarmin to eternity—as is recorded in the great book of fate, fortune and fatality. Write again, says the angel. What am I to write? At the name of Mabel Sullivan place along wid all the rest, two great paragons of a woman's life, Marriage and Prosperity—write marriage happy, and prosperity numerous—and so the child's born, an' the page written—beauty and goodness, a happy father, and a proud mother—both made wealthy through her means."

"And so," he proceeded, dropping the recitative, and resuming his natural voice—

"Be kind and indulgent to your daughter, for she'll yet live to make all your fortunes

Take care of her and yourself till I sees yez again."

And without adding another word be departed.

CHAPTER IV.

A Dance, and Double Discovery.

THE dance to which Sarah M'Gowan went after the conflict with her step-mother, was but a miserable specimen of what a dance usually is in Ireland. On that occasion, there were but comparatively few assembled; and these few, as may be guessed, consisted chiefly of those gay and frolicsome spirits whom no pressure of distress, nor anything short of sickness or death, could sober down into seriousness. The meeting, in fact, exhibited a painful union of mirth and melancholy. The season brought with it none of that relief to the peasantry which usually makes autumn so welcome. On the contrary, the failure of the potato crop, especially in its quality, as well as that in the grain generally, was not only the cause of hunger and distress, but also of the sickness which prevailed. The poor were forced, as they too often are, to dig their potatoes before they were fit for food; and the consequences were disastrous to themselves in every sense. Sickness soon began to appear; but then it was supposed that as soon as the new grain came in, relief would follow. In this expectation, however, they were, alas! most wofully disappointed. The wetness of the summer and autumn had soured and fermented the grain so lamentably, that the use of it transformed the sickness occasioned by the unripe and bad potatoes into a terrible and desolating epidemic. At the period we are treating of, this awful scourge had just set in, and was begining to carry death and misery in all their horrors throughout the country. It was no wonder, then, that, at the dance we are describing, there was an almost complete absence of that cheerful and light-hearted enjoyment which is, or at least which was, to be found at such meetings. It was, besides, owing to the severity of the evening, but thinly attended. Such a family had two or three members of it sick; another had buried a fine young woman; a third, an only son; a fourth, had lost the father, and the fifth, the mother of a large family. In fact, the conversation on this occasion was rather a catalogue of calamity and death, than that hearty ebullition of animal spirits which throws its laughing and festive spirits into such assemblies. Two there were, however, who, despite of the gloom which darkened both the dance and the day, contrived to sustain our national reputation for gayety and mirth. One of these was our friend, Sarah, or, as she was better known, Sally M'Gowan, and the other a young fellow named Charley Hanlon, who acted as a kind of gardener and steward to Dick o' the Grange. This young fellow possessed great cheerfulness, and such an everlasting fund of mirth and jocularity, as made him the life and soul of every dance, wake, and merry-meeting in the parish. He was quite a Lothario in his sphere—a lady-killer—and so general an admirer of the sex, that he invariably made love to every pretty girl he met, or could lure into conversation. The usual consequences followed. Nobody was such a favorite with the sex in general, who were ready to tear each other's caps about him, as they sometimes actually did; and indeed this is not at all to be wondered at. The fellow was one of the most open, hardy liars that ever lived. Of shame he had heard; but of what it meant, no earthly eloquence could give him the slighest perception; and we need scarcely add, that his assurance was boundless, as were his powers of flattery. It is unnecessary to say, then, that a man so admirably calculated to succeed with the sex, was properly appreciated by them, and that his falsehood, flattery, and assurance were virtues which enshrined the vagabond in their hearts. In short, he had got the character of being a rake; and he was necessarily obliged to suffer the agreeable penalty of their admiration and favor in consequence. The fellow besides, was by no means ill-looking, nor ill-made, but just had enough of that kind of face and figure which no one can readily either find fault with or praise.

This gallant and Sally M'Gowan, were in fact, the life of the meeting; and Sally, besides, had the reputation of being a great favorite with *him*—a circumstance which considerably diminished her popularity with her own sex. She herself felt towards him that kind of wild, indomitable affection, which is as vehement as it is unregulated in such minds as hers. For instance, she made no secret of her attachment to him, but on the contrary, gloried in it, even to her father, who, on this subject, could exercise no restraint whatsoever over her. It is not our intention to entertain our readers with the history of the occurrences which took place at the dance, as they are, in fact, not worth recording. Hanlon, at its close, prepared to see Sally home, as is usual.

"You may come with me *near* home," she replied; "but I'm not goin' home to-night."

"Why," he asked, "where the dickens are you goin' then?"

"To Barny Gormly's wake; there 'ill be lots of fun there, too," she replied. "But come—you can come wid me as far as the turn-up to the house; for I won't go in, nor go home neither, till afther the berril, to-morrow."

"Do you know," said he, rather gravely, "the Grey Stone that's at the mouth of the Black Glen?"

"I ought," said she; "sure that's where the carman was found murdhered."

"The same," added Hanlon. "Well, I must go that far to-night," said he.

"And that's jist where I turn off to the Gormly's."

"So far, then, we'll be together," he replied.

"But why that far only, Charley—eh?"

"That's what you could never guess," said he, "and very few else aither; but go I must, an' go I will. At all events, I'll be company for you in passin' it. Are you never afeard at night, as you go near it?"

"Divil a taste," she replied; "what 'ud I be afeard of? my father laughs at sich things; although," she added, musing, "I think he's sometimes timorous for all that. But I know he's often out at all hours, and *he says* he doesn't care about ghosts—I know I don't."

The conversation now flagged a little, and Hanlon, who had been all the preceding part of the evening full of mirth and levity, could scarcely force himself to reply to her observations, or sustain any part in the dialogue.

"Why, what the sorra's comin' over you?" she asked, as they began to enter into the shadow of the hill at whose foot her father's cabin stood, and which here, for about two hundred yards, fell across the road. "It is gettin' afeard you are?"

"No," he replied; "but I was given to undherstand last night, that if I'd come this night to the Grey Stone, I'd find out a saicret that I'd give a great deal to know."

"Very well," she replied, "we'll see that; an' now, raise your spirits. Here we're in the moonlight, thank goodness, such as it is. Dear me, thin, but it's an awful night, and the wind's risin'; and listen to the flood, how it roars in the glen below, like a thousand bulls!"

"It is," he replied; "but hould your tongue now for a little, and as you're here stop wid me for a while, although I don't see how I'm likely to come by much knowledge in sich a place as this."

They now approached the Grey Stone, and as they did the moon came out a little from her dark shrine of clouds, but merely with that dim and feeble light which was calculated to add ghastliness and horror to the wildness and desolation of the place.

Sally could now observe that her companion was exceedingly pale and agitated; his voice, as he spoke, became disturbed and infirm; and as he laid his hand upon the Grey Stone he immediately withdrew it, and taking off his hat he blessed himself, and muttered a short prayer with an earnestness and solemnity for which she could not account. Having concluded it, both stood in silence for a short time, he awaiting the promised information—for which on this occasion he appeared likely to wait in vain—and she without any particular purpose beyond her natural curiosity to watch and know the event.

The place at that moment was, indeed, a lonely one, and it was by no means surprising that, apart from the occurrence of two murders, one on, and the other near, the spot where they stood, the neighboring peasantry should feel great reluctance in passing it at night. The light of the moon was just sufficient to expose the natural wildness of the adjacent scenery. The glen itself lay in the shadow of the hill, and seemed to the eye so dark that nothing but the huge outlines of the projecting crags, whose shapes appeared in the indistinctness like gigantic spectres, could been seen; while all around, and where the pale light of the moon fell, nothing was visible but the muddy gleams of the yellow flood as it rushed, with its hoarse and incessant roar, through a flat country on whose features the storm and the hour had impressed a character of gloom, and the most dismal desolation. Nay, the still appearance of the Grey Stone, or rock, at which they stood, had, when contrasted with the moving elements about them, and associated with the murder committed at its very foot, a solemn appearance that was of itself calculated to fill the mind with awe and terror. Hanlon felt this, as, indeed, his whole manner indicated.

"Well," said his companion, alluding to the short prayer he had just concluded, "I didn't expect to see you at your prayers like a voteen this night at any rate. Is it fear that makes you so pious upon our hands? Troth, I doubt there's a white feather,—a cowardly dhrop—in you, still an' all."

"If you can be one minute serious, Sally, do, I beg of you. I am very much disturbed, I acknowledge, an' so would you, may be, if you knew as much as I do."

"You're the color of death," she replied, putting her fingers upon his cheek; "an', my God! is it paspiration I feel such a night as this? I declare to goodness it is. Give

me the white pocket-handkerchy that you say Peggy Murray gave you. Where is it?" she proceeded, taking it out of his pocket. "Ah, ay, I have it; stoop a little; take care of your hat; here now," and while speaking she wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead. "Is this the one she made you a present of, an' put the letthers on?"

"It is," he replied, "the very same—but she didn't make me a present of it, she only hemmed it for me."

"That's a lie of you," she replied, fiercely; "she bought it for you out of her own pocket. I know that much. She tould Kate Duffy so herself, and boasted of it: but wait."

"Well," replied Hanlon, anxious to keep down the gust of jealousy which he saw rising, "and if she did, how could I prevent her?"

"What letthers did she put on it?"

"P. and an M.," he replied, "the two first letthers of my name."

"That's another lie," she exclaimed; "they're not the two first letthers of your name, but of her own; there's no M in Hanlon. At any rate, unless you give the same handkerchy to me, I'll make it be a black business to her."

"Keep it, keep it, wid all my heart," he replied, glad to get rid of a topic which at that moment came on him so powerfully and unseasonably. "Do what you like wid it."

"You say so willingly, now—do you?"

"To be sure I do; an' you may tell the whole world that I said so, if you like."

"P. M.—oh, ay, that's for Peggy Murray—maybe the letthers I saw on the ould tobaccy-box I found in the hole of the wall to-day were for Peggy Murray. Ha! ha! ha! Oh, may be I won't have a brag over her!"

"What letthers?" asked Hanlon eagerly; "a tobaccy-box, did you say?"

"Ay did I—a tobaccy-box. I found it in a hole in the wall in our house to-day; it tumbled 'out while I was gettin' some cobwebs to stop a bleedin'."

"Was it a good one?" asked Hanlon, with apparent carelessness, "could one use it?"

"Hardly; but no, it's all rusty, an' has but one hinge."

"But one hinge!" repeated the other, who was almost breathless with anxiety; "an' the letthers—what's this you say they wor?"

"The very same that's on your handkerchy," she replied—"a P. an' an M."

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "is this possible! Heavens! What is that? Did you hear anything?"

"What ails you?" she enquired. "Why do you look so frightened?"

"Did you hear nothing?" he again asked.

"Ha! ha!—hear!" she replied, laughing—"hear; I thought I heard something like a groan; but sure 'tis only the wind. Lord! what a night! Listen how the wind an' storm growls an' tyrannizes and rages down in the glen there, an' about the hills. Faith there'll be many a house stripped this night. Why, what ails you? After all, you're but a hen-hearted divil, I doubt; sorra thing else."

Hanlon made her no reply, but took his hat off, and once more offered up a short prayer, apparently in deep and most extraordinary excitement.

"I see," she observed, after he had concluded, "that you're bent on your devotions this night; and the devil's own place you've pitched upon for them."

"Well, now," replied Hanlon, "I'll be biddin' you good-night; but before you go, promise to get me that tobaccy-box you found; it's the least you may give it to me for Peggy Murray's handkerchy."

"Hut," returned Sally, "it's not worth a thraneen; you couldn't use it even if you had it; sure it's both rusty and broken."

"No matther for that," he replied; "I want to play a thrick on Peggy Murray wid it, so as to have a good laugh against her—the pair of us—you wid the handkerchy, and me wid the tobaccy-box."

"Very well," she replied. Ha! ha! ha!—that'll be great. At any rate, I've a crow to pluck wid the same Peggy Murray. Oh, never you fear, you must have it; the minnit I get my hands on it, I'll secure it for you."

After a few words more of idle chat they separated; he to his master's house, which was a considerable distance off; and this extraordinary creature—unconscious of the terrors and other weaknesses that render her sex at once so dependent on and so dear to man—full only of delight at the expected glee of the wake—to the house of death where it was held.

In the country parts of Ireland it is not unusual for those who come to a wake-house from a distance, to remain there until the funeral takes place: and this also is frequently the case with the nearest door neighbors. There is generally a solemn hospitality observed on the occasion, of which the two classes I mention partake. Sally's absence, therefore, on that night, or for the greater portion of the next day, excited neither alarm nor surprise at home. On entering their miserable sheiling, she found her father, who had just returned, and her

step-mother in high words; the cause of which, she soon learned, had originated in his account of the interview between young Dalton and Mave Sullivan, together with its unpleasant consequences to himself.

"What else could you expect," said his wife, "but what you got? You're ever an' always too ready wid your divil's grin an' your black prophecy to thim you don't like. I wondher you're not afeard that some of them might come back to yourself, an' fall upon your own head. If ever a man tempted Providence you do."

"Ah, dear me!" he exclaimed, with a derisive sneer, rendered doubly repulsive by his own hideous and disfigured face, "how pious we are! Providence, indeed! Much I care about Providence, you hardened jade, or you aither, whatever puts the word into your purty mouth. Providence! oh, how much we regard it as if Providence took heed of what we do. Go an' get me somethin' to put to this swellin', you had betther; or if it's goin' to grow religious you are, be off out o' this; we'll have none of your cant or pishthrougues here."

"What's this?" inquired Sarah, seating herself on a three legged stool, "the ould work, is it? bell-cat, bell-dog. Ah, you're a blessed pair an' a purty pair, too; you, wid your swelled face an' blinkin' eye. Arrah, what dacent man gave you that? An' you," she added, turning to her step-mother, "wid your cheeks poulticed, an' your eye blinkin' on the other side—what a pair o' beauties you are, ha! ha! ha! I wouldn't be surprised if the divil an' his mother fell in consate wid you both!—ha! ha!"

"Is that your manners, afther spendin' the night away wid yourself?" asked her father, angrily. "Instead of stealin' into the house thremblin' wid fear, as you ought to be, you walk in wid your brazen face, ballyraggin' us like a Hecthor."

"Devil a taste I'm afeard," she replied, sturdily; "I did nothin' to be afeard or ashamed of, an' why should I?"

"Did you see Mr. Hanlon on your travels, eh?"

"You needn't say eh about it," she replied, "to be sure I did: it was to meet him that I went to the dance; I have no saicrets."

"Ah, you'll come to a good end yet, I doubt," said her father.

"Sure she needn't be afeard of Providence, any how," observed his wife.

"To the divil wid you, at all events," he replied; "if you're not off out o' that to get me somethin' for this swellin' I'll make it worse for you."

"Ay, ay. I'll go," looking at him with peculiar bitterness, "an wid the help of the same Providence that you laugh at, I'll take care that the same roof won't cover the three of us long. I'm tired of this life, and come or go what may, I'll look to my sowl an' lead it no longer.

"Do you mane to break our hearts?" he replied, laughing; "for sure we couldn't do less afther her, Sally; eh, ha! ha! ha! Before you lave us, anyhow," he added, "go and get me some *Casharrawan* roots to bring down this swellin'; I can't go to the Grange wid sich a face as this on me."

"You'll have a blacker an' a worse one on the day of judgment," replied Nelly, taking up an old spade as she spoke, and proceeding to look for the Casharrawan (Dandelion) roots he wanted.

When she had gone, the prophet, assuming that peculiar sweetness of manner, for which he was so remarkable when it suited his purpose, turned to his daughter, and putting his hand into his waistcoat pocket, pulled out a tress of fair hair, whose shade and silky softness were exquisitely beautiful.

"Do you see that," said he, "isn't that pretty?"

"Show," she replied, and taking the tress into her hand, she looked at it.

"It is lovely; but isn't that aquil to it?" she continued, letting loose her own of raven black and equal gloss and softness—"what can it brag over that? eh," and as she compared them her black eye flashed, and her cheek assumed a rich glow of pride and conscious beauty, that made her look just such a being as an old Grecian statuary would have wished to model from.

"It is aiquil to hers any day," replied her father, softening into affection as he contemplated her; "and indeed, Sally, I think you're her match every way except—except—no matter, troth are you."

"What are you going to do wid it?" she asked; "is it to the Grange it's goin'?"

"It is an' I want you to help me in what I mentioned to you. If I get what I'm promised, we'll lave the country, you and I, and as for that ould vagabond, we'll pitch her to ould Nick. She's talking about devotion, and has nothing but Providence in her lips."

"But isn't there a Providence?" asked his daughter, with a sparkling eye.

"Devil a much myself knows or cares," he replied, with indifference, "whether there is or not."

"Bekase if there is," she said, pausing—"if there is, one might as well——"

She paused again and her fine features assumed an intellectual meaning—a sorrowful and meditative beauty, that gave a new and more attractive expression to her face than her father had ever witnessed on it before.

"Don't vex me, Sarah," he replied, snappishly. "Maybe it's goin' to imitate *her* you are. The clergy knows these things maybe—an' maybe they don't. I only wish she'd come back with the *casharravean*. If all goes right, I'll pocket what'll bring yourself an' me to America. I'm beginnin' somehow to get uneasy; an' I don't wish to stay in this country any longer."

Whilst he spoke, the sparkling and beautiful expression which had lit up his daughter's countenance passed away, and with it probably the moment in which it was possible to have opened a new and higher destiny to her existence.

Nelly, in the meantime, having taken an old spade with her to dig the roots she went in quest of, turned up Glendhu, and kept searching for some time in vain, until at length she found two or three bunches of the herb growing in a little lonely nook that lay behind a projecting ledge of rock, where one would seldom think of looking for herbage at all. Here she found a little, soft, green spot, covered over with dandelion; and immediately she began to dig it up. The softness of the earth and its looseness surprised her a good deal; and moved by an unaccountable curiosity, she pushed the spade further down, until it was met by some substance that felt rather hard. From this she cleared away the earth as well as she could, and discovered that the spade had been opposed by a bone; and on proceeding to examine still further, she discovered that the spot on which the dandelions had grown, contained the bones of a full grown human body.

CHAPTER V.

The Black Prophet is Startled by a Black Prophecy.

Having satisfied herself that the skeleton was a human one, she cautiously put back the earth, and covered it up with the green sward, as graves usually are covered, and in such a way that there should exist, from the undisturbed appearance of the place, as little risk as possible of discovery. This being settled, she returned with the herbs, laying aside the spade, from off which she had previously rubbed the red earth, so as to prevent any particular observation; she sat down, and locking her fingers into each other, swayed her body backwards and forwards in silence, as a female does in Ireland when under the influence of deep and absorbing sorrow, whilst from time to time she fixed her eyes on the prophet, and sighed deeply.

"I thought," said he, "I sent you for the dandelion; where is it?"

"Oh," she replied, unrolling it from the corner of her apron, "here it is—I forgot it—ay, I forgot it—and no wondher—oh, no wondher, indeed!—Providence! You may blaspheme Providence as much as you like; but he'll take his own out o' you yet; an' indeed, it's comin' to that—it is, Donnel, an' you'll find it so."

The man had just taken the herbs into his hand and was about to shred them into small leaves for the poultice, when she uttered the last words. He turned his eyes upon her; and in an instant that terrible scowl, for which he was so remarkable, when in a state of passion, gave its deep and deadly darkness to his already disfigured visage. His eyes blazed, and one half of his face became ghastly with rage.

"What do you mane?" he asked; "what does she mane, Sarah? I tell you, wanst for all, you must give up ringing Providence into *my* ears, unless you wish to bring my hand upon you, as you often did! mark that!"

"Your *ears*," she replied, looking at him calmly, and without seeming to regard his threat; "oh, I only wish I could ring the fear of Providence into your *heart*—I wish I could; I'll do for yourself what you often pretend to do for others: but I'll give you warnin'. I tell you now, that Providence himself is on your track—that his judgment's hangin' over you—and that it'll fall upon you before long. This is my prophecy, and a black one you'll soon find it."

That Nelly had been always a woman of some good nature, with gleams of feeling and humanity appearing in a character otherwise apathetic, hard, and dark, M'Gowan well knew; but that she was capable of bearding him in one of his worst and most ferocious moods, was a circumstance which amazed and absolutely overcame him. Whether it was the novelty or the moral elevation of the position she so unexpectedly assumed, or some lurking conviction within himself which echoed back the truth of her language, it is difficult to say. Be that, however, as it might, he absolutely quailed before her; and instead of giving way to headlong violence or outrage, he sat down, and merely looked on her in silence and amazement.

Sarah thought he was unnecessarily tame on the occasion, and that her prophecy ought not to have been listened to in silence. The utter absence of all fear, however, on the part of the elder female, joined to the extraordinary union of determination and indifference with which she spoke, had something morally impressive in it; and Sarah, who

felt, besides, that there seemed a kind of mystery in the words of the denunciation, resolved to let the matter rest between them, at least for the present.

A silence of some time now ensued, during which she looked from the one to the other with an aspect of uncertainty. At length, she burst into a hearty laugh—

"Ha, ha, ha!—well," said she, "it's a good joke at any rate to see my father bate with his own weapons. Why, she has frightened you more wid *her* prophecy than ever you did any one wid one of your own. Ha, ha, ha!"

To this Sally neither replied, nor seemed disposed to reply.

"Here," added Sarah, handing her stepmother a cloth, "remimber you have to go to Darby Skinadre's for meal. I'd go myself, an' save you in the journey, but that I'm afraid you might fall in love wid one another in my absence. Be off now, you ould stepdivle, an' get the meal; or if you're not able to go, I will."

After a lapse of a few minutes, the woman rose, and taking the cloth, deliberately folded it up, and asked him for money to purchase the meal she wanted.

"Here," said he, handing her a written paper, "give him that, an' it will do as well as money. He expects Master Dick's interest for Dalton's farm, an' I'll engage he'll attend to that."

She received the paper, and looking at it, said—

"I hope this is none of the villainy I suspect."

"Be off," he replied, "get what you want, and that's all *you* have to do."

"What's come over you?" asked Sarah of her father, after the other had gone. "Did you get afeard of her?"

"There's something in her eye," he replied, "that I don't like, and that I never seen there before."

"But," returned the other, a good deal surprised, "what can there be in her eye that *you* need care about? You have nobody's *blood* on your hands, an' you stole nothing. What made you look afeard that time?"

"I didn't look afeard."

"But I say you did, an' I was ashamed of you."

"Well, never mind—I may tell you something some o' these days about that same woman. In the meantime, I'll throw myself on the bed, an' take a sleep, for I slept but little last night."

"Do so," replied Sarah; "but at any rate, never be cowed by a woman. Lie down, an' I'll go over awhile to Tom Cassidy's. But first, I had better make the poultice for your face, to take down the ugly swellin'."

Having made and applied the poultice, she went off, light-hearted as a lark, leaving her worthy father to seek some rest if he could.

She had no sooner disappeared than the prophet, having closed and bolted the door, walked backwards and forwards, in a moody and unsettled manner.

"What," he exclaimed to himself, "can be the matther with that woman, that made her look at me in sich a way a while agone? I could not mistake her eye. She surely knows more than I thought, or she would not fix her eye into mine as she did. Could there be anything in that dhrame about Dalton an' my coffin? Hut! that's nonsense. Many a dhrame I had that went for nothin'. The only thing she could stumble on is the *Box*, an' I don't think she would be likely to find that out, unless she went to throw down the house; but, anyhow, it's no harm to thry."

He immediately mounted the old table, and, stretching up, searched the crevice in the wall where it had been, but, we need not add, in vain. He then came down again, in a state of dreadful alarm, and made a general search for it in every hole and corner visible, after which his agitation became wild and excessive.

"She has got it!" he exclaimed—"she has stumbled on it, aided by the devil—an' may she soon be in his clutches!—and it's the only thing I'm afeard of! But then," he added, pausing, and getting somewhat cool—"does she know it might be brought against me, or who owned it? I don't think she does; but still, where can it be, and what could she mane by Providence trackin' me out?—an' why did she look as if she knew something? Then that dhrame—I can't get it out o' my head this whole day—and the terrible one I had last night, too! But that last is aisily 'counted for. As it is, I must only wait, and watch her; and if I find she can be dangerous, why—*it'll be worse for her*—that's all!"

He then threw himself on the wretched bed, and, despite of his tumultuous reflections, soon fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

A Rustic Miser and His Establishment.

There is to be found in Ireland, and, we presume, in all other countries, a class of hardened wretches, who look forward to a period of dearth as to one of great gain and

advantage, and who contrive, by exercising the most heartless and diabolical principles, to make the sickness, famine, and general desolation which scourge their fellow-creatures, so many sources of successful extortion and rapacity, and consequently of gain to themselves. These are Country Misers or Money-lenders, who are remarkable for keeping meal until the arrival of what is termed a hard year, or a dear summer, when they sell it out at an enormous or usurious prices, and who, at all times, and under all circumstances, dispose of it only at terms dictated by their own griping spirit and the crying necessity of the unhappy purchasers.

The houses and places of such persons are always remarkable for a character in their owners of hard and severe saving, which at a first glance has the appearance of that rare virtue in our country, called frugality—a virtue which, upon a closer inspection, is found to be nothing with them but selfishness, sharpened up into the most unscrupulous avarice and penury.

About half a mile from the Sullivan's, lived a remarkable man of this class, named Darby Skinadre. In appearance he was lank and sallow, with a long, thin, parched looking face, and a miserable crop of yellow beard, which no one could pronounce as anything else than "a dead failure;" added to this were two piercing ferret eyes, always sore and with a tear standing in each, or trickling down his fleshless cheeks; so that, to persons disposed to judge only by appearances, he looked very like a man in a state of perpetual repentance for his transgressions, or, what was still farther from the truth, who felt a most Christian sympathy with the distresses of the poor. In his house, and about it, there was much, no doubt, to be commended, for there was much to mark the habits of the saving man. Everything was neat and clean, not so much from any innate love of neatness and cleanliness, as because these qualities were economical in themselves. His ploughs and farming implements were all snugly laid up, and covered, lest they might be injured by exposure to the weather; and his house was filled with large chests and wooden hogsheads, trampled hard with oatmeal, which, as they were never opened unless during a time of famine, had their joints and crevices festooned by innumerable mealy-looking cobwebs, which description of ornament extended to the dresser itself, where they might be seen upon most of the cold-looking shelves, and those neglected utensils, that in other families are mostly used for food. His haggard was also remarkable for having in it, throughout all the year, a remaining stack or two of oats or wheat, or perhaps one or two large ricks of hay, tanned by the sun of two or three summers into tawny hue—each or all kept in the hope of a failure and a famine.

In a room from the kitchen, he had a beam, a pair of scales, and a set of weights, all of which would have been vastly improved by a visit from the lord-mayor, had our meal-monger lived under the jurisdiction of that civic gentleman. He was seldom known to use metal weights when disposing of his property; in lieu of these he always used round stones, which, upon the principle of the Scottish proverb, that "many a little makes a muckle," he must have found a very beneficial mode of transacting business.

If anything could add to the iniquity of his principles, as a plausible but most unscrupulous cheat, it was the hypocritical prostitution of the sacred name and character of religion to his own fraudulent impositions upon the poor and the distressed. Outwardly, and to the eye of men, he was proverbially strict and scrupulous in the observation of its sanctions, but outrageously severe and unsparing upon all who appeared to be influenced either by a negligent or worldly spirit, or who omitted the le ıst tittle of its forms. Religion and its duties, therefore, were perpetually in his mouth but never with such apparent zeal and sincerity as when enforcing his most heartless and hypocritical exactions upon the honest and struggling creatures whom necessity or neglect had driven into his meshes.

Such was Darby Skinadre; and certain we are that the truth of the likeness we have given of him will be at once recognized by our readers as that of the roguish hypocrite, whose rapacity is the standing curse of half the villages of the country, especially during the seasons of distress, or failure of crops.

Skinadre on the day we write of, was reaping a rich harvest from the miseries of the unhappy people. In a lower room of his house, to the right of the kitchen as you entered it, he stood over the scales, weighing out with a dishonest and parsimonious hand, the scanty pittance which poverty enabled the wretched creatures to purchase from him; and in order to give them a favorable impression of his piety, and consequently of his justice, he had placed against the wall a delf crucifix, with a semi-circular receptacle at the bottom of it for holding holy water. This was as much as to say "how could I cheat you, with the image of our Blessed Redeemer before my eyes to remind me of my duty, and to teach me, as He did, to love my fellow-creatures?" And with many of the simple people, he actually succeeded in

making the impression he wished; for they could not conceive it possible, that any principle, however rapacious, could drive a man to the practice of such sacrilegious imposture.

There stood Skinadre, like the very Genius of Famine, surrounded by distress, raggedness, feeble hunger, and tottering disease, in all the various aspects of pitiable suffering, hopeless desolation, and that agony of the heart which impresses wildness upon the pale cheek, makes the eye at once dull and eager, parches the mouth and gives to the voice of misery tones that are hoarse and hollow. There he stood, striving to blend consolation with deceit, and in the name of religion and charity subjecting the helpless wretches to fraud and extortion. Around him was misery, multiplied into all her most appalling shapes. Fathers of families were there, who could read in each other's faces too truly the gloom and anguish that darkened the brow and wrung the heart. The strong man, who had been not long before a comfortable farmer, now stood dejected and apparently broken down, shorn of his strength, without a trace of either hope or spirit; so wofully shrunk away too, from his superfluous apparel, that the spectators actually wondered to think that this was the large man, of such powerful frame, whose feats of strength had so often heretofore filled them with amazement. But, alas! what will not sickness and hunger do?

There too was the aged man—the grandsire himself—bent with a double weight of years and sorrow—without food until that late hour; forgetting the old pride that never stooped before, and now coming with the last feeble argument, to remind the usurer that he and his father had been schoolfellows and friends, and that although he had refused to credit his son and afterwards his daughter-in-law, still, for the sake of old times, and of those who were now no more, he hoped he would not refuse his gray hairs and tears, and for the sake of the living God besides, that which would keep his son, and his daughter-in-law, and his famishing grandchildren, who had not a morsel to put in their mouths, nor the means of procuring it on earth—if *he* failed them.

And there was the widower, on behalf of his motherless children, coming with his worn and desolate look of sorrow, almost thankful to God that his Kathleen was not permitted to witness the many-shaped miseries of this woful year; and yet experiencing the sharp and bitter reflection that now, in all their trials—in his poor children's want and sickness—in their moanings by day and their cries for her by night, they have not the soft affection of her voice nor the tender touch of her hand to soothe their pain—nor has the that smile, which was ever his, to solace him now, nor that faithful heart to soothe him with its affection, or to cast its sweetness into the bitter cup of affliction. Alas! no; he knows that her heart will beat for him and them no more; that that eye of love will never smile upon them again; and so he feels the agony of her loss superadded to all his other sufferings, and in this state he approaches the merciless usurer.

And the widow—emblem of desolation and dependence—how shall *she* meet and battle with the calamities of this fearful season? She out of whose heart these very calamities draw forth the remembrances of him she has lost, with such vividness that his past virtues are added to her present sufferings; and his manly love as a husband—his tenderness as a parent—his protecting hand and ever kind heart, crush her solitary spirit by their memory, and drag it down to the utmost depths of affliction. Oh! bitter reflection!—"if her Owen were now alive, and in health, *she* would not be here; but God took him to Himself, and now unless he—the miser—has compassion on her, she and her children—her Owen's children—must lie down and die! If it were not for *their* sakes, poor darlings, she would wish to follow *him* out of such a world; but now she and the Almighty are all that they have to look to, blessed be His name!"

Others there were whose presence showed how far the general destitution had gone into the heart of society, and visited many whose circumstances had been looked upon as beyond its reach. The decent farmer, for instance, whom no one had suspected of distress, made his appearance among them with an air of cheerfulness that was put on to baffle suspicion. Sometimes he laughed as if his heart were light, and again expressed a kind of condescending sympathy with some poor person or other, to whom he spoke kindly, as a man would do who knew nothing personally of the distress which he saw about him, but who wished to encourage those who *did* with the cheering hope that it must soon pass away. Then affecting the easy manner of one who was interesting himself for another person, he asked to have some private conversation with the usurer, to whom he communicated the immediate want that pressed upon him and his family.

It is impossible, however, to describe the various aspects and claims of misery which presented themselves at Skinadre's house. The poor people flitted to and fro silently

and dejectedly, wasted, feeble, and sickly—sometimes in small groups of twos and threes, and sometimes a solitary individual might be seen hastening with earnest but languid speed, as if the life of some dear child or beloved parent, of a husband or wife, or perhaps, the lives of a whole family, depended upon his or her arrival with food.

CHAPTER VII.

A Panorama of Misery.

SKINADRE, thin and mealy, with his coat off, but wearing a waistcoat to which were attached flannel sleeves, was busily engaged in his agreeable task of administering to their necessities. Such was his smoothness of manner, and the singular control which a long life of hypocrisy had given him over his feelings, that it was impossible to draw any correct distinction between that which he only assumed, and that which he really felt. This consequently gave him an immense advantage over every one with whom he came in contact, especially the artless and candid, and all who were in the habit of expressing what they thought. We shall, however, take the liberty of introducing him to the reader, and allow honest Skinadre to speak for himself.

"They're beggars—them three—that woman and her two children; still my heart bleeds for them, bekase we should love our neighbors as ourselves; but I have given away as much meal in charity, an' me can so badly afford it, as would—I can't now, indeed, my poor woman! Sick—troth they look sick, an' you look sick yourself. Here, Paddy Lenahan, help that woman an' her two poor children out of that half bushel of meal you've got; you won't miss a handful for God's sake."

This he said to a poor man who had just purchased some oat-meal from him; for Skinadre was one of those persons who, however he might have neglected works of mercy himself, took great delight in encouraging others to perform them.

"Troth it's not at your desire I do it, Darby," replied the man; "but bekase she an' they wants it, God help them. Here, poor creature, take this for the honor of God: an' I'm only sorry, for both our sakes, that I can't do more."

"Well, Jemmy Duggan," proceeded the miser, addressing a new-comer, "what's the news wid you? They're hard times, Jemmy; we all know that, an' feel it too, and yet we live, most of us, as if there wasn't a God to punish us."

"At all events," replied the man, "we feel what sufferin' is now, God help us! Between hunger and sickness, the counthry was never in such a state widin the memory of man. What, in the name o' God, will become of the poor people, I know not. The Lord pity them an' relieve them!"

"Amen, amen, Jemmy! Well, Jemmy, can I do any thing for you? But Jemmy, in regard to that, the thruth is, we have brought all these scourges on us by our sins and our transgressions; thim that sins, Jemmy, must suffer."

"There's no one denyin' it, Darby; but you're axin' me can you do any thing for me, an' my answer to that is, you can, if you like."

"Ah! Jemmy, you wor ever an' always a wild, heedless, heerum-skeerum rake, that never was likely to do much good; little religion ever rested on you, an' now I'm afeard no signs on it."

"Well, well, who's widout sin? I'm sure I'm not. What I want is, to know if you'll credit me for a hundred of meal till the times mends a trifle. I have the six o' them at home widout their dinner this day, an' must go widout if you refuse me. When the harvest comes round, I'll pay you."

"Jemmy, you owe three half-year's rent; an' as for the harvest an' what it'll bring, only jist look at the day that's in it. It goes to my heart to refuse you, poor man; but Jemmy, you see you have brought this on yourself. If you had been an attentive, industrious man, an' minded your religion, you wouldn't be as you are now. Six you have at home, you say?"

"Ay, not to speak of the woman an' myself. I know you won't refuse them, Darby, bekase if we're hard pushed now, it's a'most every body's case as well as mine. Be what I may, you know I'm honest."

"I don't doubt your honesty, Jemmy: but Jemmy, if I sell my meal to a man that can pay and won't, or if I sell my meal to a man that would pay and can't, by which do I lose most? There it is, Jemmy—think o' that now. Six in family, you say?"

"Six in family, wid the woman an' myself."

"The sorra man livin' feels more for you than I do, an' I would let you have the meal if I could; but the truth is, I'm makin' up my rent—an' Jemmy, I lost so much last year by my foolish good nature, an' I gave away so much on trust, that now I'm brought to a hard pass myself. Troth I'll fret enough this night for havin' to refuse you. I know it was rash of me to make the

promise I did; but still, God forbid that ever any man should be able to throw it in my face, an' say that Darby Skinadre ever broke his promise."

"What promise?"

"Why, never to sell a pound of meal on trust."

"God help us, then!—for what to do or where to go I don't know."

"It goes to my heart, Jemmy, to refuse you—six in family, an' the two of yourselves. Troth it does, to my very heart itself; but stay, maybe we may manage it. You have no money, you say?"

"No money now, but won't be so long, plaise God."

"Well, but havn't you value of any kind?—sure, God help them, they can't starve, poor cratures—the Lord pity them!"

Here he wiped away a drop of villainous rheum which ran down his cheek, and he did it with such an appearance of sympathy, that almost any one would have imagined it was a tear of compassion for the distresses of the poor man's family.

"Oh! no, they can't starve. Have you no valuables of any kind, Jemmy!—ne'er a baste now, or anything that way?"

"Why, there's a young heifer; but I'm strugglin' to keep it to help me in the rent. I was obliged to sell my pig long ago, for I had no way of feedin' it."

"Well, bring me the heifer, Jemmy, an' I won't let the crathurs starve. We'll see what can be done when it comes here. An' now, Jemmy, let me ax if you wint to hear mass on last Sunday?"

"Troth I didn't like to go in this trim. Peggy has a web of frieze half made this good while; it'll be finished some time, I hope."

"Ah! Jemmy, Jemmy, it's no wondher the world's the way it is, for indeed there's little thought of God or religion in it. You passed last Sunday like a haythen, an' now you see how you stand to-day for the same."

"You'll let me bring some o' the meal home wid me now," said the man; "the poor cratures tasted hardly anything to-day yet, an' they wor cryin' whin I left home. I'll come back wid the heifer *full fut*. Troth they're in utther misery, Darby."

"Poor things!—an' no wondher, wid such a haythen of a father; but, Jemmy, bring the heifer here *first* till I look at it, an' the sooner you bring it here the sooner they'll have relief, the crathurs."

It is not our intention to follow up this iniquitous bargain any further; it is enough to say that the heifer passed from Jemmy's possession into his, at about the fourth part of its value.

To those who had money he was a perfect honey-comb, overflowing with kindness and affection, expressed in such a profusion of warm and sugary words, that it was next to an impossibility to doubt his sincerity.

"Darby," said a very young female, on whose face was blended equal beauty and sorrow, joined to an expression that was absolutely death-like, "I suppose *I* needn't ax you for credit?"

He shook his head.

"It's for the couple," she added, "an' not for myself. I wouldn't ax it for myself. I know my fault, an' my sin, an' may God forgive myself in the first place, an' him that brought me to it, an' to the shame that followed it! But what would the ould couple do now widout me?"

"An' have you no money? Ah, Margaret Murtagh! sinful creature—shame, shame, Margaret. Unfortunate girl that you are, have you no money?"

"I have not, indeed; the death of my brother Alick left us as we are; *he's* gone from them now; but there was no fear of *me* goin' that *wished* to go. Oh, if God in His goodness to them had took me an' spared him, they wouldn't be sendin' to you this day for meal to keep life in them till things comes round."

"Troth I pity them—from my heart I pity them now they're helpless and ould—especially for havin' sich a daughter as you are; but if it was my own father an' mother, God rest them, I couldn't give meal out on credit. There's not in the parish a poorer man than I am. I'm done wid givin' credit now, thank goodness; an' if I had been so long ago, it isn't robbed, and ruined, an' beggared by rogues I'd be this day, but a warm, full man, able and willin' too to help my neighbors; an' it is not empty handed I'd send away any messenger from your father or mother, as I must do, although my heart bleeds for them this minute."

Here once more he wiped away the rheum, with every appearance of regret and sorrow. In fact, one would almost suppose that by long practice he had trained one of his eyes—for we ought to have said that there was one of them more sympathetic than the other—to shed its hypocritical tear at the right place, and in such a manner, too, that he might claim all the credit of participating in the very distresses which he refused to relieve, or by which he amassed his wealth.

The poor heart-broken looking girl, who by the way carried an unfortunate baby in her arms, literally tottered out of the room, sobbing bitterly, and with a look of misery and despair that it was woeful to contemplate.

"Ah, then, Harry Hacket," said he, passing to another, "how are you? an' how are you all over in Derrycloony, Harry? not forgettin' the ould couple?"

"Throth, middlin' only, Darby. My fine boy, Denis, is down wid this illness, an' I'm wantin' a barrel of meal from you till towards Christmas."

"Come inside, Harry, to this little nest here, till I tell you something; an', by the way, let your father know I've got a new prayer that he'll like to learn, for it's he that's the pious man, an' attinds to his duties—may God enable him! and every one that has the devotion in the right place; *amin a Chiernah!*"

He then brought Hacket into a little outshot behind the room in which the scales were, and shutting the door, thus proceeded in a sweet, confidential kind of whisper—

"You see, Harry, what I'm goin' to say to you is what I'd not say to e'er another in the parish, the divil a one—God pardon me for swearin'—*amin a Chiernah!* I'm ruined all out—smashed down and broke horse and foot; there's the Slevins that wint to America, an' I lost more than thirty pounds by them."

"I thought," replied Hacket, "they paid you before they went; they were always a daicent and an honest family, an' I never heard any one speak an ill word o' them."

"Not a penny, Harry."

"That's odd, then, bekaise it was only Sunday three weeks, that Murty Slevin, their cousin, if you remember, made you acknowledge that they paid you, at the chapel green."

"Ay, an' I do acknowledge; bekaise, Harry, one may as well spake charitably of the absent as not; it's only in private to you that I'm lettin' out the truth."

"Well, well," exclaimed the other, rather impatiently, "what have they to do wid us?"

"Ay, have they; it was what I lost by them an' others—see now, don't be gettin' onpatient, I bid you—time enough for that when you're refused—that prevints me from bein' able to give credit as I'd wish. I'm not refusin' *you*, Harry; but *achora*, listen; you'll bring your bill at two months, only I must charge you a trifle for trust, for chances, or profit an' loss, as the schoolmasther says; but you're to keep it a saicret from livin' mortal, bekaise if it 'ud get known in these times that I'd do sich a thing, I'd have the very flesh ait off o' my bones by others wantin' the same thing; bring me the bill, then, Harry, an' I'll fill it up myself, only *be dhe husth** about it."

Necessity forces those who are distressed to comply with many a rapacious condition of the kind, and the consequence was that Hacket did what the pressure of the time compelled him to do, passed his bill to Skinadre, at a most usurious price, for the food which was so necessary to his family.

It is surprising how closely the low rustic extortioner and the city usurer upon a larger scale resemble each other in the expression of their sentiments, in their habits of business, their plausibility, natural tact, and especially, in that hardness of heart and utter want of all human pity and sympathy, upon which the success of their black arts of usury and extortion essentially depends. With extortion in all its forms Skinadre, for instance, was familiar. From those who were poor but honest, he got a bill such as he exacted from Hacket, because he knew that, cost what it might to them, he was safe in their integrity. If dishonest, he still got a bill and relied upon the law and its cruel list of harassing and fraudulent expenses for security. From others he got property of all descriptions; from some, butter, yarn, a piece of frieze, a pig, a cow, or a heifer. In fact, nothing that possessed value came wrong to him, so that it is impossible to describe adequately the web of mischief which this blood-sucking old spider contrived to spread around him, especially for those whom he knew to be *too poor* to avail themselves of a remedy against his villany.

"Molly Cassidy, how are you?" he said, addressing a poor looking woman who carried a parcel of some description rolled up under her cloak; "how are all the family, achora?"

"Glory be to God for it, they can scarcely be worse;" replied the woman, in that spirit of simple piety and veneration for the Deity, which in all their misery characterizes the Irish people; "but sure we're only sufferin' like others, an' indeed not so bad as many; there's Mick Kelly has lost his fine boy Lanty; and his other son, young Mick, isn't expected to live, an' all wid this sickness, that was brought on them, as it is everywhere, wid bad feedin'."

"They're miserable times, Molly, at least I find them so; for I dunna how it happens, but every one's disappointment falls upon me, till they have me a'most out of house an' home—throth it 'ud be no wonther I'd get hard-hearted some day wid the way I'm thrated an' robbed by every one; aye, indeed, bekase I'm good-natured, they play upon me."

The poor creature gave a faint smile, for she knew the man's character thoroughly.

* Hold your tongue.

"I have a dish of butther here, Darby," she said, "an' I want meal instead of it."

"Butther, Molly; why thin, Molly, sure it isn't to me you're bringing butther—me that has so much of it lyin' on my hands here already. Sure, any way, it's down to dirt since the wars is over—butther is; if it was anything else but butther, Molly: but it's of no use; I've too much of it."

"The sorra other thing I have, thin, Mr. Skinadre; but sure you had bettther look at it, an' you'll find it's what butther ought to be, firm, claine, and sweet."

"I can't take it, achora; there's no market for it now."

"Here, as we're distressed, take it for sixpence a pound, and that's the lowest price—God knows, if we won't as we are, it isn't for that you'd get it."

"Troth, I dar' say, you're ill off—as who isn't in these times? an' it's worse they're gettin' an' will be gettin' every day. Troth, I say, my heart bleeds for you; but we can't dale; oh, no! butther, as I said, is only dirt now."

"For God's sake, thin," exclaimed the alarmed creature, "take it for whatever you like."

"It 'ud go hard wid me to see your poor family in a state of outther want," he replied, "an' it's not in my nature to be harsh to a struggling person—so whether I lose or gain, I'll allow you three-pence a pound for it."

A shade of bitterness came across her features at this iniquitous proposal; but she felt the truth of that old adage in all its severity, that necessity has no law.

"God help us," she exclaimed—"three-pence a pound for such butther as this!—however, it's the will of God sure, an' it can't be helped—take it."

"Ay, it's aisy said, take it; but not to say what'll I do wid it, when I have it; however, that's the man I am, an' I know how it'll end wid me—sarvin' every one, workin' for every one, an' thinkin' of every one but myself, an' little thanks or gratitude for all—I know I'm not fit for sich a world—but still it's a consolation to be doin' good to our fellow-creatures when we can, an' that's what lightens my heart."

A woman now entered, whose appearance excited general sympathy, as was evident from the subdued murmurs of compassion which were breathed from the persons assembled, as soon as she entered the room. There was something about her which, in spite of her thin and worn dress, intimated a consciousness of a position either then or at some previous time, above that of the common description of farmers' wives. No one could mistake her for a highly-educated woman—but there was in her appearance that decency of manner resulting from habits of independence and from moral feeling, which at a first glance, whether it be accompanied by superior dress or not, indicates something which is felt to entitle its proprietor to unquestionable respect. The miser, when she entered, had been putting away the dish of butter into the outshot we have mentioned, so that he had not yet an opportunity of seeing her, and, ere he returned to the scales, another female possessing probably not less interest to the reader, presented herself—this was Mave or Mabel, the young and beautiful daughter of the pious and hospitable Jerry Sullivan.

Skinadre on perceiving the matron who preceded her, paused for a moment, and looked at her with a wince in his thin features that might be taken for an indication of either pleasure or pain. He closed the sympathetic eye, and wiped it—but this not seeming to satisfy him, he then closed both, and blew his nose with a little skeleton mealy handkerchief that lay on a sack beside him for that purpose.

"Hem—a-hem! why, thin, Mrs. Dalton, it isn't to my poor place I expected you would come."

"Darby," she replied, "there is no use for any length of conversation between you and me—I'm here contrary to the wishes of my family—but I am a mother, and cannot look upon their destitution without feeling that I should not allow my pride to stand between them and death: we are starving, I mean—*they* are; and I'm come to ask you for credit; if we are ever able to pay you, we will; if not, it's only one good act done to a family that often did many to you when they thought you grateful."

"I'm the worst in the world—I'm the worst in the world," replied Skinadre; "but it wasn't till I knew that you'd be put out o' your farm that I offered for it, and now you've taken away my carrecther, an' spoken ill o' me everywhere, an' said that I bid for it over your heads; ay, indeed, an' that it was your husband that set me up, by the way—oh, yes—an' supposin' it was, an' I'm not denyin' it, but is that any raisin that I'd not bid for a good farm, when I knew that yez 'ud be put out of it?"

"I am now spakin' about the distress of our family," said Mrs. Dalton, "you know that sickness has been among us, and is among us—poor Tom is just able to be up, but that's all."

"Troth, an' it 'ud be well for you all, an' for himself too, that he had been taken away afore he comes to a bad end, what he *will*

rosete too, if God hasn't said it. I hope he feels the affliction he brought on poor Ned Murray an' his family by the hand he made of his unfortunate daughter."

"He does feel it. The death of her brother and their situation has touched his heart, an' he's only waitin' for better health and better times to do her justice; but now what answer do you give me?"

"Why, this: I'm harrished by what I've done for every one; an'—an'—the short and the long of it is, that I've naither male nor money to throw away. I couldn't afford it and I can't. I'm a rogue, Mrs. Dalton—a miser, an extortioner, an ungrateful knave, and everything that is bad an' worse than another; an' for that raison, I say, I have naither male nor money to throw away. That's what I'd say if I was angry; but I'm not angry. I do feel for you an' them; still I can't afford to do what you want, or I'd do it, for I like to do good for evil, bad as I am. I'm strivin' to make up my rent an' to pay an unlucky bill that I have due to-morrow, and doesn't know where the money's to come from to meet both."

"Mave Sullivan, achora, what can I ——"

Mrs. Dalton, from her position in the room, could not have noticed the presence of Mave Sullivan, but even had she been placed otherwise, it would have been somewhat difficult to get a glimpse of the young creature's face. Deeply did she participate in the sympathy which was felt for the mother of her mother, and so naturally delicate were her feelings, that she had drawn up the hood of her cloak, lest the other might have felt the humiliation to which Mave's presence must have exposed her by the acknowledgment of her distress. Neither was this all the gentle and generous girl had to suffer. She experienced, in her own person, as well as Mrs. Dalton did, the painful sense of degradation which necessity occasions, by a violation of that hereditary spirit of decent pride and independence which the people consider as the *prestige* of high respect, and which, even while it excites compassion and sympathy, is looked upon, to a certain extent, as diminished by even a temporary visitation of poverty. When the meal-man, therefore, addressed her, she unconsciously threw the hood of her cloak back, and disclosed to the spectators a face burning with blushes and eyes filled with tears. The tears, however, were for the distress of Mrs. Dalton and her family, and the blushes for the painful circumstances which compelled her at once to witness them, and to expose those which were left under her own care-worn father's roof. Mrs. Dalton, however, on looking round and perceiving what seemed to be an ebullition merely of natural shame, went over to her with a calm but mournful manner that amounted almost to dignity.

"Dear Mave," she said, "there is nothing here to be ashamed of. God forbid that the struggle of an honest family with poverty should bring a blot upon either your good name or mine. It does not, nor it will not; so dry your tears, my darlin' girl; there are better times before us all, I trust. Darby Skinadre," she added, turning to the miser, "you are both hard-hearted and ungrateful, or you would remember, in our distress, the kindness we showed you in yours. If you can cleanse your conscience from the stain of ingratitude, it must be by a change of life."

"Whatever stain there may be on my ungrateful conscience," he replied, turning up his red eyes, as it were with thanksgiving, "there's not the stain of blood and murdher on it—that's one comfort."

Mrs. Dalton did not seem to hear him, neither did she seem to look in the direction of where he stood. As the words were uttered she had been in the act of extending her hand to Mave Sullivan, who had hers stretched out to receive it. There now occurred, however, a mutual pause. Her hand was withdrawn, as was that of Mave also, who had suddenly become pale as death.

"God bless you, my darlin' girl!" exclaimed Mrs. Dalton, sighing, as if with some hidden sorrow; "God bless you and yours, prays my unhappy heart this day!"

An! with these words she was about to depart, when Mave, trembling and much agitated, laid her hand gently and timidly upon her,—adding, in a low, sweet, tremulous voice,

"*My* heart is free from *that* suspicion—I can't tell why—but *I* don't believe it."

And while she spoke, her small hand gradually caught that of Mrs. Dalton, as a proof that she would not withhold the embrace on that account. Mrs. Dalton returned her pressure, and at the same moment kissed the fair girl's lips, who sobbed a moment or two in her arms, where she threw herself. The other again invoked a blessing upon her head, and walked out, having wiped a few tears from her pale cheeks.

The miser looked upon this exhibition of feeling with some surprise; but as his was not a heart susceptible of the impressions it was calculated to produce, he only said in a tone of indifference:

"Well, to be sure now, Mave, I didn't expect to see *you* shakin' hands wid and kissin' Condy Dalton's wife, at any rate, considerin' *all* that has happened atween the families

However, it's good to be forgivin'; I hope it is; indeed I know that; for it comes almost to a feelin' in myself. Well, *achora*, what am I to do for you?"

"Will you let me speak to you inside a minute?" she asked.

"Will I? Why, then, to be sure I will; an' who knows but it's my daughter-in-law I might have you yet, *avillish!* Yourself and Darby's jist about an age. Come inside, *ahaqur*."

Their dialogue was not of very long duration. Skinadre, on returning to the scales, weighed two equal portions of oatmeal, for one of which Mave paid him.

"I will either come or send for this," she said laying her hand on the one for which she *had* paid. "If I send any one, I'll give the token I mentioned."

"Very well, a suchar—very well," he replied; "it's for nobody livin' but yourself I'd do it; but sure, now that I must begin to coort you for Darby, it won't be aisy to refuse you for anything in raison."

"Mind, then," she observed, as she seized one of the portions, in order to proceed home; "mind," said she, laying her hand upon that which she was leaving behind her; "mind it's for *this one* I have paid you."

"Very well, achora, it makes no difference; sure a kiss o' them red, purty lips o' yours to Darby will pay the inthrest for all."

Two other females now made their appearance, one with whom our readers are already acquainted. This was no other than the prophet's wife, who had for her companion a woman whom neither she herself nor any one present knew.

"Mave Sullivan, darlin'," exclaimed the former, "I'm glad to see you. Are you goin' home, now?"

"I am, Nelly," replied Mave, "jist on my step."

"Well, thin, if you stop a minute or two, I'll be part o' the way wid you. I have somethin' to mention as we go along."

"Very well, then," replied Mave; "make as much haste as you can, Nelly, for I'm in a hurry;" and an expression of melancholy settled upon her countenance as she spoke.

The stranger was a tall thin woman, much about the age and height of the prophet's wife, but neither so lusty nor so vigorous in appearance. She was but indifferently dressed, and though her features had evidently been handsome in her younger days, yet there was now a thin, shrewish expression about the nose, and a sharpness about the compressed lips, and those curves which bounded in her mouth, that betokened much firmness, if not obstinacy in her character, joined to a look which might as well be considered an indication of trial and suffering, as of a temper naturally none of the best.

On hearing Mave Sullivan's name mentioned, she started, and looked at her keenly, and for a considerable time; after which she asked for a drink of water, which she got in the kitchen, where she sat, as it seemed to rest a little.

Nelly, in the meantime, put her hand in a red, three-cornered pocket that hung by her side, and pulling out a piece of writing, presented it to the meal man. That worthy gentleman, on casting his eye over it, read as follows:

"Dear Skinadre: Give Daniel M'Gowan, otherwise the Black Prophet, any quantity of meal necessary for his own family, which please charge, (and you know why,) to your friend,

Dick o' the Grange, Jun."

Skinadre's face, on perusing this document, was that of a man who felt himself pulled in different directions by something at once mortifying and pleasant. He smiled at first, then bit his lips, winked one eye, then another; looked at the prophet's wife with complacency, but immediately checked himself, and began to look keen and peevish. This, however, appeared to be an error on the other side: and the consequence was, that, after some comical alterations, his countenance settled down into its usual expression.

"Troth," said he, "that same Dick o' the Grange, as he calls himself, is a quare young gintleman; as much male as you want—a quare, mad—your family's small, I think?"

"But sharp an' active," she replied, with a hard smile, as of one who cared not for the mirth she made, "as far as we go."

"Ay," said he, abruptly, "divil a much—God pardon me for swearin'—ever they wor for good that had a large appetite. It's a bad sign of either man or woman. There never was a villain hanged yet that didn't ait more to his last breakfast than ever he did at a meal in his life before. How-an-ever, one may as well have a friend; so I suppose, we must give you a thrifle."

When her portion was weighed out, she and Mave Sullivan left this scene of extortion together, followed by the strange woman, who seemed, as it were, to watch their motions, or at least to feel some particular interest in them.

He had again resumed his place at the scales, and was about to proceed in his exactions, when the door opened, and a powerful young man, tall, big-boned and broad-

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TOM'S CLUTCHES WERE AGAIN AT HIS THROAT. "ANOTHER LIE!" HE EXCLAIMED, "AND YOU'RE A GONE MAN, DO WHAT I BID YOU."—*The Black Phophet*, chap. vii, *p.* 807.

shouldered, entered the room, leading or rather dragging with him the poor young woman and her child, who had just left the place in such bitterness and affliction. He was singularly handsome, and of such resolute and manly bearing, that it was impossible not to mark him as a person calculated to impress one with a strong anxiety to know who and what he might be. On this occasion his cheek was blanched and his eye emitted a turbid fire, which could scarcely be determined as that of indignation or illness.

"Is it thrue," he asked, "that you've dared to refuse to this—this—unfor—is it thrue that you've dared to refuse this girl and her starvin' father and mother the meal she wanted? Is this thrue, you hard-hearted ould scoundrel?—bekaise if it is, by the blessed sky above us, I'll pull the wind-pipe out of you, you infernal miser!"

He seized unfortunate Skinadre by the neck, as he spoke, and almost at the same moment forced him to project his tongue about three inches out of his mouth, causing his face at the same time to assume, by the violence of the act, an expression of such comic distress and terror, as it was difficult to look upon with gravity.

"Is it thrue," he repeated, in a voice of thunder, "that you've dared to do so scoundrelly an act, an' she, the unfortunate creature, famishing wid hunger *herself?*"

While he spake, he held Skinadre's neck as if in a vice—firm in the same position—and the latter, of course, could do nothing more than turn his ferret eyes round as well as he could, to entreat him to relax his grip.

"Don't choke him, Tom," exclaimed Hacket, who came forward to interpose; "you'll strangle him; as Heaven's above, you will."

"An' what great crime would *that* be?" answered the other, relaxing his awful grip of the miser. "Isn't he an' every cursed meal-monger like him a curse and a scourge to the counthry—and hasn't the same counthry curses and scourges enough widhout either him or them? Answer me now," he proceeded, turning to Skinadre, "why did you send her away widout the food she wanted?"

"My heart bled for her; but——"

"It's a lie, you born hypocrite—it's a lie—your heart never bled for anything, or anybody."

"But you don't know," replied the miser, "what I lost by——"

"It's a lie, I say," thundered out the gigantic young fellow, once more seizing the unfortunate meal-monger by the throat, when out again went his tongue, like a piece of machinery touched by a spring, and again were the red eyes, now almost starting out of his head, turned round, whilst he himself was in a state of suffocation, that rendered his appearance ludicrous beyond description—"it's a lie, I say, for you have neither thruth nor heart—that's what we all know."

"For Heaven's sake, let the man go," said Hacket, "or you'll have his death to answer for"—and as he spoke he attempted to unclasp the young man's grip; "Tom Dalton, I say, let the man go."

Dalton, who was elder brother to the lover of Mave Sullivan, seized Hacket with one of his hands, and spun him like a child to the other end of the room.

"Keep away," he exclaimed, "till I settle wid him—here now, Skinadre, listen to me—you refused my father credit when we wanted it, although you knew we were honest—you refused him credit when we were turned out of our place, although you knew the sickness was among us—well, you know whether we that wor your friends, an'—my father at least—the makin' of you"—and as he spoke, he accompanied every third word by a shake or two, as a kind of running commentary upon what he said; "ay—you did—you knew it well, and I could bear all that; but I can't bear you to turn this unfortunate girl out of your place, widout what she wants, and she's sinkin' wid hunger herself. If she's in distress, 'twas I that brought her to it, an' to shame an' to sorrow too—but I'll set all right for you yet, Margaret dear—an' no one has a betther right to spake for her."

"Tom," said the young woman, with a feeble voice, "for the love of God let him go or he'll drop."

"Not," replied Dalton, "till he gives you what you come for. Come now," he proceeded, addressing the miser, "weigh her. How much will you be able to carry, Margaret?"

"Oh, never mind, now, Tom," she replied, "I don't want any, it's the ould people at home—it's them—it's them."

"Weigh her out," continued the other, furiously; "weigh her out a stone of meal, or by all the lies that ever came from your lips, I'll squeeze the breath out of your body, you deceitful ould hypocrite."

"I will," said the miser, panting, and adjusting his string of a cravat, "I will, Tom; here, I ain't able, weigh it yourself—I'm not—indeed I'm not able," said he, breathless; "an' I was thinkin' when you came in of sendin' after her, bekase, when I heard of the sickness among them, that I mayn't sin, but I found my heart bleedin' inwar——"

Tom's clutches were again at his throat. "Another lie," he exclaimed, "and you're a gone man. Do what I bid you."

Skinadre appeared, in point of fact, unable to do so, and Dalton seeing this, weighed the unhappy young woman a stone of oatmeal, which, on finding it too heavy for her feeble strength, he was about to take up himself when he put his hands to his temples, then staggered and fell.

They immediately gathered about him to ascertain the cause of this sudden attack, when it appeared that he had become insensible. His brow was now pale and cold as marble, and a slight dew lay upon his broad forehead; his shirt was open, and exposed to view a neck and breast, which, although sadly wasted, were of surpassing whiteness and great manly beauty.

Margaret, on seeing him fall, instantly placed her baby in the hands of another woman, and flying to him, raised his head and laid it upon her bosom; whilst the miser, who had now recovered, shook his head, lifted his hands, and looked as if he felt that his house was undergoing pollution. In the meantime, the young woman bent her mouth down to his ear, and said, in tones that were wild and hollow, and that had more of despair than even of sorrow in them—

"Tom, oh, Tom, are you gone?—hear me!"

But he replied not to her.

"Ah! there *was* a day," she added, looking with a mournful smile around, "when he loved to listen to *my* voice; but that day has passed forever."

He opened his eyes as she spoke; hers were fixed upon him. He felt a few warm tears upon his face, and she exclaimed in a low voice, not designed for other ears—

"I forgive you *all*, Tom, dear—I forgive you *all!*"

He looked at her, and starting to his feet, exclaimed—

"Margaret, my own Margaret, hear me! She is dyin'," he shouted, in a hoarse and excited voice—"she is dyin' with want. I see it all. She's dead!"

It was too true; the unhappy girl had passed into another life; but, whether from a broken heart, caused by sin, shame, and desertion, or from famine and the pressure of general destitution and distress, could never properly be ascertained.

"I see!" exclaimed Dalton, his eyes again blazing, and his voice hollow with emotion—"I see—there she lies; and who brought her to *that?* But I intended to set all right. Ay—there she lies. An' again, how are we *at home?* Brought low down, down to a mud cabin! Now, Dick o' the Grange, an' now, Darby Skinadre—now for revenge. The time is come. I'll take my place at the head of them, and what's to be done, *must* be done. Margaret Murtagh, you're lying dead before me, and by the broken heart you died of——"

He could add no more; but with these words, tottering and frantic, he rushed out of the miser's house.

"Wid the help o' God, the young savage is as mad as a March hare," observed Skinadre, coolly; "but, as it's all over wid the unfortunate crature, I don't see why an honest man should lose his own, at any rate."

Whilst uttering these words, he seized the meal, and deliberately emptied it back into the chest from which young Dalton had taken it.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Middle Man and Magistrate—Master and Man.

Having mentioned a strange woman who made her appearance at Skinadre's, it may be necessary, or, at least, agreeable to the reader, that we should account for her presence under the roof of that worthy individual, especially as she is likely to perform a part of some interest in our tale. We have said already that she started on hearing Mave Sullivan's name mentioned, and followed her and the Black Prophet's wife like a person who watched their motions, and seemed to feel some peculiar interest in either one or both. The reader must return, then, to the Grey Stone already alluded to, which to some of the characters in our narrative will probably prove to be a "stone of destiny."

Hanlon, having departed from Sarah M'Gowan in a state of excitement, wended his way along a lonely and dreary road, to the residence of his master, Dick o' the Grange. The storm had increased, and was still increasing at every successive blast, until it rose to what might be termed a tempest. It is, indeed, a difficult thing to describe the peculiar state of his feelings as he struggled onwards, sometimes blown back to a stand-still, and again driven forward by the gloomy and capricious tyranny of the blast, as if he were its mere plaything.

In spite, however, of the conflict of the external elements as they careered over the country around him, he could not shake from his imagination the impression left there by the groan which he had heard at the Grey Stone. A supernatural terror, therefore, was upon him, and he felt as if he were in the presence of an accompanying spirit—of a spirit that seemed anxious to disclose the fact that murder would not rest; and so

strongly did this impression gain upon him, that in the fitful howling of the storm, and in its wild wailing and dying sobs among the trees and hedges, as he went along, he thought he could distinguish sounds that belonged not to this life. Still he proceeded, his terrors thus translating, as it were, the noisy conflict of the elements into the voices of the dead, or thanking Heaven that the strong winds brought him to a calmer sense of his position, by the necessity that they imposed of preserving himself against their violence. In this anomalous state he advanced, until he came to a grove of old beeches that grew at the foot of one of the hill-ranges we have described, and here the noises he heard were not calculated to diminish his terrors. As the huge trees were tossed and swung about in the gloomy moonlight, his ears were assailed by a variety of wild sounds which had never reached them before. The deep and repeated crashes of the tempest, as it raged among them, was accompanied by a frightful repetition of hoarse moanings, muffled groans, and wild unearthly shrieks, which encountered him from a thousand quarters in the grove, and he began to feel that horrible excitement which is known to be occasioned by the mere transition from extreme cowardice to reckless indifference.

Still he advanced homewards, repeating his prayers with singular energy, his head uncovered notwithstanding the severity of the night, and the rain pouring in torrents upon him, when he found it necessary to cross a level of rough land, at all times damp and marshy, but in consequence of the rains of the season, now a perfect morass. Over this he had advanced about half a mile, and got beyond the frightful noises of the woods, when some large object rose into the air from a clump of plashy rushes before him, and shot along the blast, uttering a booming sound, so loud and stunning that he stood riveted to the earth. The noise resembled that which sometimes proceeds from a humming-top, if a person could suppose one made upon such a gigantic scale as to produce the deep and hollow buzz which this being emitted. Nothing could now convince him that he was not surrounded by spirits, and he felt confident that the voice of undiscovered murder was groaning on the blast—shrieking, as it were, for vengeance in the terrible voice of the tempest. He once more blessed himself, repeated a fresh prayer, and struggled forward, weak, and nearly exhausted, until at length he reached the village adjoining which his master, Dick o' the Grange, resided.

The winds now, and for some minutes previously, had begun to fall, and the lulls in the storm were calmer and more frequent, as well as longer in duration. Hanlon proceeded to his master's, and peering through the shutters, discovered that the servants had not yet retired to rest; then bending his steps further up the village, he soon reached a small isolated cabin, at the door of which he knocked, and in due time was admitted by a thin, tall female.

"God protect us, dear, you're lost!—blessed father, sich a night! Oh! my, my! Well, well; sit near the spark o' fire, sich as it is; but, indeed, it's little you'll benefit by it. Any way, sit down."

Hanlon sat on a stool, and laying his hat beside him on the floor, he pressed the rain as well as he could out of his drenched hair, and for some time did not speak, whilst the female, squatted upon the ground, somewhat like a hare in her form, sat with the candle in her hand, which she held up in the direction of his face, whilst her eyes were riveted on him with a look of earnest and solemn inquiry.

"Well," she at length said, "did your journey end, as I tould you it would, in nothing? And yet, God presarve me, you look—eh!—what has happened?—you look like one that was terrified, sure enough. Tell me, at wanst, did the dhrame come out thrue?"

"I'll not have a light heart this many a day," he replied; "let no one say there's not a Providence above us to bring murdher to light."

"God of glory be about us!" she exclaimed, interrupting him; "something has happened! Your looks would frighten one, an' your voice isn't like the voice of a livin' man. Tell me—and yet, for all so curious as I feel, I'm thremblin' this minute—but tell me, did the dhrame come out thrue, I say?"

"*The dhrame came out thrue,*" he replied, solemnly. "I know where the tobacey box is that he had about him; the same that transported my poor uncle, or that was partly the means of doin' it."

The woman crossed herself, muttered a short ejaculatory prayer, and again gathered her whole features into an expression of mingled awe and curiosity.

"Did you go to the place you dhramed of?" she asked.

"I went to the Grey Stone," he replied, "an' offered up a prayer for his sowl, afther puttin' my right hand upon it in his name, jist as I did on yesterday; afther I got an account of the tobacey box, I heard a groan at the spot—as heaven's above me, I did."

"Savior of earth, *gluntho shin!*"

"But that wasn't all. On my way home, I heard, as I was passin' the ould trees at the Rabbit Bank, things that I can't find words to tell you of."

"Well acushla, glory be to God for everything! it's all his will, blessed be his name! What did you hear, avick?—but wait till I throw a drop o' the holy wather that I have hangin' in the little bottle at the bed-post upon us."

She rose whilst speaking and getting the bottle alluded to, sprinkled both herself and him, after which she hung it up again in its former position.

"There, now, nothin' harmful, at any rate, can come near us afther that, blessed be his name. Well, what did you hear comin' home?—I mean at the Rabbit Bank. Wurrah," she added, shuddering, "but it's it that's the lonely spot after night! What was it, dear?"

"Indeed, I can scarcely tell you—sich groans, an' wild shoutins, an' shrieks, man's ears never hard in this world, I think; there I hard them as I was comin' past the trees, an' afther I passed them; an' when I left them far behind me, I could hear, every now and then, a wild shriek that made my blood run cowld. But there was still worse as I crossed the Black Park; something got up into the air out o' the rushes before me, an' went off wid a noise not unlike what Jerry Hamilton of the Band makes when he rubs his middle finger up against the tamborine."

"Heaven be about us!" she exclaimed, once more crossing herself, and uttering a short prayer for protection from evil; "but tell me, how did you know it was *his* Box, and how did you find it out?"

"By the letters P. M., and the broken hinge," he replied.

"Blessed be the name of God!" she exclaimed again—"*He* won't let the murdher lie, that's clear. But what I want to know is, how did your goin' to the Grey Stone bring you to the knowledge of the box?"

He then gave her a more detailed account of his conversation with Sarah M'Gowan, and the singular turn which it chanced to take towards the subject of the handkerchief, in the first instance; but when the coincidence of the letters were mentioned, together with Sarah's admission that she had the box in her possession, she clasped her hands, and looking upwards exclaimed—

"Blessed be the name of the Almighty for that! Oh, I feel there is no doubt now the hand of God is in it, an' we'll come at the murdher or the murdherers yet."

"I hope so," he replied; "but I'm lost wid wet an' cowld; so in the meantime I'll be off home, an' to my bed. I had something to say to you about another matther, but I'll wait till mornin'; dear knows, I'm in no condition to spake about anything else to-night. This is a snug little cabin; but, praise God, in the coorse of a week or so, I'll have you more comfortable than you are. If my own thronble was over me, I wouldn't stop long in the neighborhood; but as the hand of God seems to be in this business, I can't think of goin' till it's cleared up, as cleared up it will be, I have no doubt, an' can have none, afther what has happened this awful night."

Hanlon's situation with his master was one with which many of our readers are, no doubt, well acquainted. He himself was a clever, active, ingenious fellow, who could, as they say in the country, put a hand to anything, and make himself useful in a great variety of employments. He had in the spring of that year, been engaged as a common laborer by Dick o' the Grange, in which capacity he soon attracted his employer's notice, by his extraordinary skill in almost everything pertaining to that worthy gentleman's establishment. It is true he was a stranger in the country, of whom nobody knew anything—for there appeared to be some mystery about him; but as Dick cared little of either his place of birth or pedigree, it was sufficient for him to find that Hanlon was a very useful, not to say valuable young man, about his house, that he understood everything, and had an eye and hand equally quick and experienced. The consequence was, that he soon became a favorite with the father, and a kind of *sine qua non* with the son, into whose rustic gallantries he entered, with a spirit that satisfied the latter of his capacity to serve him in that respect as well as others. Hanlon, in truth, was just the person for such a master, and for such an establishment as he kept. Dick o' the Grange was not a man who, either by birth, education, or position in society, could entertain any pretensions to rank with the gentry of the surrounding country. It is true he was a magistrate, but then he was a middleman, and as such found himself an interested agent in the operation of one of the worst and most cruel systems that ever cursed either the country or the people. We of course mean that which suffered a third party to stand between the head landlord, and those who in general occupied the soil. Of this system, it may be with truth said, that the iniquity lay rather in the principal on which it rested, than in the individual who administered it; because it was next to an impossibility that a man anxious to aggrandize his family—as almost every man

is—could, in the exercise of the habits which enable him to do so, avoid such a pressure upon those who were under him as amounted to great hardships and injustice. The system held out so many temptations to iniquity in the management of land, and in the remuneration of labor, that it required an amount of personal virtue and self-denial to resist them, that were scarcely to be expected from any one, so difficult was it to overlook or neglect the opportunities for oppression and fraud which it thus offered.

Old Dick, although bearing the character of being a violent and outrageous man, was, however, one of those persons of whom there will be always somebody found to speak favorably. Hot and ungovernable in temper, he unquestionably was, and capable of savage and cruel acts; but at the same time his capricious and unsteady impulses rendered him uncertain, whether for good or evil; so much so, indeed, that it was impossible to know when to ask him for a favor; nor was it extraordinary to find him a friend this day to the man whose avowed enemy he proclaimed himself yesterday; and this same point of character was true the other way—for whilst certain that you had him for a friend, perhaps you found him hard at work to oppress or over-reach you if he could. The consequence of this peculiarity was that he had a two-fold reputation in the country. Some were found to abuse him, and others to mention many acts of generosity and kindness which he had been known to perform under circumstances where they were least to be expected. This perhaps was one reason why they made so strong an impression upon the people, and were so distinctly remembered to his advantage. It is true he was a violent party man, but then he wanted coolness to adjust his principles, and thus make them subservient to his private interests. For this reason, notwithstanding his strong and out-spoken prejudices, it was a well know fact, that the Roman Catholic population preferred him as a magistrate to many who were remarkable for a more equal and even tenor of life, and in whom, under greater plausibility of manner, there existed something which they would have readily exchanged for his violent abuse of them and their creed.

Such was Dick o' the Grange, a man who, as a middleman and a magistrate, stood out a prominent representative of a class that impressed themselves strongly upon their times, and who, whether as regards their position or office, would not find at the present day in the ranks of any party in Ireland a single man who could come forward and say they were not an oppressive evil to the country.

Dick o' the Grange, at this period of out narrative, was far advanced in years, and had, some time past, begun to feel what is known in men who have led a hard convivial life, as that breaking down of the constitution, which is generally the forerunner of dissolution. On this account he had for some time past resigned the management of his property altogether to his son, young Dick, who was certainly wild and unreflecting, but neither so impulsively generous, nor so habitually violent as his father. The estimate of his character which went abroad was such as might be expected—many thought him better than the old man. He was the youngest son and a favorite—two circumstances which probably occasioned his education to be neglected, as it had been. All his sisters and brothers having been for some years married and settled in life, he, and his father, who was a widower, kept a bachelor's house, where we regret to say the parental *surveillance* over his morals was not so strict as it ought to have been. Young Dick was handsome, and so exceedingly vain of his person, that any one wishing to gain a favor either from himself or his worthy sire, had little more to do than dexterously apply a strong dose of flattery to this his weakest point, and the favor was sure to be granted, for his influence over old Dick was boundless.

In this family, then, it was that Hanlon held the situation we have described—that is, partly a gardener, and partly a steward, and partly a laboring man. There was a rude and riotous character in and about Dick's whole place, which marked it at once as the property of a person below the character of a gentleman. Abundance there was, and great wealth; but neither elegance nor neatness marked the house or furniture. His servants partook of the same equivocal appearance, as did the father and son, and the "Grange" in general; but, above all and everything in his establishment, must we place, in originality and importance, Jemmy Branigan, who, in point of fact, ought to receive credit for the greater portion of old Dick's reputation, or at least for all that was good of it. Jemmy was his old, confidential—enemy—for more than forty years, during the greater portion of which period it could scarcely be said with truth that, in Jemmy's hands, Dick o' the Grange ought to be looked to as a responsible person. When we say "enemy," we know perfectly well what we mean; for if half a dozen battles between Jemmy and his master every day during the period above mentioned constituted friendship, then, indeed, the reader may substitute the word *friend*, if he pleases.

In fact, Dick and Jemmy had become notorious throughout the whole country; and we are certain that many of our readers will, at first glance, recognize these two remarkable individuals. Truly, the ascendancy which Jemmy had gained over the magistrate, was surprising; and nothing could be more amusing than the interminable series of communications, both written and oral, which passed between them, in the shape of dismissals from service on the one side, and notices to leave on the other; each of which whether written or oral, was treated by the party noticed with the most thorough contempt. Nothing was right that Jemmy disapproved of, and nothing wrong that had his sanction, and this without any reference whatsoever to the will of his master, who, if he happened to get into a passion about it, was put down by Jemmy, who got into a greater passion still; so that, after a long course of recrimination and Billingsgate on both sides, delivered by Jemmy in an incomparably louder voice, and with a more consequential manner, old Dick was finally forced to succumb.

The worthy magistrate and his son were at breakfast next morning, when young "Master Richard," as he was called, rung the bell, and Jemmy attended—for we must add, that Jemmy discharged the duties of butler, together with any other duty that he himself deemed necessary, and that without leave asked or given.

"Where's Hanlon, Jemmy?" he asked.

"Hanlon? troth, it's little matther where he is, an' devil a one o' myself cares."

"Well, but I care, Jemmy, for I want him. Where is he?"

"He's gone up to that ould streele's, that lives in the cabin above there. I don't like the same Hanlon; nobody here knows anything about him, nor he won't let them know anything about him. He's as close as Darby Skimadre, and as deep as a dhraw-well. Altogether, he looks as if there was a weight on his conscience, for all his lightness an' fun—an' if I thought so, I'd discharge him at wanst."

"And I agree with you for once," observed his master; "there *is* some cursed mystery about him. I don't like him, either, to say the truth."

"An' why don't you like him?" asked Jemmy, with a contemptuous look.

"I can't say; but I don't."

"No! you can't? I know you can't say anything, at all events, that you ought to say," replied Jemmy, who, like his master, would have died without contradiction; "but *I* can say why you don't like him; it's bekaise he's the best sarvint ever was about your place; that's the raison you don't like him. But what do *you* know about a good sarvint or a bad one, or anything else that's useful to you, God help you."

"If you were near my cane, you old scoundrel, I'd pay you for your impertinence, ay would I."

"Ould scoundrel, is it? Oh, hould your tongue; I'm not of your blood, thank God!—and don't be fastenin' your name upon me. Ould scoundrel, indeed!—Troth, we could spare an odd one now and then out of our own little establishment."

"Jemmy, never mind," said the son, "but te'l Hanlon I want to speak to him in the office after breakfast."

"If I see him I will, but the devil an inch I'll go out o' my way for it—if I see him I will, an' if I don't I won't. Did *you* put a fresh bandage to your leg, to keep in them *Pharisee** veins o' yours, as the docthor ordhered you?"

This, in fact, was the usual style of his address to the old magistrate, when in conversation with him.

"Damn the quack!" replied his master: "no, I didn't."

"An' why didn't you?"

"You're beginning this morning," said the other, losing temper. "You had better keep quiet, keep your distance, if you're wise—that's all."

"Why didn't you. I ax," continued Jemmy, walking up to him, with his hands in his coat pocket, and looking coolly, but authoritatively in his face. "I tell you, and if *you* don't know how to take care of yourself, *I* do, and I will. I'm all that's left over you now; an' in spite of all I can do, it's a purty account I'd be able to give of you, if I was called on."

"This to my face!" exclaimed Dick—"this to my face, you villain!"—and, as he spoke, the cane was brandished over Jemmy's head, as if it would descend every moment.

"Ay," replied Jemmy, without budging, "ay, indeed—an' a purty face it is—a nice face hard drinkin' an' a bad life has left you. Ah! do it if you dare," he added, as the other swung his staff once or twice, as if about to lay it down in reality; "troth, if you do, I'll know how to act."

"What would you do, you old cancer—what would you do if I did?"

"Troth, what you'll force me to do some day. I know you will; for heaven an' earth couldn't stand you; an' if I do, it's not me you'll have to blame for it. Ah, that same step you'll drive me to—I see that."

"What will you do, you old viper, that has

* Varicose, we presume.

been like a blister to me my whole life—what will you do?"

"Send you about your business," replied Jemmy, coolly, but with all the plenitude of authority in his manner; "send you from about the place, an' then I'll have a quiet house. I'll send you to your youngest daughter's or somewhere, or any where, out of this. So now that you know my determination you had betther keep yourself cool, unless, indeed, you wish to thravel. Oh, then heaven's above, but you wor a bitther sight to me, an' but it was the unlucky day that ever the divil druv you acrass me!"

"Dick," said the father, "as soon as you go into the office, write a discharge, as bad a one, for that old vagabond, as the English language can enable you to do—for by the light of heaven, he shan't sleep another night under this roof."

"Shan't I?—we'll see that, though. To the divil I pitch yourself an' your discharge—an' now mark *my* words: I'll be no longer throubled wid you; you've been all my life a torment and a heart-break to me—a blister of French flies was swan's down, compared to you, but by the book, I'll end it at last—ay, will I—I give you up—I surrendher you as a bad bargain—I wash my hands of you—This is Tuesday mornin', God bless the day and the weather—an' woeful weather it is—but sure it's betther than you desarve, an' I don't doubt but it's you and the likes o' you that brings it on us! Ay, this is Tuesday mornin', an' I now give you warnin' that on Saturday next, you'll see the last o' me—an' don't think that this warnin' is like the rest, or that I'll relint again, as I was foolish enough to do often before. No—my mind's made up—an' indeed—" here his voice sank to a great calmness and philosophy, like a man who was above all human passion, and who could consequently talk in a voice of cool and quiet determination;—"An' indeed," he added, "my conscience was urgin' me to this for some time past—so that I'm glad things has taken this turn."

"I hope you'll keep your word, then," said his master, "but before you go, listen to me."

"Listen to you—to be sure I will; God forbid I wouldn't; let there be nothing at any rate, but civility between us while we're together. What is it?"

"You asked me last night to let widow Leary's cow out o' pound?"

"Ay, did I!"

"And I swore I wouldn't."

"I know you did. Who would doubt *that*, at any rate?"

"Well, before you leave us, be off now, and let the animal out o' the pound."

"Is that it? Oh, God help you! what'll you do when you'll be left to yourself, as you will be on Saturday next? Let her out, says you. Troth, the poor woman had her cow safe and sound at home wid her before she went to bed last night, and her poor childre had her milk to kitchen their pratics, the craythurs. Do you think I'd let her stay in till the maggot bit you? Oh, ay, indeed! In the mane time, as soon as you are done breakfast, I want you in the study, to put the bindage on that ould, good-for-nothin' leg o' yours; an' mark my words, let there be no shirkin' now, for on it must go, an' will, too. If I see that Hanlon, I'll tell him you want to see him, Master Richard; an' now that I'm on it, I had betther say a word to *you* before I go; bekaise when I *do* go, you'll have no one to guide you, God help you, or to set you a Christian patthern. You see that man sittin' there wid that bad leg, stretched out upon the chair?"

"I do, Jemmy—ha, ha, ha! Well. what next?"

"That man was the worst patthern ever *you* had. In the word, don't folly his example in anything—in any one single thing; an' then there may be some chance o' you still. I'll want you by-an'-by in the study, I tould you."

These last words were addressed to his master, at whom he looked as one might be supposed to do at a man whose case, in a moral sense, was hopeless; after which, having uttered a groan that seemed to imitate the woeful affliction he was doomed, day by day, to suffer, he left the room.

It is not our intention, neither is it necessary that we should enter into the particulars of the interview which Hanlon had that morning with young Dick. It is merely sufficient to state that they had a private conversation in the old magistrate's office, at which the female whom Hanlon had visited the night before was present. When this was concluded, Hanlon walked with her a part of the way, evidently holding serious and interesting discourse touching a subject which we may presume bore upon the extraordinary proceedings of the previous night. He closed by giving her directions how to proceed on her journey; for it seemed that she was unacquainted with the way, being, like himself, but a stranger in the neighborhood:—"You will go on," said he, "till you reach the height at Aughindrummon, from that you will see the trees at the Rabbit Bank undher you; then keep the road straight till you come to where it crosses the ford of the river: a little on this side, and where the road turns to your right, you will find the Grey Stone, an' jist opposite that you will

see the miserable cabin where the Black Prophet lives."

"Why do they call him the Black Prophet?"

"Partly, they tell me, from his appearance, an' partly bekaise he takes delight in prophesyin' evil."

"But could *he* have anything to do wid the murdher?"

"I was thinkin' about that,' he replied, "and had some talk this mornin' wid a man that's livin' a long time—indeed that was born—a little above the place—and he says that the Black Prophet, or M'Gowan, did not come to the neighborhood till after the murdher. I wasn't myself cool enough last night to ask his daughter many questions about it; an' I was afraid, besides, to appear over-anxious in the business. So now that you have your instructions in that and the other matthers, you'll manage every thing as well as you can."

Hanlon then returned to the Grange, and the female proceeded on her mission to the house, if house it could be called, of the Black Prophet, for the purpose, if possible, of collecting such circumstances as might tend to throw light upon a dark and mysterious murder.

When Sarah left her father, after having poulticed his face, to go *a kailley*, as she said, to a neighbor's house, she crossed the ford of the river, and was proceeding in the same directions that had been taken by Hanlon the preceding night, when she met a strange woman, or rather she found her standing, apparently waiting for herself, at the Grey Stone. From the position of the stone, which was a huge one, under one ledge of which, by the way, there grew a little clump of dwarf elder, it was impossible that Sarah could pass her, without coming in tolerable close contact; for the road was an old and narrow one, though perfectly open and without hedge or ditch on either side of it.

"Maybe you could tell me, young woman, whereabouts here a man lives that they call Donnel Dhu, or the Black Prophet; his real name is M'Gowan, I think."

"I ought to be able to tell you, at any rate," replied Sarah; "I'm his daughter."

The strange woman, on surveying Sarah more closely, looked as if she never intended to remove her eyes from her countenance and figure. She seemed for a moment, as it were, to forget every other object in life—her previous conversation with Hanlon—the message on which she had been sent—and her anxiety to throw light upon the awful crime that had been committed at the spot whereon she stood. At length she sighed deeply, and appeared to recover her presence of mind, and to break through the abstraction in which she had been wrapped.

"You're his daughter, you say?"

"Ay, I *do* say so."

"Then you know a young man by name Pierce—och, what am I sayin'!—by name Charley Hanlon?"

"To be sure I do—I'm not ashamed of knowin' Charles Hanlon."

"You have a good opinion of him, then?"

"I *have* a good opinion of him, but not so good as I had thought."

"Musha why then, might one ask?"

"I'm afeard he's a cowardly crathur, and rather unmanly a thrifle. I like a man to be a man, an' not to get as white as a sheet, an' cowld as a tombstone, bekaise he hears what he thinks to be a groan at night, an' it may be nothin' but an owld cow behind a ditch. Ha! ha! ha!"

"An' where did he hear the groan?"

"Why, here where we're standin'. Ha! ha! ha! I was thinkin' of it since, an' I did hear somethin' very like a groan; but what about it? Sich a night as last night would make any one groan that had a groan in them."

"You spoke about ditches, but sure there's no ditches here."

"Divil a matther—who cares what it was? What did you want wid my father?"

"It was yourself that I wanted to see."

"Faix, an' you've seen me, then, an' the full o' your eye you tuck out o' me. You'll know me again, I hope."

"Is your mother livin'?"

"No."

"How long is she dead, do you know?"

"I do not; I hardly remember anything about her. She died when I was a young slip—a mere child, I believe. Still," she proceeded, rather slowly, musing and putting her beautiful and taper fingers to her chin—"I think that I *do* remember—it's like a dhrame to me though, an' I dunna but it *is* one—still it's like a dhrame to me, that I was wanst in her arms, that I was cryin', an' that she kissed me—that she kissed me! If *she* had lived, it's a different life maybe I'd lead an' a different creature I'd be to-day, maybe, but I never had a mother."

"Did your father marry a second time?"

"He did."

"Then you have a step-mother?"

"Ay have I."

"Is she kind to you, an' do you like her?"

"Middlin'—she's not so bad—better than I deserve, I doubt; I'm sorry for what I did to her; but then I have the divil's temper,

an' have no guide o' myself when it comes on me. I know whatever she may be to me, I'm not the best step-daughter to her.'

The strange female was evidently much struck with the appearance and singularly artless disposition of Sarah, as well as with her extraordinary candor; and indeed no wonder; for as this neglected creature spoke, especially with reference to her mother, her eyes flashed and softened with an expression of brilliancy and tenderness that might be said to resemble the sky at night, when the glowing corruscations of the *Aurora Borealis* sweep over it like expanses of lightning, or fade away into those dim but graceful undulations which fill the mind with a sense of such softness and beauty.

"I don't know," observed her companion, sighing and looking at her affectionately, "how any step-mother could be harsh to *you*."

"Ha! ha! ha! don't you, indeed? Faix, then, if you had me, maybe you wouldn't think so—I'm nothin' but a born divil when the fit's on me."

"Charley Hanlon," proceeded the strange woman, "bid me ax you for the ould tobacy-box you promised him last night."

"Well, but he promised me a handkerchy; have you got it?"

"I have," replied the other, producing it; "but, then, I'm not to give it to you, unless you give me the box for it."

"But I haven't the box now," said Sarah, "how-and-ever, I'll get it for him."

"Are you sure that you can an' will?" inquired the other.

"I had it in my hand yesterday," she said, "an' if it's to be had I'll get it."

"Well, then," observed the other mildly, "as soon as you get him the box, he'll give you this handkerchy, but not till then."

"Ha!" she exclaimed, kindling, "is that his bargain; does he think I'd thrick him or cheat him?—hand it here."

"I can't," replied the other; "I'm only to give it to you when I get the box."

"Hand it here, I say," returned Sarah, whose eyes flashed in a moment; "it's Peggy Murray's rag, I suppose—hand it here, I bid you."

The woman shook her head and rep'ied, "I can't—not till you get the box."

Sarah replied not a word, but sprang at it, and in a minute had it in her hands.

"I would tear it this minute into ribbons," she exclaimed, with eyes of fire and glowing cheeks, "and tramp it undher my feet too; only that I want it to show her, that I may have the advantage over her."

There was a sharp, fierce smile of triumph on her features as she spoke; and altogether her face sparkled with singular animation and beauty.

"God bless me!" said the strange woman, looking at her with a wondering yet serious expression of countenance; "I wanst knew a face like yours, an' a temper the aiquil of it—at any rate, my good girl, you don't pay much respect to a stranger. Is your step-mother at home?"

"She is not, but my father is; however, I don't think he'll see you now. My step-mother's gone to Darby Skinadre, the meal-monger's."

"I'm goin' there."

"An' if you see her," replied the other, "you'll know her; a score on her cheek—ha, ha, ha; an' when you see it, maybe you'll thank God that I am not your step-daughter."

"Isn't there a family named Sullivan that lives not far from Skinadre's?"

"There is; Jerry Sullivan, it's his daughter that's the beauty—*Gra Gal* Sullivan. Little she knows what's preparin' for her!"

"How am I to go to Skinadre's from this?" asked the woman.

"Up by that road there; any one will tell you as you go along."

"Thank you, dear," replied the woman, tenderly; "God bless you; you *are* a wild girl, sure enough; but above all things, afore I go, don't forget the box for—for—och, for—Charley Hanlon. God bless you, *a colleen machree*, an' make you what you ought to be!"

Sarah, during many a long day, had not heard herself addressed in an accent of kindness or affection; for it would be wrong to bestow upon the rude attachment which her father entertained for her, or his surly mode of expressing it, any term that could indicate tenderness, even in a remote degree. She looked, therefore, at the woman earnestly, and as she did, her whole manner changed to one of melancholy and kindness. A soft and benign expression came like the dawn of breaking day over her features, her voice fell into natural melody and sweetness, and, approaching her companion, she took her hand and exclaimed—

"May God bless *you* for them words! it's many a day since *I* heard the voice o' kindness. I'll get the box, if it's to be had, if it was only for *your own* sake."

She then passed on to her neighbor's house, and the next appearance of her companion was that in which the reader caught a glimpse of her in the house of Darby Skinadre, from which she followed Nelly M'Gowan and Mave Sullivan with an appearance of such interest.

CHAPTER IX.

Meeting of Strangers—Mysterious Dialogue.

Gra Gal Sullivan and the prophet's wife, having left the meal-shop, proceeded in the direction of Aughamurran, evidently in close, and if one could judge by their gestures, deeply important conversation. The strange woman followed them at a distance, meditating, as might be perceived by her hesitating manner, upon the most seasonable moment of addressing either one or both, without seeming to interrupt or disturb their dialogue. Although the actual purport of the topic they discussed could not be known by a spectator, yet even to an ordinary observer, it was clear that the elder female uttered something that was calculated to warn or alarm the younger.

She raised her extended forefinger, looked earnestly into the face of her companion, then upwards solemnly, and, clasping her hands with vehemence, appeared to close her assertion by appealing to heaven in behalf of its truth; the younger looked at her with wonder, seemed amazed, paused suddenly on her step, raised her hands, and looked as if about to express terror; but, checking herself, appeared as it were perplexed by uncertainty and doubt. After this the elder woman seemed to confide some secret or sorrow to the other, for she began to weep bitterly, and to wring her hands as if with remorse, whilst her companion looked like one who had been evidently transformed into an impersonation of pure and artless sympathy. She caught the rough hand of the other—and, ere she had proceeded very far in her narrative, a few tears of compassion stole down her youthful cheek—after which she began to administer consolation in a manner that was at once simple and touching. She pressed the hand of the afflicted woman between hers, then wiped her eyes with her own handkerchief, and soothed her with a natural softness of manner that breathed at once of true tenderness and delicacy.

As soon as this affecting scene had been concluded, the strange woman imperceptibly mended her pace, until her proximity occasioned them to look at her with that feeling which prompts us to recognize the wish of a person to address us, as it is often expressed, by an appearance of mingled anxiety and diffidence, when they approach us. At length Mave Sullivan spoke—

"Who is that strange woman that is followin' us, an' wants to say something, if one can judge by her looks?"

"Well, I don't know," replied Nelly; "but whatsomever it may be, she wishes to speak to you or me, no doubt of it."

"She looks like 'a poor woman,'"* said Mave, "an' yet she didn't ask anything in Skinadre's, barring a drink of water; but, God pity her if she's comin' to us for relief, poor creature! At any rate, she appears to have care and distress in her face; I'll spake to her."

She then beckoned the female to approach them, who did so; but they could perceive as she advanced, that they had been mistaken in supposing her to be one of those unhappy beings whom the prevailing famine had driven to mendicancy. There was visible in her face a feeling of care and anxiety certainly, but none of that supplicating expression which is at once recognized as the characteristic of the wretched class to which they supposed her to belong. This circumstance particularly embarrassed the inexperienced girl, whose gentle heart at the moment sympathized with the stranger's anxieties, whatever they may have been, and she hesitated a little, when the woman approached, in addressing her. At length she spoke:

"We wor jist sayin' to one another," she observed, "that it looked as if you wished to spake to either this woman or me."

"You're right enough, then," she replied; "I have something to say to her, and a single word to yourself, too."

"An' what is it you have to say to *me?*" asked Nelly; "I hope it isn't to borrow money from me, bekase if it is, my banker has failed, an' left me as poor as a church mouse."

"Are you in distress, poor woman," inquired the generous and kind-hearted girl. "Maybe you're hungry; it isn't much we can do for you; but little as it is, if you come home with me, you'll come to a family that won't scruple to share the little they have *now* with any one that's worse off than themselves."

"Ay, you may well say '*now*,'" observed the prophet's wife; "for *until now*, it's they that could always afford it; an' indeed it was the ready an' the willin' bit was ever at your father's table."

The stranger looked upon the serene and beautiful features of Mave with a long gaze of interest and admiration; after which she added, with a sigh:

"And you, I believe, are the girl they talk so much about for the fair face and good heart? Little pinetration it takes to see that you have both, my sweet girl. If I don't

* A common and compassionate name for a person forced to ask alms.

mistake, your name is Mave Sullivan, or *Gra Gal*, as the people mostly call you."

Mave, whose natural delicacy was tender and pure as the dew-drop of morning, on hearing her praises thus uttered by the lips of a stranger, blushed so deeply, that her whole neck and face became suffused with that delicious crimson of modesty which, alas! is now of such rare occurrence among the sex, unconscious that, in doing so, she was adding fresh testimony to the impressions which had gone so generally abroad of her extraordinary beauty, and the many unostentatious virtues which adorned her humble life.

"Mave Sullivan is my name," she replied, smiling through her blushes: "as to the nickname, the people will call one what they like, no matther whether it's right or wrong."

"The people's seldom wrong, then, in givin' names o' the kind," returned the stranger; "but in your case, they're right at all events, as any one may know that looks upon you; that sweet face an' them fair looks is seldom if ever found with a bad heart. May God guard you, my purty and innocent girl, an' keep you safe from all evil, I pray his holy name."

The prophet's wife and Mave exchanged looks as the woman spoke: and the latter said:

"I hope *you* don't think there's any evil before me."

"Who is there," replied the stranger, "that can say there's not? Sure it's before us and about us every hour in the day; but in your case, darlin', I jist say, be on your guard, an' don't trust or put belief in any one that you don't know well. That's all I can say, an' indeed all I know."

"I feel thankful to you," replied Mave; "and now that you wish me well, (for I'm sure you do,) maybe you'd grant me a favor?"

"If it is widin the bounds of my power, I'll do it," returned the other; "but it's little I can do, God help me."

"Nelly," said Mave, "will you go on to the cross-roads there, an' I'll be with you in a minute."

The cross-roads alluded to were only a couple of hundred yards before them. The prophet's wife proceeded, and Mave renewed the conversation.

"What I want you to do for me is this—that is if you can do it—maybe you could bring a couple of stones of meal to a family of the name of—of—" here she blushed again, and her confusion became so evident that she felt it impossible to proceed until she had recovered in some degree her composure. "Only two or three years agone,' she continued, "they were the daicentest farmers in the parish; but the world went against them as it has of late a'most against every one, owing to the fall of prices, and now they're out of their farm, very much reduced, and there's sickness amongst them, as well as want. They've been living," she proceeded, wiping away the tears which were now fast flowing, "in a kind of cabin or little cottage not far from the fine house an' place that was not long ago their own. Their name," she added, after a pause in which it was quite evident that she struggled strongly with her feelings, "is—is—Dalton."

"O was the young fellow one of them," asked the woman, "that was so outrageous awhile ago in the miser's? I think I heard the name given to him."

"Oh, I have nothing to say for him," replied Mave; "he was always wild, but they say never bad-hearted; it's the rest of the family I'm thinking about—and even that young man isn't more than three or four days up out o' the fever. What I want you to do is to bring the male I'm spakin' of to that family; any one will show you their little place; an' to leave it there about dusk this evenin', so that no one will ever know that you do it; an' as you love God an' hope for mercy, don't breathe *my* name in the business at all."

"I will do it for you," replied the other; "but in the meantime where am I to get the meal?"

"Why, at the miser's," replied Mave; "and when you go there, tell him that the person who told him *they wouldn't forget it to him*, sent you for it, an' you'll get it."

"God forbid I refused you that much,' said the stranger; "an' although it'll keep me out longer than I expected, still I'll manage it for you, an' come or go what will, widout mentioning your name."

"God bless you for that," said Mave, "an grant that you may never be brought to the same hard pass that they're in, and keep you from ever having a heavy or a sorrowful heart."

"Ah, acushla oge," replied the woman with a profound sigh. "that prayer's too late for me; anything else than a heavy and sorrowful heart I've seldom had: for the last twenty years and upwards little but care and sorrow has been upon me."

"Indeed, one might easily guess as much," said Mave, "you have a look of heart-break and sorrow, sure enough. But answer me this: how do you know that there's evil before me or about me?"

"I don't know much about it," returned

the other; "but I'm afeard there's something to your disadvantage planned or plannin' against you. When I seen you awhile ago I didn't know you till I heard your name; I'm a stranger here, not two weeks in the neighborhood, and know hardly anybody in it."

"Well," observed Mave, who had fallen back upon her own position, and the danger alluded to by the stranger, "I'll do nothing that's wrong myself, and if there's danger about me, as I hear there is, it's a good thing to know that God can guard me in spite of all that any one can do against me."

"Let that be your principle, ahagur—sooner or latter the hand o' God can and will make everything clear, and after all, dear, he is the best protection, blessed be his name!"

They had now reached the cross-roads already spoken of, where the prophet's wife again joined them for a short time, previous to her separation from Mave, whose way from that point lay in a direction opposite to theirs.

"This woman," said Mave, "wishes to go to Condy Dalton's in the course of the evening, and you, Nelly, can show her from the road the poor place they now live in, God help them."

"To be sure," replied the other, "an' the house where they *did* live when they wor *as* themselves, full, an' warm, an' daicent; an' it is a hard case on them, God knows, to be turned out like beggars from a farm that they spent hundreds on, and to be forced to see the landlord, ould Dick o' the Grange, now settin' it at a higher rent and putting into his own pocket the money they had laid out upon improvin' it an' makin' it valuable for him and his; troth, it's open robbery an' nothin' else."

"It *is* a hard case upon them, as every body allows," said Mave, "but it's over now, and can't be helped. Good-bye, Nelly, an' God bless you; an' God bless you too," she added, addressing the strange woman, whose hand she shook and pressed. "You are a great deal oulder than I am, an' as I said, every one may read care an' sorrow upon your face. Mine doesn't show it yet, I know, but for all that the heart within me is full of both, an' no likelihood of its ever bein' otherwise with me."

As she spoke, the tears again gushed down her cheeks; but she checked her grief by an effort, and after a second hurried good-bye, she proceeded on her way home.

"That seems a mild girl," said the strange woman, "as she is a lovely creature to look at."

"She's better than she looks," returned the prophet's wife, "an' that's a great deal to say for *her*."

"That's but truth," replied the stranger, "and I believe it; for indeed she has goodness in her face."

"She has and in her heart," replied Nelly; "no wondher, indeed, that every one calls her the *Gra Gal*, for it's she that well deserves it. You are bound for Condy Dalton's, then?" she added, inquiringly.

"I am," said the other.

"I think you must be a stranger in the country, otherwise I'd know your face," continued Nelly—"but maybe you're a relation of theirs."

"I am a stranger," said the other; "but no relation."

"The Daltons," proceeded Nelly, "are daicent people,—but hot and hasty, as the sayin' is. It's the blow before the word wid them always."

"Ah, but they say," returned her companion, "that a hasty heart was never a bad one."

"Many a piece o' nonsense they say as well as that," rejoined Nelly; "I know them that 'nd put a knife into your heart hastily enough—ay, an' give you a hasty death into the bargain. They'll first break your head—cut you to the skull, and then, indeed, they'll give you a phaisther. That was ever an' always the carrecther of the same Daltons; an', if all accounts be thrue, the hand of God is upon them, an' will be upon them till the bloody deed is brought to light."

"How is that?" inquired the other, with intense interest, whilst her eyes became riveted upon Nelly's hard features.

"Why, a murdher that was committed betther than twenty years ago in this neighborhood."

"A murdher!" exclaimed the stranger. "Where?—when?—how?"

"I can tell you where, an' I can tell you when," replied Nelly; "but there I must stop—for unless I was at the committin' of it, you might know very well I couldn't tell you *how*."

"*Where* then?" she asked, and whilst she did so, it was by a considerable effort that she struggled to prevent her agitation from being noticed by the prophet's wife.

"Why, near the Grey Stone at the cross-roads of Mallybenagh—that's the *where*."

"An' now for the *when?*" asked the stranger, who almost panted with anxiety as she spoke.

"Let me see," replied Nelly, "fourteen and six makes twenty, an' two before that or nearly—I mane the year of the rebellion. Why it's not all out two-and-twenty years, I think."

"Aisey," said the other, "I'm but very weak an' feeble—will you jist wait till I rest a minute upon this green bank by the road."

"What ails you?" asked Nelly. "You look'as if you got suddenly ill."

"I did get a little—but it'll soon pass away," she answered—"true enough," she added in a low voice, and as if in a soliloquy; "God is a just Judge—he is—he is! Well, but—oh, I'll soon get better—well, but listen, what became of the murdhered man?—was the body ever got?"

"Nobody knows that—the body was never got—that is to say nobody knows where it's now lyin', snug enough too."

"Ha!" thought the stranger, eying her furtively—"snug enough!—there's more knowledge where that came from. What do you mane by snug enough?" she asked abruptly.

"Mane!" replied the other, who at once perceived the force of the unguarded expression she had used;—"mane, why what could I mane, but that whoever did the deed, hid the body where very few would be likely to find it."

Her companion now stood up, and approaching the prophet's wife, raised her hand, and said in a tone that was both startling and emphatic—

"I met you this day as you may think, by accident; but take my word for it, and, as sure as we must both account for our acts, it was the hand o' God that brought us together. I now look into your face, and I tell you that I see guilt and throuble there—ay, an' the dark work of a conscience that's gnawin' your heart both night and day."

Whilst speaking, she held her face within about a foot of Nelly's, into which she looked with an expression so searching and dreadful in its penetration, that the other shrunk back, and felt for a moment as if subdued by a superior spirit. It was, however, only for a moment; the sense of her subjection passed away, and she resumed that hard and imperturbable manner, for which she had been all her life so remarkable, unless, like Etna and Vesuvius, she burst out of this seeming coldness into fire and passion. There, however, they stood looking sternly into each others' faces, as if each felt anxious that the other should quail before her gaze—the stranger, in order that her impressions might be confirmed, and the prophet's wife, that she should, by the force of her strong will, fling off those traces of inquietude, which she knew very well were often too legible in her countenance.

"You are wrong," said Nelly, "an' have only mistaken my face for a lookin'-glass. It was your own you saw, an' it was your own you wor spaking of—for if ever I saw a face that publishes an ill-spent life on the part of its owner, yours is it."

"Care an' sorrow I have had," replied the other, "an' the sin that causes sorrow, I grant; but there's somethin' that's weighin' down your heart, an' that won't let you rest until you give it up. You needn't deny it, for you can't hide it—hard your eye is, but it's not clear, and I see that it quivers, and is uaisy before mine."

"I said you're mistaken," replied the other; "but even supposin' you wor not, how is it your business whether my mind is aisy or not? You won't have my sins to answer for."

"I know that," said the stranger; "and God sees my own account will be too long and too heavy, I doubt. I now beg of you, as you hope to meet judgment, to think of what I said. Look into your own heart, and it will tell you whether I am right or whether I am wrong. Consult your husband, and if he has any insight at all into futurity, he must tell you that, unless you clear your couscience, you'll have a hard death-bed of it."

"You're goin' to Condy Dalton's," replied Nelly, with much coolness, but whether assumed or not it is difficult to say; "look into *his* face, and try what you can find *there*. At any rate, report has it that there's blood upon his hand, an' that the downfall of himself and his family is only the vengeance of God, an' the curse of murdher that's pursuin' him and them."

"Why," inquired the other, eagerly, "was *he* accused of it?"

"Ay, an' taken up for it; but bekaise the body wasn't found, they could do nothing to him."

"May Heaven assist me!" exclaimed the stranger, "but this day is——however, God's will be done, as it *will* be done! Are you goin'?"

"I'm goin'," replied Nelly; "by crossin' the fields here, I'll save a great deal of ground; and when you get as far as the broken bridge, you'll see a large farm-house widout any smoke from it; about a quarter of a mile or less beyant that you'll find the house you're lookin' for—the house where Condy Dalton lives."

Having thus directed the stranger, the prophet's wife entered a gap that led into a field, and proceeded on her way homewards, having, ere she parted, glanced at her with a meaning which rendered it extremely difficult to say whether the singular language addressed to her had left behind it any such

impression as the speaker wished to produce. Their glances met and dwelt on each other for a short time: the strange woman pointed solemnly towards the sky, and the prophet's wife smiled carelessly; but yet, by a very keen eye, it might have been noticed that, under this natural or affected indifference, there lurked a blank or rather an unquiet expression, such as might intimate that something within her had been moved by the observations of her strange companion.

CHAPTER X.

The Black Prophet makes a Disclosure.

The latter proceeded on her way home, having marked the miserable hovel of Condy Dalton. At present our readers will accompany us once more to the cabin of Donnel Dhu, the prophet.

His wife, as the reader knows, had been startled into something like remorse, by the incidents which had occurred within the last two days, and especially by the double discovery of the dead body and the Tobacco box. Sarah, her step-daughter, was now grown, and she very reasonably concluded, her residence in the same house with this fiery and violent young female was next to an impossibility.—The woman herself was naturally coarse and ignorant; but still there was mixed up in her character a kind of apathetic or indolent feeling of rectitude or vague humanity, which rendered her liable to occasional visitations of compunction for whatever she did that was wrong. The strongest principle in her, however, was one which is frequently to be found among her class—I mean such a lingering impression of religious feeling as is not sufficiently strong to prevent the commission of crime, but yet is capable by its influence to keep the conscience restless and uneasy under its convictions. Whether to class this feeling with weakness or with virtue, is indeed difficult; but to whichsoever of them it may belong, of one thing we are certain, that many a mind, rude and hardened by guilt, is weak or virtuous only on this single point. Persons so constituted are always remarkable for feelings of strong superstition, and are easily influenced by the occurrence of slight incidents, to which they are certain to attribute a peculiar significance, especially when connected with anything that may occasion them uneasiness for the time, or which may happen to occupy their thoughts, or affect their own welfare or interests.

The reader need not be surprised, therefore, on learning that this woman, with all her apathy of character on the general matters of life, was accessible to the feeling or principle we have just described, nor that the conversation she had just had with the strange woman, both disturbed and alarmed her.

On returning, she found her husband and step-daughter both at home; the latter hacking up some white thorn wood with an old hatchet, for the fire, and the other sitting with his head bent gloomily upon his hand, as if ruminating upon the vicissitudes of a troubled or ill-spent life.

Having deposited her burthen, she sat down, and drawing a long breath, wiped her face with the corner of a blue *praskeen* which she always wore, and this she did with a serious and stern face, intimating, as it were, that her mind was engaged upon matters of deep interest, whatever they might have been.

"What's that you're doin'?" she inquired of Sarah, in a grave, sharp voice.

"Have you no eyes?" replied the other; "don't you see what I am doin'?"

"Where did you get them white thorns that you're cuttin' up?"

"Where did I get them, is it?"

"Ay; I said so."

"Why, where they grew—ha, ha, ha! There's information for you."

"Oh, God help you! how do you expect to get through life at all?"

"Why, as well as I can—although not, maybe, as well as I wish."

"Where did you cut them thorns, I ax?"

"An' I tould you; but since that won't satisfy you, I cut them on the *Rath* above there."

"Heaven presarve us, you hardened jade, have you no fear of anything about you?"

"Divil a much that I know of, sure enough."

"Didn't you know that them thorns belongs to the fairies, and that some evil will betide any one that touches or injures a single branch o' them."

"Divil a single branch I injured," replied Sarah, laughing; "I cut down the whole tree at wanst."

"My sowl to glory, if I think its safe to live in the house wid you, you hardened divil."

"Troth, I think you may well say so, after yesterday's escape," returned Sarah; "an' I have no objection that you should go to glory, body an' soul; an' a purty piece o' goods will be in glory when you're there—ha, ha, ha!"

"Throw out them thorns, I bid you."

"Why so? Don't we want them for the fire?"

"No matther for that; we don't want to bring '*the good people*'—this day's Thursday, the Lord stand between us an' harm—amin!—about our ears. Out wid them."

"No, the sorra branch."

"Out wid them, I say. Are you afeard of neither God nor the divil?"

"Not overburdened with much fear of either o' them," replied the daring young creature.

"Aren't you afeard o' the good people, then?"

"If they're good people, why should we be afeard o' them? No, I'm not."

"Put the thorns out, I bid you again."

"Divil a chip, mother dear; if your own evil conscience or your dirty cowardice makes you afeard o' the fairies, don't think I am. I don't care that about them. These same thorns must boil the dinner in spite of all the fairies in Europe; so don't fret either yourself or me on the head o' them."

"Oh, I see what's to come! There's a doom over this house, that's all, an' over some, if not all o' them that's in it. Everything's leadin' to it; an' come it will."

"Why, mother, dear, at this rate you'll leave my father nothin' to say. You're keepin' all the black prophecies to yourself. Why don't you rise up, man alive," she added, turning to him, "and let her hear how much of the divil's lingo *you* can give?—It's hard, if you can't prophesy as much evil as she can. Shake yourself, ruffle your feathers, or clap your wings three times, in the divil's name, an' tell her she'll be hanged; or, if you wish to soften it, say she'll go to Heaven in a string. Ha, ha, ha!"

At this moment, a poor, famine-struck looking woman, with three or four children, the very pictures of starvation and misery, came to the door, and, in that voice of terrible destitution, which rings feeble and hollow from an empty and exhausted frame, she implored them for some food.

"We haven't it for you, honest woman," said Nelly, in her cold, indifferent voice—"it's not for you now."

The hope of relief was nearly destroyed by the unfeeling tones of the voice in which she was answered. She looked, however, at her famishing children, and once more returned to the door, after having gone a few steps from it.

"Oh, what will become of these?" she added, pointing to the children. "I don't care about myself—I think my cares will soon be over."

"Go to the divil out o' that!" shouted the prophet—"don't be tormentin' us wid yourself and your brats."

"Didn't you hear already," repeated his wife, "that you got your answer? We're poor ourselves, and we can't help every one that comes to us. It's not for you now."

"Don't you hear that there's nothing for you?" again cried the prophet, in an angry voice; "yet you'll be botherin' us!"

"Indeed, we haven't it, good woman," repeated Nelly; "so take your answer."

"Don't you know that's a lie?" said Sarah, addressing her step-mother. "You have it, if you wish to give it."

"What's a lie?" said her father, starting, for he had again relapsed into his moodiness. "What's a lie?—who—who's a liar?"

"You are!" she replied, looking him coolly and contemptuously in the face; "you tell the poor woman that there's nothing for her. Don't you know that's a lie? It may be very well to tell a lie to them that can bear it—to a rich *bodagh*, or his proud lady of a wife—although it's a mean thing even to them; but to tell a lie to that heart-broken woman and her poor childhre—*her* childhre—aren't they her own?—an' who would spake for them if *she* wouldn't. If every one treated the poor that way, what would become of them? Ay, to look in her face, where there's want an' hunger, and answer distress wid a lie—it's cruel—cruel!".

"What a kind-hearted creature she is," said her step-mother, looking towards her father—"isn't she?"

"Come here, poor woman," said Sarah, calling her back; "it *is* for you. If these two choose to let you and your childhre die or starve, I won't;" and she went to the meal to serve them as she spoke.

The woman returned, and looked with considerable surprise at her; but Nelly went also to the meal, and was about to interpose, when Sarah's frame became excited, and her eyes flashed, as they always did when in a state of passion.

"If you're wise, don't prevent me," she said. "Help these creatures I will. I'm your match now, an' more than your match, thank God; so be quiet."

"If I was to die for it, you won't have your will now, then," said Nelly.

"Die when you like, then," replied Sarah; "but help that poor woman an' her childhre *I will*."

"Fight it out," said Donnel Dhu, "it's a nice quarrel, although Sal has the right on her side."

"If you prevent me," said she, disregarding her step-mother, "you'll rue it quickly; or hould—I'm beginnin' to hate this kind of

quarrellin' —here, let her have as much meal as will make my supper; I'll do without any for the sake of the childhre, this night."

This was uttered in a tone of voice more mitigated, but at the same time so resolute, that Nelly stepped back and left her to pursue her own course.

She then took a wooden trencher, and with a liberal hand assisted the poor creatures, who began to feel alarmed at the altercation which their distress had occasioned in the family.

"You're starvin', childre," said she, whilst emptying the meal into the poor woman's bag.

"May the blessin' of God rest upon you," whispered the woman, "you've saved my orphans;" and, as she uttered the words, her hollow eyes filled, and a few tears ran slowly down her cheeks.

Sarah gave a short, loud laugh, and snatching up the youngest of the children, stroked its head and patted its cheek, exclaiming—

"Poor thing; you won't go without your supper this night, at any rate."

She then laughed again in the same quick, abrupt manner, and returned into the house.

"Why, then," said her step-mother, looking at her with mingled anger and disdain, "is it tears you're sheddin'—cryin', no less! After that, maricles will never cease."

Sarah turned towards her hastily; the tears, in a moment, were dried upon her cheeks, and as she looked at her hard, coarse, but well-shaped features, her eyes shone with a brilliant and steady light for more than a minute. The expression was at once lofty and full of strong contempt, and, as she stood in this singular but striking mood, it would indeed be difficult to conceive a finer type of energy, feeling, and beauty, than that which was embodied in her finely-turned and exquisite figure. Having thus contemplated the old woman for some time, she looked upon the ground, and her face passed rapidly into a new form and expression of beauty. It at once became soft and full of melancholy, and might have been mistaken for an impersonation of pity and sorrow.

"Oh, no!" she exclaimed, in a low voice, that was melody itself; "I never got it from either the one or the other—the kind or soft word—an' it's surely no wondher that I am as I am."

And as she spoke she wept. Her heart had been touched by the distress of her fellow creatures, and became, as it were, purified and made tender by its own sympathies, and she wept. Both of them looked at her; but as they were utterly incapable of understanding what she felt, this natural struggle of a great but neglected spirit excited nothing on their part but mere indifference.

At this moment, the prophet, who seemed laboring under a fierce but gloomy mood, rose suddenly up, and exclaimed—

"Nelly—Sarah!—I can bear this no longer; the saicret must come out. I am a ——"

"Stop," screamed Sarah, "don't say it—don't say it! Let me leave the counthry. Let me go somewhere—any where—let me—let me—*die* first."

"I am——," said he.

"I know it," replied his wife; "a murdherer! I know it now—I knew it since yesterday mornin'."

"Give him justice," said Sarah, now dreadfully excited, and seizing him by the breast of his coat,—"give him common justice—give the man justice, I say. You are my father, aren't you? Say how you did it. It was a struggle—a fight; he opposed you—he did, and your blood riz, and you stabbed him for fear he might stab you. That was it. Ha! ha! I know it was, for *you* are *my* father, and *I* am your daughter; and that's what I would do like a man. But you never did it—ah! you never did it in cowld blood, or like a coward."

There was something absolutely impressive and commanding in her sparkling eyes, and the energetic tones of her voice, whilst she addressed him.

"Donnel," said the wife, "it's no saicret to me; but it's enough now that you've owned it. This is the last night that I'll spend with a murdherer. You know what I've to answer for on my own account; and so, in the name of God, we'll part in the mornin'."

"Ha!" exclaimed Sarah, "you'd leave him now, would you? You'd desart him now; now that all the world will turn against him; now that every tongue will abuse him; that every heart will curse him; that every eye will turn away from him with hatred; now that shame, an' disgrace, an' guilt is all upon his head; you'd leave him, would you, and join the world against him? Father, on my knees I go to you;" and she dropped down as she spoke; "here on my knees I go to you, an' before you spake, mark, that through shame an' pain, an' sufferin', an' death, I'll stay by you, an' with you. But, I now kneel to you—what I hardly ever did to God—an' for his sake, for God's sake, I ask you; oh say, say that you did not kill the man in cowld blood; that's all! Make me sure of *that*, and I'm happy."

"I think you're both mad," replied Donnel. "Did I say that I was a murdherer? Why didn't you hear me out?"

"You needn't," returned Nelly; "I knew it since yestherday mornin'."

"So you think," he replied, "an' it's but nathural you should, I was at the place this day, and seen where you dug the *Casharrawan.* I have been strugglin' for years to keep this saicret, an' now it must come out; but *I'm* not a murdherer."

"What saicret, father, if you're not a murdherer?" asked Sarah; "what saicret; but there is not murder on you; *do* you say *that?*"

"I do say it; there's neither blood nor murdher on my head!" but I know who the murdherer is, an' I can keep the saicret no longer!"

Sarah laughed, and her eyes sparkled up with singular vividness. "That'll do," she exclaimed; "that'll do; all's 'right now; you're not a murdherer, you killed no man, aither in cowld blood or otherwise; ha! ha! you're a good father; you're a good father; I forgive you all now, all you ever did."

Nelly stood contemplating her husband with a serious, firm, but dissatisfied look; her chin was supported upon her forefinger and thumb; and instead of seeming relieved by the disclosure she had just heard, which exonerated him from the charge of blood, she still kept her eyes riveted upon him with a stern and incredulous aspect.

"Spake out, then," she observed coolly, "an' tell us all, for I am not convinced."

Sarah looked as if she would have sprang at her.

"You are not convinced," she exclaimed; "you are not convinced! Do you think he'd tell a lie on such a subject as this?" But no sooner had she uttered the words than she started as if seized by a spasm. "Ah, father," she exclaimed, "it's now your want of truth comes against you; but still, still I believe you."

"Tell us all about it," said Nelly, coldly; "let us hear all."

"But you both promise solemnly, in the sight of God, never to breathe this to a human being till I give yez leave."

"We do; we do," replied Sarah; "in the sight of God, we do."

"*You* don't spake," said he, addressing Nelly.

"I promise it."

"In the sight of God?" he added, "for I know you."

"Ay," said she, "in the sight of God, since you must have it so."

"Well, then," said he, "the common report is right; the man that murdhered him is Condy Dalton. I have kept it in till I can bear it no longer. It's my intention to go to a magistrate's as soon as my face gets well. For near two-and-twenty years, now, this saicret is lyin' hard upon me; but I'll aise my mind, and let justice take it's coorse. Bad I have been, but never so bad as to take my fellow-crature's life."

"Well, I'm glad to hear it," said his wife; "an' now I can undherstand you."

"And I'm both glad and sorry," exclaimed Sarah; "sorry for the sake of the Daltons. Oh! who would suppose it! and what will become of them?"

"I have no peace," her father added; "I have not had a minute's peace ever since it happened; for sure, they say, any one that keeps their knowledge of murdher saicret and won't tell it, is as bad as the murdherer himself. There's another thing I have to mention," he added, after a pause; "but I'll wait for a day or two; it's a thing I lost, an', as the case stands now, I can do nothing widout it."

"What is it, father?" asked Sarah, with animation; "let us know what it is."

"Time enough yet," he replied; "it'll do in a day or two; in the mean time it's hard to tell but it may turn up somewhere or other; I hope it may; for if it get into any hands but my own——"

He paused and bent his eyes with singular scrutiny first upon Sarah, who had not the most distant appreciation of his meaning. Not so Nelly, who felt convinced that the allusion he made was to the Tobacco-box, and her impression being that it was mixed up in some way with an act of murder, she determined to wait until he should explain himself at greater length upon the subject. Had Sarah been aware of its importance, she would have at once disclosed all she knew concerning it, together with Hanlon's anxiety to get it into his possession. But of this she could know nothing, and for that reason there existed no association, in her mind, to connect it with the crime which the Prophet seemed resolved to bring to light.

When Donnel Dhu laid himself down upon the bed that day, he felt that by no effort could he shake a strong impression of evil from off him. The disappearance of the Box surprised him so much, that he resolved to stroll out and examine a spot with which the reader is already acquainted. On inspecting the newly-disturbed earth, he felt satisfied that the body had been discovered, and this circumstance, joined with the disappearance of the Tobacco-box, precipitated his determination to act as he was about to do; or, perhaps altogether suggested the notion of taking such steps as might bring Condy Dalton to justice. At present it is difficult to say why he did not allude to

the missing Box openly, but perhaps that may be accounted for at a future and more appropriate stage of our narrative.

CHAPTER XI.

Pity and Remorse.

The public mind, though often obtuse and stupid in many matters, is in others sometimes extremely acute and penetrating. For some years previous to the time laid in our tale, the family of Condy Dalton began to decline very perceptibly in their circumstances. There had been unpropitious seasons; there had been failure of crops and disease among the cattle—and, perhaps what was the worst scourge of all, there existed a bad landlord in the person of Dick-o'-the-Grange. So long, however, as they continued prosperous, their known principles of integrity and strict truth caused them to be well spoken of and respected, in spite of the imputation which had been made against them as touching the murder of Sullivan. In the course of time, however, when the evidences of struggle succeeded those of comfort and independence, the world began to perceive the just judgments of God as manifested in the disasters which befel them, and which seemed to visit them as with a judicial punishment. Year after year, as they sank in the scale of poverty, did the almost forgotten murder assume a more prominent and distinct shape in the public mind, until at length it became too certain to be doubted, that the slow but sure finger of God's justice was laid upon them as an additional proof that crime, however it may escape the laws of men, cannot veil itself from the all-seeing eye of the Almighty.

There was, however, an individual member of the family, whose piety and many virtues excited a sympathy in her behalf, as general as it was deep and compassionate. This was Mrs. Dalton, towards whom only one universal impression of good-will, affection, and respect prevailed. Indeed, it might be said that the whole family were popular in the country; but, notwithstanding their respectability, both individually and collectively, the shadow of crime was upon them; and as long as the people saw that everything they put their hand to failed, and that a curse seemed to pursue them, as if in attestation of the hidden murder, so long did the feeling that God would yet vindicate His justice by their more signal punishment, operate with dreadful force against them, with the single exception we have mentioned.

Mrs. Dalton, on her return home from her unsuccessful visit to the miser's, found her family in the same state of grievous privation in which she had left them. 'Tis true she had not mentioned to any of them her intention of appealing to the gratitude or humanity of Skinadre; yet they knew, by an intuitive perception of her purpose, that she had gone to him, and although their pride would not allow them to ask a favor directly from him, yet they felt pleased that she had made the experiment, and had little doubt that the miser, by obliging her in the request she went to prefer, would gladly avail himself of the circumstance to regain their good will, not so much on their own account, as for the sake of standing well in the world, in whose opinion he knew he had suffered by his treachery towards them in the matter of their farm. She found her husband seated in an old arm-chair, which, having been an heir-loom in the family for many a long year, had, with one or two other things, been purchased *in* at the sheriff's sale. There was that chair, which had come down to them from three or four generations; an old clock, some smaller matters, and a grey sheep, the pet of a favorite daughter, who had been taken away from them by decline during the preceding autumn. There are objects, otherwise of little value, to which we cling for the sake of those unforgotten affections, and old mournful associations that invest indifferent things with a feeling of holiness and sorrow by which they are made sacred to the heart.

Condy Dalton was a man tolerably well stricken in years; his face was pale, but not unhealthy looking; and his hair, which rather flowed about his shoulders, was almost snow white—a circumstance which, in this case, was not attributed to the natural progress of years, but to that cankered remorse which turns the head grey before its time. Their family now consisted of two sons and two daughters, the original number having been two sons and *three* daughters—one of the latter having fallen a victim to decline, as we have already stated. The old man was sitting in the arm-chair, in which he leant back, having his chin at the same time on his breast, a position which gave something very peculiar to his appearance.

As Mrs. Dalton had occupied a good deal of time in unsuccessfully seeking for relief from other sources, it is unnecessary to say that the day had now considerably advanced, and the heavy shadows of this dismal and unhealthy evening had thrown their gloom

over the aspect of all nature, to which they gave an appearance of desolation that was in painful keeping with the sickness and famine that so mercilessly scourged the kingdom at large. A pot of water hung upon a dark slow fire, in order that as little time as possible might be lost in relieving their physical wants, on Mrs. Dalton's return with the relief which they expected.

"Here's my mother," said one of her daughters, looking with a pale cheek and languid eye out of the door; for she, too, had been visited by the prevailing illness; "an', my God! she's comin' as she went—empty handed!"

The other sister and Con, her brother, went also to look out, and there she was, certainly without relief.

"She isn't able to carry it herself," said their father; "or maybe she's comin' to get one of you—Con, I suppose—to go for it. Bad as Skinadre is, he wouldn't have the heart to refuse us a lock o' meal to keep the life in us. Oh! no, he'd not do that."

In a few moments Mrs. Dalton entered, and after looking upon the scene of misery about her, she sat down and burst into tears. "Mother," said the daughter, "there's no relief, then? You came as you went, I see."

"I came as I went, Nanty; but there *is* relief. There's relief for the poor of this world in Heaven; but on this earth, an' in this world, there is none for us—glory be to the name of God, still."

"So Skinadre refused, then?" said her husband; "he wouldn't give the meal?"

"No," she replied, "he would not; but the truth is, our woful state is now so well known, that nobody will trust us; they know there's no chance of ever bein' paid, an' they all say they can't afford it."

"I'm not surprised at what Tom says," observed our friend, young Con, "that the mealmongers and strong farmers that keep the provisions up on the poor deserves to be smashed and tramped under foot; an' indeed they'll get it, too, before long, for the people can't stand this, especially when one knows that there's enough, ay, and more than enough, in the country."

"If *I* had tobacco," said the old man, "I didn't care—that would keep the hunger off o' me; but it's poor Mary, here, now recoverin' from the sickness, that I pity; don't cry, Mary, dear; come here, darlin', come here, and turn up that ould creel, and sit down beside me. It's useless to bid you not to cry, avourneen machree, bekaise we all know what you feel; but you have one comfort—you are innocent—so are you all—there's nothing on any of your minds—no dark thought to lie upon your heart—oh, no, no; an' if it was only myself that was to suffer, I could bear it; but to see them that's innocent sufferin' along wid me, is what kills me. This is the hand of God that's upon us, an' that *will* be upon us, an' that has been upon us, an' I knew it would be so; for ever since that black night, the thought—the thought of what happened!—ay, it's that that's in me, an' upon me—it's that that has put wrinkles in my cheek before their time, an' that has made my hair white before its time, and that has——"

"Con, dear," observed his wife, "I never wished you to be talkin' of that before them; sure you did as much as a man could do; you repented, an' were sorry for it, an' what more could be expected from you?"

"Father, dear," said Mary, drying, or struggling to dry her tears, "don't think of me, or of any of us, nor don't think of anything that will disturb your mind—don't think of me, at any rate—I'm very weak, but I'm not *so* hungry as you may think; if I had one mouthful of anything just to take this feelin' that I have inwardly, an' this weakness away, I would be satisfied—that would do me; an' although I'm cryin' it's more to see your misery, father dear, an' all your miseries, than for what I'm sufferin' myself; but there's a kiss for you, it's all I have to give you."

"Mary, dear," said her sister, smote to the heart by her words, "you're sufferin' more than any of us, you an' my father," and she encircled her lovingly and mournfully in her arms as she spoke, and kissed her wan lips, after which she went to the old man, and said in a voice of compassion and consolation that was calculated to soothe any heart—

"Oh, father, dear, if you could only banish all uneasy thoughts from your mind—if you could only throw that darkness that's so often over you, off you, we could bear anything—anything—Oh, anything, if we seen you aisy in your mind, an' happy!"

Mrs. Dalton had dried her tears, and sat upon a low stool musing and silent, and apparently revolving in her mind the best course to be pursued under such circumstances. It was singular to observe the change that had taken place in her appearance even within a few hours; the situation of her family, and her want of success in procuring them food, had so broken down her spirits and crushed her heart, that the lines of her face were deepened, and her features sharpened and impressed with the marks of suffering as strongly as if they had been left there by the affliction of years. Her son leant himself against a piece of the

broken wall that partially divided their hut into something like two rooms, if they could be called so, and from time to time he glanced about him, now at his father, then at his poor sisters, and again at his heart-broken mother, with an impatient agony of spirit that could scarcely be conceived.

"Well," said he, clenching his hands and grinding his teeth, "it is expected that people like us will sit tamely undher sich tratement as we have resaved from Dick o' the Grange. Oh, if we had now the five hundre good pounds that we spent upon our farm—spent, as it turned out, not for ourselves, but to enable that ould villain of a landlord to set it to Darby Skinadre; for I b'lieve it's he that's to get it, with strong inthrest goin' into his pocket for all our improvements; if we had now," he continued, his passion rising, "if we had that five hundre pounds now, or one hundre, or one pound, great God! ay, or one shillin' now, wouldn't it save some of you from starvin'?"

This reflection, which in the young man excited only wrath, occasioned the female portion of the family to burst into fresh sorrow; not so the old man; he arose hastily, and paced up and down the floor in a state of gloomy indignation and fury which far transcended that of his son.

"Oh!" said he, "if I was a young man, as I was wanst—but the young men now are poor, pitiful, cowardly—I would—I would;" he paused suddenly, however, looked up, and clasping his hands, exclaimed—"forgive me, O God! forgive the thought that was in my unhappy heart! Oh, no, no, never, never allow yourself, Con, dear, to be carried away by anger, for 'fraid you might do in one minute, or in a short fit of anger, what might make you pass many a sleepless night, an' maybe banish the peace of God from your heart forever!"

"God bless you for them last words, Condy!" exclaimed his wife, "that's the way I wish you always to spake; but what to do, or where to go, or who to turn to, unless to God himself, I don't know."

"We're come to it at last," said their daughter Peggy; "little we thought of it, but at all events, it's bethher to do that than to do worse—bethher than to rob or steal, or do an ondaicent act of any kind. In the name of God, then, rather than you should die of hunger, Mary—you an' my father an' all of yez—I'll go out and beg from the neighbors."

"Beg!" shouted the old man, with a look of rage—"beg!" he repeated, starting to his feet and seizing his staff—"beg! you shameless and disgraceful strap. Do you talk of a Dalton goin' out to beg? take that!"

And as he spoke, he hit her over the arm with a stick he always carried.

"Now that will teach you to talk of beggin'. No!—die—die first—die at wanst; but no beggin' for any one wid the blood of a Dalton in their veins. Death—death—a thousand times sooner!"

"Father—oh! father, father, why, why did you do that?" exclaimed his son, "to strike poor kind an' heart-broken Peggy, that would shed her blood for you or any of us. Oh! father, I am sorry to see it."

The sorrowing girl turned pale by the blow, and a few tears came down her cheeks; but she thought not of herself, nor of her sufferings. After the necessary pause caused by the pain, she ran to him, and, throwing her arms about his neck, exclaimed in a gush of sorrow that was perfectly heartrending to witness—

"Oh! father dear, forgive me—your own poor Peggy; sure it was chiefly on your account and Mary's I was goin' to do it. I won't go, then, since you don't wish it; but I'll die with you."

The old man flung the stick from him, and clasping her in his arms, he sobbed and wept aloud.

"My darlin' child," he exclaimed, "that never yet gave one of us a bad word or angry look—will you forgive your unhappy father, that doesn't know what he's doin'! Oh! I feel that this state we're in—this outher desolation an' misery we're in—will drive me mad! but that hasty blow, avourneen machree—that hasty blow an' the hot temper that makes me give it, is my curse yet, has always been my curse, an' ever will be my curse; it's that curse that's upon me now, an' upon all of us this minute—it is, it is!"

"Condy," said his wife, "we all know that you're not as bad as you make yourself. Within the last few years your temper has been sorely tried, and your heart too, God knows; for our trials and our downcome in this world has been great. In all these trials, however, and sufferings, its a consolation to us, that we never neglected to praise an' worship the Almighty—we are now brought almost to the very last pass—let us go to our knees, then, an' throw ourselves upon His mercy, and beg of Him to support us, an' if it's His holy will, to aid us, and send us relief."

"Oh, Mary dear," exclaimed her husband, "but you are the valuable and faithful wife! If ever woman was a protectin' angel to man, you wor to me. Come children, in the name of the merciful God, let us kneel and pray."

The bleak and depressing aspect of twilight had now settled down upon the sweltering and deluged country, and the air was warm, thick, moist, and consequently unhealthy. The cabin of the Daltons was placed in a low, damp situation; but fortunately it was approached by a remnant of one of those old roads or causeways which had once been peculiar to the remote parts of the country, and also of very singular structure, the least stone in it being considerably larger than a shilling loaf. This causeway was nearly covered with grass, so that in addition to the antique and desolate appearance which this circumstance gave it, the footsteps of a passenger could scarcely be heard as they fell upon the thick close grass with which its surface was mostly covered.

Along this causeway, then, at the very hour when the Daltons, moved by that piety which is characteristic of our peasantry, had gone to prayer, was the strange woman whom we have already noticed, proceeding with that relief which it may be God in His goodness had ordained should reach them in answer to the simple but trustful spirit of their supplications. On reaching the miserable looking cabin, she paused, listened, and heard their voices blend in those devout tones that always mark the utterance of prayer among the people. They were, in fact, repeating a Rosary, and surely, it is not for those who differ with them in creed, or for any one who feel the influence of true charity, to quarrel with the form of prayer, when the heart is moved as theirs were, by earnestness and humble piety.

The strange woman on approaching the door more nearly, stood again for a minute or two, having been struck more forcibly by something which gave a touching and melancholy character to this simple act of domestic worship. She observed, for instance, that their prayers were blended with many sighs, and from time to time, a groan escaped from one of the males, which indicated either deep remorse or a sense of some great misery. One of the female voices, too, was so feeble as scarcely to be heard, yet there ran through it, she felt, a spirit of such tender and lowly resignation, mingled with such an expression of profound sorrow, as almost moved her to tears. The door was open, and the light so dim, that she could not distinctly see their persons—two circumstances which for a moment induced her to try if it were possible to leave the meal there without their knowledge. She determined otherwise, however, and as their prayers were almost immediately concluded, she entered the house. The appearance of a stranger in the dusky gloom carrying a burden, caused them to suppose that it was some poor person coming to ask charity, or permission to stop for the night.

"Who is this?" asked Condy. "Some poor person, I suppose, axin' charity," he added. "But God's will be done, we haven't it to give this many a long day. Glory be to his name!"

"This is Condy Dalton's house?" said the strange woman in a tone of inquiry.

"Sich as it is, it's his house, an' the best he has, my poor creature. I wish it was betther both for his sake and yours," he replied, in a calm and resigned voice, for his heart had been touched and solemnized by the act of devotion which had just concluded.

Mrs. Dalton, in the meantime, had thrown a handful of straw on the fire to make a temporary light.

"Here," said the stranger, "is a present of meal that a friend sent you."

"Meal!" exclaimed Peggy Dalton, with a faint scream of joy; "did you say meal?" she asked.

"I did," replied the other; "a friend that hard of your present distress, and thinks you don't desarve it, sent it to you."

Mrs. Dalton raised the burning straw, and looked for about half a minute into her face, during which the woman carried the meal over and placed it on the hearth.

"I met you to-day, I think," said Mrs. Dalton, "along with Donnel Dhu's wife on your way to Darby Skinadre's?"

"You might," replied the woman; "for I went there part o' the road with her."

"And who are we indebted to for the present?" she asked again.

"I'm not at liberty to say," replied the other; "barrin' that it's from a friend and well-wisher."

Mrs. Dalton clasped her hands, and looking with an appearance of abstraction, on the straw as it burned in the fire, said in a voice that became infirm by emotion—

"Oh! I know it; it can be no other. The friend that she speaks of is the girl—the blessed girl—whose goodness is in every one's mouth—*Gra Gal* Sullivan. I know it, I feel it."

"Now," said the woman, "I must go; but before I go, I wish to look on the face of Condy Dalton."

"There's a bit of rush on the shelf there," said Mrs. Dalton to one of her daughters; "bring it over and light it."

The girl did so, and the strange woman, taking the little taper in her hand, approached Dalton, and looking with a gaze almost fearfully solemn and searching into his face.

"You are Condy Dalton?" she asked.

"I am," said he.

"Answer me now," she proceeded, "as if you were in the presence of God at judgment, are you happy?"

Mrs. Dalton, who felt anxious for many reasons, to relieve her unfortunate husband from this unexpected and extraordinary catechist, hastened to reply for him.

"How, honest woman, could a man be happy who is in a state of such destitution, or who has had such misfortunes as he has had;" and as she spoke her eyes filled with tears of compassion for her husband.

"Don't break it upon me," said the woman, solemnly, "but let me ax my question, an' let him give his answer. In God's name and presence, are you a happy man?"

"I can't speak a lie to that, for I must yet meet my judge—I AM NOT."

"You have one particular thought that makes you unhappy."

"I have one particular thought that makes me unhappy."

"How long has it made you unhappy?"

"For near two-and-twenty years."

"That's enough," she replied; "God's hand is in it all—I must now go. I have done what I was axed to do; but there's a higher will at work. Honest woman," she added, addressing Mrs. Dalton, "I wish you and your childre good night!"

The moment she went they almost ceased to think of her. The pot still hung on the fire, and little time was lost in preparing a meal of food.

From the moment *Gra Gal* Sullivan's name was mentioned, the whole family observed that young Con started and appeared to become all at once deeply agitated; he walked backwards and forwards—sat down—and rose up—applied his hands to his forehead—appeared sometimes flushed, and again pale—and altogether seemed in a state which it was difficult to understand.

"What is the matter with you, Con?" asked his mother, "you seem dreadfully uneasy."

"I am ill, mother," he replied—"the fever that was near taking Tom away, is upon me; I feel that I have it by the pains that's in my head and the small o' my back."

"Lie down a little, dear," she added, "its only the pain, poor boy, of an empty stomach—lie down on your poor bed, God help you, and when the supper's ready you'll be better."

"It's her," he replied—"it's her—I know it"—and as he uttered the words, touched by her generosity, and the consciousness of his own poverty, he wept bitterly, and then repaired to his miserable bed, where he stretched himself in pain and sorrow.

"Now, Con," said his wife, in a tone of consolation and encouragement, "will you ever despair of God's mercy, or doubt his goodness, after what has happened?"

"I'm an unhappy man, Nancy," he replied, "but it never went to that with me, thank God—but where is that poor wild boy of ours, Tom,—oh, where is he now, till he gets one meal's mate?"

"He is up at the Murtaghs," said his sister, "an' I had better fetch him home; I think the poor fellow's almost out of his senses since Peggy Murtagh's death—that an' the dregs of the fever has him that he doesn't know what he's doin', God help him."

CHAPTER XII.

Famine, Death, and Sorrow.

It has never been our disposition, either in the living life we lead, or in the fictions, humble and imperfect as they are, which owe their existence to our imagination, to lay too heavy a hand upon human frailty, any more than it has been to countenance or palliate vice, whether open or hypocritical. Peggy Murtagh, with whose offence and death the reader is already acquainted, was an innocent and affectionate girl, whose heart was full of kind, generous, and amiable feelings. She was very young, and very artless, and loved not wisely but too well; while he who was the author of her sin, was nearly as young and artless as herself, and loved her with a first affection. She was, in fact, one of those gentle, timid, and confiding creatures who suspect not evil in others, and are full of sweetness and kindness to every one. Never did there live—with the exception of her offence—a tenderer daughter, or a more affectionate sister than poor Peggy, and for this reason, the regret was both sincere and general, which was felt for her great misfortune. Poor girl! she was but a short time released from her early sorrows, when her babe followed her, we trust, to a better world, where the tears were wiped from her eyes, and the weary one got rest.

The scene in her father's house on this melancholy night, was such as few hearts could bear unmoved, as well on account of her parents' grief, as because it may be looked upon as a truthful exponent both of the destitution of the country, and of the virtues and sympathies of our people.

Stretched upon a clean bed in the only room that was off the kitchen, lay the fair but lifeless form of poor Peggy Murtagh. The bed was, as is usual, hung with white, which

was simply festooned about the posts and canopy, and the coverlid was also of the same spotless color, as were the death clothes in which she was laid out. To those who are beautiful—and poor Peggy had possessed that frequently fatal gift—death in its first stage, bestows an expression of mournful tenderness that softens while it solemnizes the heart. In her case there was depicted all the innocence and artlessness that characterized her brief and otherwise spotless life. Over this melancholy sweetness lay a shadow that manifested her early suffering and sorrow, made still more touching by the presence of an expression which was felt by the spectator to have been that of repentance. Her rich auburn hair was simply divided on her pale forehead, and it was impossible to contemplate the sorrow and serenity which blended into each other upon her young brow, without feeling that death should disarm us of our resentments, and teach us a lesson of pity and forgiveness to our poor fellow-creatures, who, whatever may have been their errors, will never more offend either God or man. Her extreme youthfulness was touching in the highest degree, and to the simplicity of her beauty was added that unbroken stillness which gives to the lifeless face of youth the only charm that death has to bestow, while it fills the heart to its utmost depths with the awful conviction that that is the slumber which no human care nor anxious passion shall ever break. The babe, thin and pallid, from the affliction of its young and unfortunate mother, could hardly be looked upon, in consequence of its position, without tears. They had placed it by her side, but within her arm, so that by this touching arrangement all the brooding tenderness of the mother's love seemed to survive and overcome the power of death itself. There they lay, victims of sin, but emblems of innocence, and where is the heart that shall, in the inhumanity of its justice, dare to follow them out of life, and disturb the peace they now enjoy by the heartless sentence of unforgiveness?

It was, indeed, a melancholy scene. The neighbors having heard of her unexpected death, came to the house, as is customary, to render every assistance in their power to the bereaved old couple, who were now left childless. And here too, might we read the sorrowful impress of the famine and illness which desolated the land. The groups around the poor departed one were marked with such a thin and haggard expression as general destitution always is certain to leave behind it. The skin of those who, with better health and feeding, had been fair and glossy as ivory, was now wan and flaccid;—the long bones of others projected sharply, and as it were offensively to the feelings of the spectators—the over-lapping garments hung loosely about the wasted and feeble person, and there was in the eyes of all a dull and languid motion, as if they turned in their socket by an effort. They were all mostly marked also by what appeared to be a feeling of painful abstraction, which, in fact, was nothing else than that abiding desire for necessary food, which in seasons of famine keeps perpetually gnawing, as they term it, at the heart, and pervades the system by that sleepless solicitation of appetite, which, like the presence of guilt, mingles itself up, while it lasts, with every thought and action of one's life.

In this instance it may be remembered, that the aid which the poor girl had come to ask from Skinadre was, as she said, 'for the ould couple,' who had, indeed, been for a long time past their *last meal*, a very common thing during such periods, and were consequently without a morsel of food. The appearance of her corpse, however, at the house, an event so unexpected, drove, for the time, all feelings of physical want from their minds; but this is a demand which will not be satisfied, no matter by what moral power or calamity it may be opposed, and the wretched couple were now a proof of it. Their conduct to those who did not understand this, resembled insanity or fatuity more than anything else. The faces of both were ghastly, and filled with a pale, vague expression of what appeared to be horror, or the dull staring stupor, which results from the fearful conflict of two great opposing passions in the mind—passions, which in this case were the indomitable ones of hunger and grief. After dusk, when the candles were lighted, they came into the room where their daughter was laid out, and stood for some time contemplating herself and her infant in silence. Their visages were white and stony as marble, and their eyes, now dead and glassy, were marked by no appearance of distinct consciousness, or the usual expression of reason. They had no sooner appeared, than the sympathies of the assembled neighbors were deeply excited, and there was nothing heard for some minutes, but groans, sobbings, and general grief. Both stood for a short time, and looked with amazement about them. At length, the old man, taking the hand of his wife in his, said—

"Kathleen, what's this?—what ails me? I want something."

"You do, Brian—you do. There's Peggy there, and her child, poor thing; see how quiet they are! Oh, how she loved that

child! an' see her darlin'—see how she keeps her arm about it, for fear anything might happen it, or that any one might take it away from her; but that's her, all over—she *loved* everything."

"Ay," said the old man, "I know how she loved it; but, somehow, she was ever and always afeard, poor thing, of seemin' over fond of it before us or before strangers, bekaise you know the poor unhappy—bekaise you know—what was I goin' to say? Oh, ay, an' I'll tell you, although I didn't let on to her, still I loved the poor little thing myself—ay, did I. But, ah! Kathleen, wasn't she the good an' the lovin' daughter?"

The old woman raised her head, and looked searchingly around the room. She seemed uneasy, and gave a ghastly smile, which it was difficult to understand. She then looked into her husband's face, after which she turned her eyes upon the countenances of the early dead who lay before her, and going over to them, stooped and looked closely into their still but composed faces. She then put her hand upon her daughter's forehead, touched her lips with her fingers, carried her hand down along her arm, and felt the pale features of the baby with a look of apparent wonder; and whilst she did this, the old man left the room and passed into the kitchen.

"For God's love, an' take her away," said a neighboring woman, with tears in her eyes; "no one can stand this."

"No, no," exclaimed another, "it's best to let her have her own will; for until they both shed plenty of tears, they won't get the bether of the shock her unexpected death gave them."

"Is it thrue that Tom Dalton's gone mad, too?" asked another; "for it's reported he is."

"No; but they say he's risin' the counthry to punish Dick o' the Grange and Darby Skinadre—the one, he says, for puttin' his father and themselves out o' their farm; and the other for bein' the death, he says, of poor Peggy there and the child; an' for takin', or offerin' to take, the farm over their heads."

The old woman then looked around, and asked—

"Where is Brian? Bring him to me—I want him here. But wait," she added, "I will find him myself."

She immediately followed him into the kitchen, where the poor old man was found searching every part of the house for food.

"What are you looking for, Brian?" asked another of his neighbors.

"Oh," he replied, "I am dyin' wid fair hunger—wid fair hunger, an' I want something to ait;" and as he spoke, a spasm of agony came over his face. "Ah," he added, "if Alick was livin' it isn't this way we'd be, for what can poor Peggy do for us afther her '*misfortune?*' However, she is a good girl—a good daughter to us, an' will make a good wife, too, for all that has happened yet; for sure they wor both young and foolish, an' Tom is to marry her. She is now all we have to depend on, poor thing, an' it wrings my heart to catch her in lonesome places, cryin' as if her heart would break; for, poor thing, she's sorry—sorry for her fault, an' for the shame an' sorrow it has brought her to; an' that's what makes her pray, too, so often as she does; but God's good, an' he'll forgive her, bekaise she has repented."

"Brian," said his wife, "come away till I show you something."

As she spoke, she led him into the other room.

"There," she proceeded, "there is our dearest and our best—food—oh, I am hungry, too; but I don't care for that—sure the mother's love is stronger than hunger or want either: but there she is, that was wanst our pride and our delight, an' what is she now? She needn't cry now, the poor heart-broken child; she needn't cry now; all her sorrow, and all her shame, and all her sin is over. She'll hang her head no more, nor her pale cheek won't get crimson at the sight of any one that knew her before her fall; but for all her sin in that one act, did her heart ever fail to you or me? Was there ever such love an' care, an' respect, as she paid us? an' we wouldn't tell her that we forgave her; we wor too hardhearted for that, an' too wicked to say that one word that she longed for so much—oh an' she our only one—but now—daughter of our hearts—now we forgive you when it's too late—for, Brian, there they are! there they lie in their last sleep—the sleep that they will never waken from! an' it's well for them, for they'll waken no more to care an' throuble, and shame! There they lie! see how quiet an' calm they both lie there, the poor broken branch, an' the little withered flower!"

The old man's search for food in the kitchen had given to the neighbors the first intimation of their actual distress, and in a few minutes it was discovered that there was not a mouthful of anything in the house, nor had they tasted a single morsel since the morning before, when they took a little gruel which their daughter made for them. In a moment, with all possible speed, the poor creatures about them either went or sent for sustenance, and in many a case, almost the last morsel was shared with them.

and brought, though scanty and humble, to their immediate assistance. In this respect there is not in the world any people so generous and kind to their fellow-creatures as the Irish, or whose sympathies are so deep and tender, especially in periods of sickness, want, or death. It is not the tear alone they are willing to bestow—oh no—whatever can be done, whatever aid can be given, whatever kindness rendered, or consolation offered, even to the last poor shilling, or, "the very bit out of the mouth," as they say themselves, will be given with a good will, and a sincerity that might in vain be looked for elsewhere. But alas! they know what it is to want this consolation and assistance themselves, and hence their promptitude and anxiety to render them to others. The old man, touched a little by the affecting language of his wife, began to lose the dull stony look we have described, and his eyes turned upon those who were about him with something like meaning, although at that moment it could scarcely be called so.

"Am I dhramin'?" he asked. "Is this a dhrame? What brings the people all about us? Where's Alick from us—an' stay—where's her that I loved best, in spite of her folly? Where's Peggy from me—there's something wrong wid *me*—and yet *she's* not here to take care o' me?"

"Brian, dear," said a poor famished-looking woman approaching him, "she's in a better place, poor thing."

"Go long out o' that," he replied, "and don't put your hands on me. It's Peggy's hands I want to have about me, an' her voice. Where's Peggy's voice, I say? 'Father, forgive me,' she said, 'forgive me, father, or I'll never be happy more;' but I wouldn't forgive her, although my heart did at the same time; still I didn't say the word: bring her here," he added, "tell her I'm ready *now* to forgive her all; for she, it's she that was the forgivin' creature herself; tell her I'm ready now to forgive her all, an' to give her my blessin' wanst more."

It was utterly impossible to hear this language from the stunned and heart-broken father, and to contemplate the fair and lifeless form of the unhappy young creature as she lay stretched before him in the peaceful stillness of death, without being moved even to tears. There were, indeed, few dry eyes in the house as he spoke.

"Oh, Brian dear," said her weeping mother, "we helped ourselves to break her heart, as well as the rest. We wouldn't forgive her; we wouldn't say the word, although her heart was breakin' bekaise we did not. Oh, Peggy," she commenced in Irish, "oh, our daughter—girl of the *one fault!* the kind, the affectionate, and the dutiful child, to what corner of the world will your father an' myself turn now that you're gone from us? You asked us often an' often to forgive you, an' we would not. You said you were sorry, in the sight of God an' of man, for your fault—that your heart was sore, an' that you felt our forgiveness would bring you consolation; but we would not. Ould man," she exclaimed abruptly, turning to her husband, "why didn't you forgive our only daughter? Why, I say, didn't you forgive her her *one fault*—you wicked ould man, why didn't you forgive her?"

"Oh, Kathleen, I'll die," he replied, mournfully, "I'll die if I don't get something to ait. Is there no food? Didn't Peggy go to thry Darby Skinadre, an' she hoped, she said, that she'd bring us relief; an' so she went upon our promise to forgive her when she'd come back wid it."

"I wish, indeed, I had a drop o' gruel or something myself," replied his wife, now reminded of her famished state by his words.

At this moment, however, relief, so far as food was concerned, did come. The compassionate neighbors began, one by one, to return each with whatever could be spared from their own necessities, so that in the course of a little time this desolate old couple were supplied with provisions sufficient to meet the demands of a week or fortnight.

It is not our intention to describe, or rather to attempt to describe, the sorrow of Brian Murtagh and his wife, as soon as a moderate meal of food had awakened them, as it were, from the heavy and stupid frenzy into which the shock of their unhappy daughter's death, joined to the pangs of famine, had thrown them. It may be sufficient to say, that their grief was wild, disconsolate, and hopeless. She was the only daughter they had ever had: and when they looked back upon the gentle and unfortunate girl's many virtues, and reflected that they had, up to her death, despite her earnest entreaties, withheld from her their pardon for her transgression, they felt, mingled with their affliction at her loss, such an oppressive agony of remorse as no language could describe.

Many of the neighbors now proposed the performance of a ceremony, which is frequently deemed necessary in cases of frailty similar to that of poor Peggy Murtagh:—a ceremony which, in the instance before us, was one of equal pathos and beauty. It consisted of a number of these humble, but pious and well-disposed people joining in what is termed the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, which was an earnest solicitation of mercy, through her intercession with her Son,

for the errors, frailties, and sins of the departed; and, indeed, when her youth and beauty, and her artlessness and freedom from guile, were taken into consideration, in connection with her unexpected death, it must be admitted that this act of devotion was as affecting as it was mournful and solemn. When they came to the words, "Mother most pure, Mother most chaste, Mother undefiled, Mother most loving, *pray for her!*"—and again to those, "Morning Star, Health of the Weak, Refuge of Sinners, Comfortress of the Afflicted, *pray for her!*"—their voices faltered, became broken, and, with scarcely a single exception, they melted into tears. And it was a beautiful thing to witness these miserable and half-famished creatures, shrunk and pinched with hunger and want, laboring, many of them, with incipient illness, and several only just recovered from it, forgetting their own distress and afflictions, and rendering all the aid and consolation in their power to those who stood in more need of it than themselves. When these affecting prayers for the dead had been concluded, a noise was heard at the door, and a voice which in a moment hushed them into silence and awe. The voice was that of him whom the departed girl had loved with such fatal tenderness.

"In the name of God," exclaimed one of them, "let some of you keep that unfortunate boy out; the sight of him will kill the ould couple." The woman who spoke, however, had hardly concluded, when Thomas Dalton entered the room, panting, pale, tottering through weakness, and almost frantic with sorrow and remorse. On looking at the unhappy sight before him, he paused and wiped his brow, which was moistened by excitement and over-exertion.

There was now the silence of death in the room so deep, that the shooting of a spark from one of the death-candles was heard by every one present, an incident which, small as it was, deepened the melancholy interest of the moment.

"An' that's it," he at last exclaimed, in a voice which, though weak, quivered with excess of agony—"that's it, Peggy dear—that's what your love for me has brought you to! An' now it's too late, I can't help you *now*, Peggy dear. I can't bid you hould your modest face up, as the darlin' wife of him who loved you betther than all this world besides, but that left you, for all that a stained name an' a broken heart! Ay! an' there's what your love for me brought you to! What can I do now for you, Peggy dear? All my little plans for us both—all that I dreamt of an' hoped to come to pass, where are they now, Peggy dear? And it wasn't I, Peggy, it was poverty—oh you know how I loved you!—it was the downcome we got—it was Dick-o'-the-Grange, that oppressed us—that ruined us—that put us out without house or home—it was he, and it was my father—my father that they say has blood on his hand, an' I don't doubt it, or he wouldn't act the part he did—it was he, too, that prevented me from doin' what my heart encouraged me to do for you! O, blessed God," he exclaimed, "what will become of me! when I think of the long, sorrowful, implorin' look she used to give me. I'll go mad!—I'll go mad!—I've killed her—I've murdhered her, an' there's no one to take me up an' punish me for it! An' when I was ill, Peggy dear, when I had time to think on my sick bed of all your love and all your sorrow and distress and shame on my account, I thought I'd never see you in time to tell you what I was to do, an' to give consolation to your breakin' heart; but all that's now over; you are gone from me, an' like the lovin' cratlur you ever wor, you brought your baby along wid you! An' when I think of it—oh God, when I think of it, before your shame, my heart's delight, how your eye felt proud out of me, an' how it smiled when it rested on me. Oh, little you thought *I'd* hould back to do *you* justice—me that you doted on—an' yet it was I that sullied you—I! me! Here," he shouted—"here, is there no one to saize a murdherer!—no one to bring him to justice!"

Those present now gathered about him, and attempted as best they might, to soothe and pacify him; but in vain.

"Oh," he proceeded, "if she was only able to upbraid me—but what am I sayin'—upbraid! Oh, never, never was her harsh word heard—oh, nothing ever to me but that long look of sorrow—that long look of sorrow, that will either drive me mad, or lave me a broken heart! That's the look that'll always, always be before me, an' that, 'till death's day, will keep me from ever bein' a happy man."

He now became exhausted, and received a drink of water, after which he wildly kissed her lips, and bathed her inanimate face, as well as those of their infant, with tears.

"Now," said he, at length; "now, Peggy dear, listen—so may God never prosper me, if I don't work bitther vengeance on them that along wid myself, was the means of bringin' you to this—Dick-o'-the-Grange, an' Darby Skinadre, for if Darby had given you what you wanted, you might be yet a livin' woman. As for myself, I care not what becomes of me; you are gone, our child is gone, and now I have nothing in this world that I'll ever care for; there's nothing in it that I'll ever love again."

He then turned to leave the room, and was in the act of going out of it, when her father, who had nearly recovered the use of his reason, said:

"Tom Dalton, you are lavin' this house, an' may the curse of that girl's father, broken-hearted as you've left him, go along wid you."

"No," exclaimed his wife, "but may the blessin' of her mother rest upon you for the sake of the love *she* bore you!"

"You've spoken late, Kathleen Murtagh," he replied; "the curse of the father *is* on me, an' will folly me; I feel it."

His sister then entered the room to bring him home, whither he accompanied her, scarcely conscious of what he did, and ignorant of the cloud of vengeance which was so soon to break upon his wretched father's head.

CHAPTER XIII.

Sarah's Defence of a Murderer.

Our readers are not, perhaps, in general, aware that a most iniquitous usage prevailed among Middlemen Landlords, whenever the leases under which their property was held were near being expired. Indeed, as a landed proprietor, the middleman's position differed most essentially from that of the man who held his estate in fee. The interest of the latter is one that extends beyond himself and his wants, and is consequently transmitted to his children, and more remote descendants; and on his account he is, or ought to be, bound by the ties of a different and higher character, to see that it shall not pass down to them in an impoverished or mutilated condition. The middleman, on the contrary, feels little or none of this, and very naturally endeavors to sweep from off the property he holds, whilst he holds it, by every means possible, as much as it can yield, knowing that his tenure of it is but temporary and precarious. For this reason, then, it too frequently happened that on finding his tenant's leases near expiring, he resorted to the most unscrupulous and oppressive means to remove from his land those who may have made improvements upon it, in order to let it to other claimants at a rent high in proportion to these very improvements.

Our readers know that this is not an extreme case, but a plain, indisputable fact, which has, unfortunately, been one of the standing grievances of our unhappy country, and one of the great curses attending the vicious and unsettled state of property in Ireland.

Dick-o'-the-Grange's ejectment of Condy Dalton and his family, therefore, had, in the eyes of many of the people, nothing in it so startlingly oppressive as might be supposed. On the contrary, the act was looked upon as much in the character of a matter of right on his part, as one of oppression to them. Long usage had reconciled the peasantry to it, and up to the period of our tale, there had been no one to awaken and direct public feeling against it.

A fortnight had now elapsed since the scene in which young Dalton had poured out his despair and misery over the dead body of Peggy Murtagh, and during that period an incident occurred, which, although by no means akin to the romantic, had produced, nevertheless, a change in the position of Dick-o'-the-Grange himself, without effecting any either in his designs or inclinations. His own leases had expired, so that, in one sense, he stood exactly in the same relation to the head landlord, in which his own tenants did to him. There leases had dropped about a twelvemonth or more before his, and he now waited until he should take out new ones himself, previous to his proceeding any further in the disposition and re adjustment of his property. Such was his position and theirs, with reference to each other, when one morning, about a fortnight or better subsequent to his last appearance, young Dick, accompanied by the Black Prophet, was seen to proceed towards the garden—both in close conversation. The Prophet's face was now free from the consequences of young Dalton's violence, but it had actually gained in malignity more than it had lost by the discoloration and disfigurement resulting from the blow. There was a calm, dark grin visible when he smiled, that argued a black and satanic disposition; and whenever the lips of his hard, contracted, and unfeeling mouth expanded by his devilish sneer, a portion of one of his vile side fangs became visible, which gave to his features a most hateful and viper-like aspect. It was the cold, sneering, cowardly face of a man who took delight in evil for its own sake, and who could neither feel happiness himself, nor suffer others to enjoy it.

As they were about to enter the garden, Donnel Dhu saw approaching him at a rapid and energetic pace, his daughter Sarah, whose face, now lit up by exercise, as well as by the earnest expression of deep interest which might be read in it, never before appeared so strikingly animated and beautiful.

"Who is this lovely girl approaching us?" asked the young man, whose eyes at once kindled with surprise and admiration.

"That is my daughter," replied Donnel, coldly; "what can she want with me now, and what brought her here?"

"Upon my honor, Donnel, that girl surpasses anything I have seen yet. Why she's perfection—her figure is—is—I haven't words for it—and her face—good heavens! what brilliancy and animation!"

The Prophet's brow darkened at his daughter's unseasonable appearance in the presence of a handsome young fellow of property, whose character for gallantry was proverbial in the country.

"Sarah, my good girl," said he, whilst his voice, which at once became low and significant, quivered with suppressed rage—"what brought you here, I ax? Did any one send for you? or is there a matther of life and death on hands, that you tramp afther me in this manner—eh?"

"It may be life an' death for any thing I know to the contrary," she replied; "you are angry at something, I see," she proceeded—"but to save time, I want to spake to you."

"You must wait till I go home, then, for I neither can nor will spake to you now."

"Father, you will—you must," she replied—"and in some private place too. I won't detain you long, for I haven't much to say, and if I don't say it *now*, it may be too late."

"What the deuce, M'Gowan!" said Dick, "speak, to the young woman—you don't know but she may have something of importance to say to you."

She glanced at the speaker, but with a face of such indifference, as if she had scarcely taken cognizance of him, beyond the fact that she found some young man there in conversation with her father.

Donnel, rather to take her from under the libertine gaze of his young friend, walked a couple of hundred yards to the right of the garden, where, under the shadow of some trees that over-hung a neglected fish-pond, she opened the purport for her journey after him to the Grange.

"Now, in the divil's name," he asked, "what brought you here?"

"Father," she replied, "hear me, and do *not* be angry, for I know—at laste I think—that what I am goin' to say to you is right."

"Well, madame, let us hear what you have to say."

"I will—an' I must spake plain, too. You know me; that I cannot think one thing and say another."

"Yes, I know you very well—go on—ay, and so does your unfortunate step-mother."

"Oh—well!" she replied—"yes, I suppose so—ha! ha!" In a moment, however, her face became softened with deep feeling; "O, father," she proceeded, "maybe *you don't* know me, nor *she* either; it's only now I'm beginnin' to know myself. But listen—I have often observed your countenance, father—I have often marked it well. I can see by you when you are pleased or angry—but that's aisy; I can tell, too, when the bad spirit is up in you by the pale face but black look that scarcely any one could mistake. I have seen every thing bad, father, in your face—bad temper, hatred, revenge—an' but seldom any thing good. Father, I'm your daughter, an' don't be angry!"

"What, in the devil's name, are you drivin' at, you brazen jade?"

"Father, you said this mornin', before you came out, that you felt your conscience troublin' you for not discoverin' the murdher of Sullivan; that you felt sorry for keepin' it to yourself so long—sorry!—you said you were sorry, father!"

"I did, and I was."

"Father, I have been thinkin' of that since; no, father—your words were false; there was *no* sorrow in your face, nor in your eye,—no, father, nor in your heart. I know that—I feel it. Father, don't look so: *you* may bate me, but I'm not afraid."

"Go home out o' this," he replied—"be off, and carry your cursed madness and nonsense somewhere else."

"Father, here I stand—your own child—your only daughter; look me in the face—let your eye look into mine, if you can. I challenge you to it! Now mark my words—you are goin' to swear a murdher against the head of a poor and distressed family—to swear it—and, father, *you* know he never murdhered Sullivan!"

The Prophet started and became pale, but he did not accept the challenge.

He looked at her, however, after a struggle to recover his composure, and there she stood firm—erect; her beautiful face animated with earnestness, her eyes glowing with singular lustre, yet set, and sparkling in the increasing moisture which a word or thought would turn into tears.

"What do you mane, Sarah?" said he, affecting coolness; "What do you mane? *I* know! Explain yourself."

"Father, I will. There was a bad spirit in your face and in your heart when you said you were sorry; that you repented for consalin' the murdher so long; there was, father, a bad spirit in your heart, but no repentance there!"

"An' did you come all the way from home to tell me this?"

"THE PROPHET'S BROW DARKENED AT HIS DAUGHTER'S UNSEASONABLE APPEARANCE IN THE PRESENCE OF A HANDSOME YOUNG FELLOW OF PROPERTY, WHOSE CHARACTER FOR GALLANTRY WAS PROVERBIAL IN THE COUNTRY."

The Prophet—Chapter XIII.,
p. 834.

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"No, father, not to tell you what I have said, but, father, dear, what I am goin' to say; only first answer me. If he did murdher Sullivan, was it in his own defence? was it a cool murdher? a cowardly murdher? because if it was, Condy Dalton is a bad man. But still listen: it's now near two-an'-twenty years since the deed was done. I know little about religion, father; you know that; but still I have heard that God is willin' to forgive all men their sins if they repent of them; if they're sorry for them. Now, father, it's well known that for many a long year Condy Dalton has been in great sorrow of heart for something or other; can man do more?"

"Go home out o' this, I say; take yourself away."

"Oh, who can tell, father, the inward agony and bitther repentance that that sorrowful man's heart, maybe, has suffered. Who can tell the tears he shed, the groans he groaned, the prayers for mercy he said, maybe, and the worlds he would give to have that man that he killed—only by a hasty blow, maybe—again alive and well! Father, don't prosecute him; leave the poor heart-broken ould man to God! Don't you see that God has already taken him an' his into His hands; hasn't He punished them a hundred ways for years? Haven't they been brought down, step by step, from wealth an' respectability, till they're now like poor beggars, in the very dust? Oh, think, father, dear father, think of his white hairs; think of his pious wife, that every one respects; think of his good-hearted, kind daughters; think of their poverty, and all they *have* suffered so long; an' above all, oh, think, father dear, of what they *will* suffer if you are the manes of takin' that sorrowful white-haired ould man out from the middle of his poor, but lovin' and dacent and respected family, and hangin' him for an act that he has repented for, maybe, and that we ought to hope the Almighty himself has forgiven him for. Father, I go on my knees to you to beg that you won't prosecute this ould man; but leave him to God!"

As she uttered the last few sentences, the tears fell in torrents from her cheeks; but when she knelt—which she did—her tears ceased to flow, and she looked up into her father's face with eyes kindled into an intense expression, and her hands clasped as if her own life and everlasting salvation depended upon his reply.

"Go home, I desire you," he replied, with a cold sneer, for he had now collected himself, and fell back into his habitual snarl; "Go home, I desire you, or maybe you'd wish to throw yourself in the way of that young profligate that I was spakin' to when you came up. Who knows, afther all, but that's your real design, and neither pity nor compassion for ould Dalton."

"Am I his daughter?" she replied, whilst she started to her feet, and her dark eyes flashed with disdain: "Can I be his daughter?"

"I hope you don't mean to cast a slur upon your——." He paused a moment and started as if a serpent had bitten him; but left the word "*mother*" unuttered.

Again she softened, and her eyes filled with tears. "Father, I never had a mother!" she said.

"No," he replied; "or if you had, her name will never come through *my* lips."

She looked at him with wonder for a few moments, after which she turned, and with a face of melancholy and sorrow, proceeded with slow and meditating steps in the direction of their humble cabin.

Her father, who felt considerably startled by some portions of her appeal, though by no means softened, again directed his steps towards the garden gate, where he left young Dick standing. Here he found this worthy young gentleman awaiting his return, and evidently amazed at the interview between him and his daughter; for although he had been at too great a distance to hear their conversation, he could, and did see, by the daughter's attitudes, that the subject of their conversation was extraordinary, and consequently important.

On approaching him, the Prophet now, with his usual coolness, pulled out the tress which he had, in some manner, got from Gra Gal Sullivan, and holding it for a time, placed it in Dick's hands.

"There's one proof," said he, alluding to a previous part of their conversation, "that I wasn't unsuccessful, and, indeed, I seldom am, when I set about a thing in earnest."

"But is it possible," asked the other, "that she actually gave this lovely tress willingly—you swear that?"

"As Heaven's above me," replied the Prophet, "there never was a ringlet sent by woman to man with more love than she sent that. Why, the purty creature actually shed tears, and begged of me to lose no time in givin' it. You have it now, at all events—an' only for young Dalton's outrage, you'd have had it before now."

"Then there's no truth in the report that she's fond of him?"

"Why—ahem—n-no—oh, no—not *now*—fond of him she *was*, no doubt; an' you know it's never hard to light a half-burned turf, or a candle that was lit before. If they could be got out of the counthry, at all

events—these Daltons—it would be so much out of your way, for between you an' me, *I* can tell you that your life won't be safe when *he* comes to know that you have put his nose out of joint with the *Gra Gal.*"

"It is strange, however, that she should change so soon!"

"Ah, Master Richard! how little you know of woman, when you say so. They're a vain, uncertain, selfish crew—women are—there's no honesty in them, nor I don't think there's a woman alive that could be trusted, if you only give her temptation and opportunity; none of them will stand that."

"But how do you account for the change in her case, I ask?"

"I'll tell you that. First and foremost, you're handsome—remarkably handsome."

"Come, come, no nonsense, Donnel; get along, will you, ha! ha! ha!—handsome indeed! Never you mind what the world says—well!"

"Why," replied the other, gravely, "there's no use in denyin' it, you know; it's a matther that tells for itself, an' that a poor girl with eyes in her head can judge of as a rich one—at any rate, if you're not handsome, you're greatly belied; an' every one knows that there's never smoke without fire."

"Well, confound you!—since they'll have it so, I suppose I may as well admit it—I believe I am a handsome dog, and I have reason to know that, that——" here he shook his head and winked knowingly: "Oh, come Donnel, my boy, I can go no further on *that* subject—ha! ha! ha!"

"There is no dispute about it," continued Donnel, gravely; "but still I think, that if it was not for the mention *I* made of the dress, an' grandeur, and state that she was to come to, she'd hardly turn round as she did. Dalton, you know, is the handsomest young fellow, barring yourself, in the parish; an' troth on your account an' hers, I wish he was out of it. He'll be crossin' you—you may take my word for it—an' a dangerous enemy he'll prove—*that* I know."

"Why? what do you mean?"

Here the prophet, who was artfully trying to fill the heart of his companion with a spirit of jealousy against Dalton, paused for a moment, as if in deep reflection, after which he sighed heavily.

"Mane!" he at length replied; "I am unhappy in my mind, an' I know I ought to do it, an' yet I'm loth now after sich a length of time. Mane, did you say, Masther Richard?"

"Yes, I said so, and I say so; what do you mean by telling me that young Dalton will be a dangerous enemy to me?"

"An' so he will; an' so he would to any one that he or his bore ill-will against. You know there's blood upon their hands."

"No, I don't know any such thing; I believe he was charged with the murder of Mave Sullivan's uncle, but as the body could not be found, there were no grounds for a prosecution. I don't, therefore, know that there's blood upon his hands."

"Well, then, if *you* don't—may God direct me!" he added, "an' guide me to the best—if you don't, Masther Richard—Heaven direct me agin!—will I say it?—could you get that family quietly out of the country, Masther Richard? Bekaise if you could, it would be betther, maybe, for all parties."

"You seem to know something about these Daltons, Mr. M'Gowan?" asked Dick, "and to speak mysteriously of them?"

"Well, then, I do," he replied; "but what I have to say, I ought to say it to your father, who is a magistrate."

The other stared at him with surprise, but said nothing for a minute or two.

"What is this mystery?" he added at length; "I cannot understand you; but it is clear that you mean something extraordinary."

"God pardon me, Masther Richard, but you are right enough. No; I can't keep it any longer. Listen to me, sir, for I am goin' to make a strange and a fearful discovery; I know who it was that murdhered Sullivan; I'm in possession of it for near the last two-an'-twenty years; I have travelled every where; gone to England, to Wales, Scotland, an' America, but it was all of no use; the knowledge of the murdher and the murdherer was here," he laid his hand upon his heart as he spoke; "an' durin' all that time I had peace neither by night nor by day."

His companion turned towards him with amazement, and truly his appearance was startling, if not frightful; he looked as if were into vacancy; his eyes had become hollow and full of terror; his complexion assumed the hue of ashes; his voice got weak and unsteady, and his limbs trembled excessively, whilst from every pore the perspiration came out, and ran down his ghastly visage in large drops.

"M'Gowan," said his companion, "this is a dreadful business. As yet you have said nothing, and from what I see, I advise you to reflect before you proceed further in it. I think I can guess the nature of your secret; but even if you went to my father, he would tell you, that you are not bound to criminate yourself."

The Prophet, in the mean time, had made an effort to recover himself, which, after a little time, was successful.

"I believe you think," he added, with a gloomy and a bitter smile, "that it was *I* who committed the murdher; oh no! if it was, I wouldn't be apt to hang myself, I think. No! but I must see your father, as a magistrate; an' I must make the disclosure to him. The man that *did* murdher Sullivan is livin', and that man is Condy Dalton. I knew of this, an' for two-an'-twenty years let that murdherer escape, an' that is what made me so miserable an' unhappy. I can prove what I say; an' I know the very spot where he buried Sullivan's body, an' where it's lyin' to this very day."

"In that case, then," replied the other, "you have only one course to pursue, and that is, to bring Dalton to justice."

"I know it," returned the Prophet; "but still I feel that it's a hard case to be the means of hangin' a fellow-crature; but of the two choices, rather than bear any longer what I have suffered an' am still sufferin', I think it betther to prosecute him."

"Then go in and see my father at once about it, and a devilish difficult card you'll have to play with him; for my part, I think he is mad ever since Jemmy Branigan left him. In fact, he knows neither what he is saying or doing without him, especially in some matters; for to tell you the truth," he added, laughing, "Jemmy, who was so well acquainted with the country and every one in it, took much more of the magistrate on him than ever my father did; and now the old fellow, when left to himself, is nearly helpless in every sense. He knows he has not Jemmy, and he can bear nobody else near him or about him."

"I will see him, then, before I lave the place; an' now, Masther Richard, you know what steps you ought to take with regard to *Gra Gal* Sullivan. As she is willin' herself, of course there is but one way of it."

"Of course I am aware of that," said Dick; "but still I feel that it's devilish queer she should change so soon from Dalton to me."

"That's bekaise you know nothing about women," replied the Prophet. "Why, Masther Richard, I tell you that a weathercock is constancy itself compared with them. The notion of you an' your wealth, an' grandeur, an' the great state you're to keep her in—all turned her brain; an' as a proof of it, there you have a lock of her beautiful hair that she gave me with her own hands. If that won't satisfy you it's hard to say what can; but indeed I think you ought to know by this time o' day how far a handsome face goes with them. Give the divil himself but *that*, and they'll take his horns, hooves, and tail into the bargain—ay, will they."

This observation was accompanied by a grin so sneering and bitter, that his companion, on looking at him, knew not how to account for it, unless by supposing that he must during the course of his life have sustained some serious or irreparable injury at their hands.

"You appear not to like the women, Donnel; how is that?"

"Like them!" he replied, and as he spoke his face, which had been, a little before, ghastly with horror, now became black and venomous; "ha! ha! how is that, you say? oh, no matther now; they're angels; angels of perdition; their truth is treachery, an' their—but no matther. I'll now go in an' spake to your father on this business; but I forgot to say that I must see *Gra Gal* soon, to let her know our plans; so do you make your mind aisy, and lave the management of the whole thing in my hands."

CHAPTER XIV.

A Middleman Magistrate of the Old School, and his Clerk.

Dick-o'-the-Grange — whose name was Henderson—at least such is the name we choose to give him—held his office, as many Irish magistrates have done before him, in his own parlor; that is to say, he sat in an arm-chair at one of the windows, which was thrown open for him, while those who came to seek justice, or, as they termed it, law, at his hands, were compelled to stand uncovered on the outside, no matter whether the weather was stormy or otherwise. We are not now about to pronounce any opinion upon the constitutional spirit of Dick's decisions—inasmuch as nineteen out of every twenty of them were come to by the only "Magistrates' Guide" he ever was acquainted with—to wit, the redoubtable Jemmy Branigan. Jemmy was his clerk, and although he could neither read nor write, yet in cases where his judgments did not give satisfaction, he was both able and willing to *set his mark* upon the discontented parties in a fashion that did not allow his blessed signature to be easily forgotten. Jemmy, however, as the reader knows, was absent on the morning we are writing about, having actually fulfilled his threat of leaving his master's service—a threat, by the way, which was held out and acted upon at least once every year since he and the magistrate had stood to each other in the capacity of master and servant. Not that we are precisely correct in the statement we had made on this matter, for sometimes his removal was the result

of dismissal on the part of his master, and sometimes the following up of the notice which he himself had given him to leave his service. Be this as it may, his temporary absences always involved a trial of strength between the parties, as to which of them should hold out, and put a constraint upon his inclinations the longest; for since the truth must be told of Jemmy, we are bound to say that he could as badly bear to live removed from the society of his master, as the latter could live without him. For many years of his life, he had been threatening to go to America, or to live with a brother that he had in the Isle of *White*, as he called it, and on several occasions he had taken formal leave of the whole family, (always in the presence of his master, however,) on his departure for either the one place or the other, while his real abode was a snug old garret, where he was attended and kept in food by the family and his fellow-servants, who were highly amused at the outrageous distress of his master, occasioned sometimes by Jemmy's obstinate determination to travel, and sometimes by his extreme brotherly affection.

Donnel, having left his son cracking a long whip which he held in his hand, and looking occasionally at the tress of Mave Sullivan's beautiful hair, approached the hall door, at which he knocked, and on the appearance of a servant, requested to see Mr. Henderson. The man waived his hand towards the space under the window, meaning that he should take his stand there, and added—

"If it's law you want, I'm afeard you'll get more abuse than justice from him now, since Jemmy's gone."

The knowing grin, and the expression of comic sorrow which accompanied the last words, were not lost upon the prophet, who, in common with every one in the neighborhood for a circumference of many miles, was perfectly well aware of the life which master and man both led.

"Is that it?" said the prophet; "however, it can't be helped. Clerk, or no clerk, I want to see him on sarious business, tell him; but I'll wait, of coorse, till he's at leisure."

"Tom," said Henderson from within, "Who's there?—is that *him?* If it is, tell him, confound him! to come in, and I'll forgive him. If he'll promise to keep a civil tongue in his head, I'll forget all, say. Come in, you old scoundrel, I'm not angry with you; I want to speak to you, at all events."

"It's not him, sir; it's only Donnel M'Gowan, the Black Prophet, that wants some law business."

"Send him to the devil for law business What brings him here now? Tell him he shall have neither law nor justice from me. Did you send to his brother-in-law? Maybe he's there?"

"We did, sir. Sorra one of his seed, breed, or generation but we sent to. However, it's no use—off to America he's gone, or to the Isle o' White, at any rate."

"May the devil sink America and the Isle of White both in the ocean, an' you, too, you scoundrel, and all of you! Only for the cursed crew that's about me, I'd have him here still—and he the only man that understood my wants and my wishes, and that could keep me comfortable and easy."

"Troth, then, he hadn't an overly civil tongue in his head, sir," replied the man; "for, when you and he, your honor, were together, there was little harmony to spare between you."

"That was my own fault, you cur. No servant but himself would have had a day's patience with me. He never abused me but when I deserved it—did he?"

"No, your honor; I know he didn't, in troth."

"You lie, you villain, you know no such thing. Here am I with my sore leg, and no one to dress it for me. Who's to help me upstairs or down-stairs?—who's to be about me?—or, who cares for me, now that he's gone? Nobody—not a soul."

"Doesn't Masther Richard, sir?"

"No sir; Master Richard gives himself little trouble about me. He has other plots and plans on his hands—other fish to fry—other irons in the fire. Masther Richard, sirra, doesn't care a curse if I was under the sod to-morrow, but would be glad of it; neither does any one about me—but he did; and you infernal crew, you have driven him away from me."

"We, your honor?"

"Yes, all of you; you put me first out of temper by your neglect and your extravagance; then I vented it on him, because he was the only one among you I took any pleasure in abus—in speaking to. However, my mind's made up—I'll call an auction—sell everything—and live in Dublin as well as I can. What does that black hound want?"

"Some law business, sir; but I donna what it is."

"Is the scoundrel honest, or a rogue?"

"Throth it's more than I'm able to tell your honor, sir. I don't know much about him. Some spakes well, and some spakes ill of him—just like his neighbors—ahem!"

"Ay, an' that's all you can say of him? but if *he* was here, I could soon ascertain

what stuff he's made of, and what kind of a hearing he ought to get. However, it doesn't matter now—I'll auction everything—in this grange I won't live; and to be sure but I was a precious old scoundrel to quarrel with the best servant a man ever had."

Just at this moment, who should come round from a back passage, carrying a small bundle in his hand, but the object of all his solicitude. He approached quietly on tiptoe, with a look in which might be read a most startling and ludicrous expression of anxiety and repentance.

"How is he?" said he—"how is his poor leg? Oh, thin, blessed saints, but I was the double distilled villain of the airth to leave him as I did to the crew that was about him! The best masther that ever an ould vagabond like me was ongrateful to! How is he, Tom?"

"Why," replied the other, "if you take my advice, you'll keep from him at all events. He's cursin' an' abusin' you ever since you went, and won't allow one of us even to name you."

"Troth, an' it only shows his sense; for I desarved nothing else at his hands. However, if what you say is true, I'm afeared he's not long for this world, and that his talkin' sense at last is only the lightening before death, poor gintleman! *I* can stay no longer from *him*, any how, let him be as he may; an' God pardon me for my ongratitude in desurtin' him like a villain as I did."

He then walked into the parlor; and as the prophet was beckoned as far as the hall, he had an opportunity of witnessing the interview which took place between this extraordinary pair. Jemmy, before entering, threw aside his bundle and his hat, stripped off his coat, and in a moment presented himself in the usual striped cotton jacket, with sleeves, which he always wore. Old Dick was in the act of letting fly an oath at something, when Jemmy, walking in, just as if nothing had happened, exclaimed—

"Why, thin, Mother o' Moses, is it at the ould work I find you? Troth, it's past counsel, past grace wid you—I'm afraid you're too ould to mend. In the manetime, don't stare as if you seen a ghost—only tell us how is that unfortunate leg of yours?"

"Why—eh?—ay,—eh, ah,—you're back are you?—an' what the devil brought you here again?—eh?"

"Come now, keep yourself quiet, you onpenitent ould sinner, or it'll be worse for you. How is your leg?"

"Ah, you provokin' ould rascal—eh?—so you *are* back?"

"Don't you see I am—who would stick to you like myself, afther all? Troth I missed your dirty tongue, bad as it is—divil a thing but rank pace and quietness I was ever in since I seen you last."

"And devil a scoundrel has had the honesty to give me a single word of abuse to my face since you left me."

"And how often did I tell you that you couldn't depind upon the crew that's around you—the truth's not in them—an' that you ought to know. However, so far as I am concerned, don't fret—God knows I forgive you all your folly and *feasthalaga*, [nonsense,] in hopes always that you'll mend your life in many respects. You had meself before you as an example, though I say it, that oughn't to say it, but you know you didn't take pattern by me as you ought."

"Shake hands, Jemmy; I'm glad to see you again; you were put to expense since you went."

"No, none; no, I tell you."

"But I say you were."

"There, keep yourself quiet now; no I wasn't; an' if I was, too, what is it to you?"

"Here, put that note in your pocket."

"Sorra bit, now," replied Jemmy, "to plaise you," gripping it tightly at the same time as he spoke; "do you want to vex me again?"

"Put it in your pocket, sirra, unless you want me to break your head."

"Oh, he would," said Jemmy, looking with a knowing face of terror towards Tom Booth and the Prophet,—"it's the weight of his cane I'd get, sure enough—but it's an ould sayin' an' a true one, that when the generosity's in, it must come out. There now, I've put it in my pocket for you—an' I hope you're satisfied. Devil a sich a tyrant in Europe," said he, loudly, "when he wishes—an' yet, after all," he added, in a low, confidential voice, just loud enough for his master to hear,—"where 'ud one get the like of him? Tom Booth, desire them to fetch warm water to the study, till I dress his poor leg, and make him fit for business."

"Here is Donnel Dhu," replied Booth, "waitin' for law business."

"Go to the windy, Donnel," said Jemmy, with an authoritative air; "go to your ground; but before you do—let *me* know what you want."

"I'll do no such thing," replied the Prophet; "unless to say, that it's a matter of life an' death."

"Go out," repeated Jemmy, with brief and determined authority, "an wait till it's his honor's convanience, his full convanience, to see you. As dark a rogue, sir," he continued, having shoved the Prophet outside, and slapped the door in his face; "and as great

a schamer as ever put a coat on his back. He's as big a liar too, when he likes, as ever broke bread; but there's far more danger in him when he tells the truth, for then you may be sure he has some devil's design in view."

Dick-o'-the-Grange, though vulgar and eccentric, was by no means deficient in shrewdness and common sense—neither was he, deliberately, an unjust man; but, like too many in the world, he generally suffered his prejudices and his interests to take the same side. Having had his leg dressed, and been prepared by Jemmy for the business of the day, he took his place, as usual, in the chair of justice, had the window thrown open, and desired the Prophet to state the nature of his business.

The latter told him that the communication must be a private one, as it involved a matter of deep importance, being no less than an affair of life and death.

This startled the magistrate, who, with a kind of awkward embarrassment, ordered, or rather requested Jemmy to withdraw, intimating that he would be sent for, if his advice or opinion should be deemed necessary.

"No matther," replied Jemmy; "the loss will be your own; for sure I know the nice hand you make of law when you're left to yourself. Only before I go, mark my words;—there you stand, Donnel Dhu, an' I'm tellin' him to be on his guard against you—don't put trust, plaise your honor, in either his word or his oath—an' if he's bringin' a charge against any one, give it in favor of his enemy, whoever he is. I hard that he was wanst tried for robbery, an' I only wondher it wasn't for murdher, too; for in troth and sowl, if ever a man has both one and the other in his face, he has. It's known to me that he's seen now and then colloguin' an' skulkin' behind the hedges, about dusk, wid red Rody Duncan, that was *in* twiste for robbery. Troth it's birds of a feather wid them—and I wouldn't be surprised if we were to see them both swing from the same rope yet. So there's my carrecther of you, you villain," he added, addressing M'Gowan, at whom he felt deeply indignant, in consequence of his not admitting him to the secret of the communication he was about to make.

Henderson, when left alone with the Prophet, heard the disclosures which the latter made to him, with less surprise than interest. He himself remembered the circumstances perfectly well, and knew that on the occasion of Condy Dalton's former arrest, appearances had been very strong against him. It was then expected that he would have disclosed the particular spot in which the body had been concealed, but as he strenuously persisted in denying any knowledge of it, and, as the body consequently could not be produced, they were obliged of necessity to discharge him, but still under strong suspicions of his guilt.

The interview between Henderson and M'Gowan was a long one; and the disclosures made were considered of too much importance for the former to act without the co-operation and assistance of another magistrate. He accordingly desired the Prophet to come to him on the following day but one, when he said he would secure the presence of a Major Johnson, who was also in the commission, and by whose warrant old Condy Dalton had been originally arrested on suspicion of the murder. It was recommended that every thing that had transpired between them should be kept strictly secret, lest the murderer, if made acquainted with the charge which was about to be brought home to him, should succeed in escaping from justice. Young Dick, who had been sent for by his father, recommended this, and on those terms they separated.

CHAPTER XV.

A Plot and a Prophecy.

Our readers cannot forget a short dialogue which took place between Charley Hanlon and the strange female, who has already borne some part in the incidents of our story. It occurred on the morning she had been sent to convey the handkerchief which Hanlon had promised to Sarah M'Gowan, in lieu of the Tobacco-Box of which we have so frequently made mention, and which, on that occasion, she expected to have received from Sarah. After having inquired from Hanlon why Donnel Dhu was called the Black Prophet, she asked:

"But could *he* have anything to do with the murdher?"

To which Hanlon replied, that "he had been thinkin' about that, an' had some talk, this mornin', wid a man that's livin' a long time—indeed, that was born a little above the place, an' he says that the Black Prophet, or M'Gowan, did not come to the neighborhood till *after* the murdher."

Now this person was no other than Red Rody Duncan, to whom our friend Jemmy Branigan made such opprobrious allusion in the character of the Black Prophet to Dick-o'-the-Grange. This man, who was generally known by the *sobriquet* of Red

Rody, had been for some time looking after the situation of bailiff or driver to Dick-o'-the-Grange; and as Hanlon was supposed to possess a good deal of influence with young Dick, Duncan very properly thought he could not do better than cultivate his acquaintance. This was the circumstance which brought them together at first, and it was something of a dry, mysterious manner which Hanlon observed in this fellow, when talking about the Prophet and his daughter, that caused him to keep up the intimacy between them.

When Donnel Dhu had closed his lengthened conference with Henderson, he turned his steps homewards, and had got half-way through the lawn, when he was met by Red Rody. He had, only a minute or two before, left young Dick, with whom he held another short conversation; and as he met Rody, Dick was still standing within about a hundred yards of them, cracking his whip with that easy indolence and utter disregard of everything but his pleasures, which chiefly constituted his character.

"Don't stand to spake to me here," said the Prophet; "that young scoundrel will see us. Have you tried Hanlon yet, and will he do? Yes or no?"

"I haven't tried him, but I'm now on way to do so."

"Caution!"

"Certainly; I'm no fool, I think. If we can secure him, the business may be managed aisily; that is, provided the two affairs can come off on the same night."

"Caution, I say again."

"Certainly; I'm no fool, I hope. Pass on."

The Prophet and he passed each other very slowly during this brief dialogue; the former, when it was finished, pointing naturally towards the Grange, or young Dick, as if he had been merely answering a few questions respecting some person about the place that the other was going to see. Having passed the Prophet, he turned to the left, by a back path that led to the garden, where, in fact, Hanlon was generally to be found, and where, upon this occasion, he found him. After a good deal of desultory chat, Rody at last inquired if Hanlon thought there existed any chance of his procuring the post of bailiff.

"I don't think there is, then, to tell you the truth," replied Hanlon; "old Jemmy is against you bitterly, an' Masther Richard's interest in this business isn't as strong as his."

"The blackguard ould villain!" exclaimed Rody; "it will be a good job to give him a dog's knock some night or other."

"I don't see that either," replied Hanlon; "ould Jemmy does a power of good in his way; and indeed many an act of kindness the master himself gets credit for that ought to go to Jemmy's account."

"But *you* can give me a lift in the driver-ship, Charley, if you like."

"I'm afeard not, so long as Jemmy's against you."

"Ay, but couldn't you thry and twist that ould scoundrel himself in my favor?"

"Well," replied the other, "there is something in *that*, and whatever I can do with him, I will, if you'll thry and do me a favor."

"Me! Name it, man—name it, and it's done, if it was only to rob the Grange. Ha! ha! An' by the way, I dunna what puts robbin' the Grange into my head!"

And, as he spoke, his eye was bent with an expression of peculiar significance on Hanlon.

"No!" replied Hanlon with indifference; "it is not to rob the Grange. I believe you know something about the man they call the Black Prophet?"

"Donnel Dhu? Why—ahem!—a little—not much. Nobody, indeed, knows or cares much about him. However, like most people, he has his friends and his enemies."

"Don't you remember a murdher that was committed here about two-and-twenty-years ago?"

"I do."

"Was that before or afther the Black Prophet came to live in this counthry?"

"Afther it—afther it. No, no!" he replied, correcting himself; "I am wrong; it was before he came here."

"Then *he* could have had no hand in it?"

"Him! Is it him! Why, what puts such a thing as that into your head?"

"Faith, to tell you the truth, Rody, his daughter Sarah an' myself is beginnin' to look at one another; an', to tell you the truth again, I'd wish to know more about the same Prophet before I become his son-in-law, as I have some notion of doin'."

"I hard indeed that you wor pullin' a string wid her, an' now that I think of it, if you give me a lift wid ould Jemmy, I'll give you one there. The bailiff's berth is jist the thing for me; not havin' any family of my own, you see I could have no objection to live *in* the Grange, as their bailiff always did; but, aren't you afeard to tackle yourself to that divil's clip, Sarah?"

"Well, I don't know," replied the other; "I grant it's a hazard, by all accounts."

"An' yet," continued Rody, "she's a favorite with every one; an' indeed there's not a more generous or kinder-hearted creature alive this day than she is. I advise you, however, not to let her into your saicrets,

for if it was the knockin' of a man on the head and that she knew it, and was asked about it, out it would go, rather than she'd tell a lie."

"They say she's handsomer than *Gra Gal* Sullivan," said Hanlon; "and I think myself she is."

"I don't know; it's a dead tie between them; however, I can give you a lift with her father, but not with herself, for somehow, she doesn't like a bone in my skin."

"She and I made a swop," proceeded Hanlon, "some time ago, that 'ud take a laugh out o' you: I gave her a pocket-handkerchy; and she was to give me an ould Tobacey-Box—but she says she can't find it, altho' I have sent for it, an' axed it myself several times. She thinks the step-mother has thrown it away or hid it somewhere."

Rody looked at him inquiringly.

"A Tobacey-Box," he exclaimed; "would you like to get it?"

"Why," replied Hanlon, "the poor girl has nothing else to give, an' I'd like to have something from her, even if a ring never was to go on us, merely as a keepsake."

"Well, then," replied Duncan, with something approaching to solemnity in his voice, "mark my words—you promise to give me a lift for the driversship with old Jemmy and the two Dicks?"

"I do."

"Well, then, listen: If you will be at the Grey Stone to-morrow night at twelve o'clock—midnight—I'll engage that Sarah will give you the box *there*."

"Why, in troth, Rody, to tell you the truth if she could give it to me at any other time an' place, I'd prefer it. That Grey Stone is a wild place to be in at midnight."

"It *is* a wild place; still it's there, an' nowhere else, that you must get the box. And now that the bargain's made, do you think it's thrue that this old Hendherson"—here he looked very cautiously about him—"has as much money as they say he has?"

"I b'lieve he's very rich."

"It is thrue that he airs the bank notes in the garden here, and turns the guineas in the sun, for fraid—for fraid—they'd get blue-mowled—is it?"

"It may, for all I know; but it's more than I've seen yet."

"An' now between you and me, Charley—whisper—I say, isn't it a thousand pities—nobody could hear us, surely?"

"Nonsense—who could hear us?"

"Well, isn't it a thousand pities, Charley, *avic*, that dacent fellows, like you and me, should be as we are, an' that mad ould villain havin' his house full 'o money? eh, now?"

"It's a hard case," replied Hanlon, "but still we must put up with our lot. His father I'm tould was as poor in the beginnin' as either of us."

"Ay, but, it's the son we're spakin about—the ould tyrannical villain that dhrives an' harries the poor! He has loads of money in the house, they say—eh?"

"Divil a know myself knows, Rody;—nor—not makin' you an ill answer—divil a hair myself cares, Rody. Let him have much, or let him have little, that's your share an' mine of it."

"Charley, they say America's a fine place; talkin' about money—wid a little money there, they say a man could do wondhers."

"Who says that?"

"Why Donnel Dhu, for one; an' he knows, for he was there."

"I b'lieve that Donnel was many a place;—over half the world, if all's thrue."

"Augh! the same Donnel's a quare fellow—a deep chap—a cute fellow; but, I know more about him than you think—ay, do I."

"Why, what do you know?"

"No matther—a thing or two about the same Donnel; an' by the same token, a bether fellow never lived—an' whisper—you're a strong favorite wid him, that I know, for we wor talkin' about you. In the meantime I wish to goodness we had a good scud o' cash among us, an' we safe an' snug in America! Now shake hands an' good bye—an' mark me—if you dhrame of America an' a long purse any o' these nights, come to me an' I'll riddle your dhrame for you."

He then looked Hanlon significantly in the face, wrung his hand, and left him to meditate on the purport of their conversation.

The latter as he went out gazed at him with a good deal of surprise.

"So," thought he, "you were feelin' my pulse, were you? I don't think it's hard to guess whereabouts you are; however I'll think of your advice at any rate, an' see what good may be in it. But, in the name of all that's wondherful, how does it come to pass that that red ruffian has sich authority over Sarah M'Gowan as to make her fetch me the very thing I want?—that tobacco-box; an' at sich a place, too, an' sich an hour! An' yet he says that she doesn't like a bone in his skin, which I b'lieve! I'm fairly in the dark here; however time will make it all clear, I hope; an' for that we must wait."

He then resumed his employment.

Donnel Dhu, who was a man of much energy and activity, whenever his purposes required it, instead of turning his steps homewards, directed them to the house of our

kind friend Jerry Sullivan, with whose daughter, the innocent and unsuspecting Mave, it was his intention to have another private interview. During the interval that had elapsed since his last journey to the house of this virtuous and hospitable family, the gloom that darkened the face of the country had become awful, and such as wofully bore out to the letter the melancholy truth of his own predictions. Typhus fever had now set in, and was filling the land with fearful and unexampled desolation. Famine, in all cases the source and origin of contagion, had done, and was still doing, its work. The early potato crop, for so far as it had come in, was a pitiable failure; the quantity being small, and the quality watery and bad. The oats, too, and all early grain of that season's growth, were still more deleterious as food, for it had all fermented and become sour, so that the use of it, and of the bad potatoes, too, was the most certain means of propagating the pestilence which was sweeping away the people in such multitudes. Scarcely any thing presented itself to him as he went along that had not some melancholy association with death or its emblems. To all this, however, he paid little or no attention. When a funeral met him, he merely turned back three steps in the direction it went, as was usual; but unless he happened to know the family from which death had selected its victim, he never even took the trouble of inquiring who it was they bore to the grave—a circumstance which strongly proved the utter and heartless selfishness of the man's nature. On arriving at Sullivan's, however, he could not help feeling startled, hard and without sympathy as was his heart, at the wild and emaciated evidences of misery and want which a couple of weeks' severe suffering had impressed upon them. The gentle Mave herself, patient and uncomplaining as she was, had become thin and cheerless; yet of such a character was the sadness that rested upon her, that it only added a mournful and melancholy charm to her beauty—a charm that touched the heart of the beholder at once with love and compassion. As yet there had been no sickness among them; but who could say to-day that he or she might not be stricken down at once before to-morrow.

"Donnel," said Sullivan, after he had taken a seat, "how you came to prophecy what would happen, an' what has happened, is to me a wonder; but sure enough, *fareer gair*,* it has all come to pass."

"I can't tell myself," replied the other, "how I do it; all I know is, that the words come into my mouth, an' I can't help spakin' them. At any rate, that's not sur prisin'. I'm the seventh son of the seventh son, afther seven generations; that is I'm the seventh seventh son that was in our family; an' you must know that the knowledge increases as they go on. Every seventh son knows more than thim that went before him till it comes to the last, and he knows more than thim all. There were six seventh sons before me, so that I'm the last; for it was never known since the world began that ever more than seven afther one another had the gift of prophecy in the same family. That's the raison, you see, that I have no sons—the knowledge ends wid me."

"It's very strange," replied Sullivan, "an' not to be accounted for by any one but God—glory be to his name!"

"It *is* strange—an' when I find that I'm goin' to foretell any thing that's bad or unlucky, I feel great pain or uneasiness in my mind—but on the other hand, when I am to prophesy what's good, I get quite light-hearted and aisy—I'm all happiness. An' that's the way I feel now, an' has felt for the last day or two."

"I wish to God, Donnel," said Mrs. Sullivan, "that you could prophesize something good for us."

"Or," continued her charitable and benevolent husband, "for the thousands of poor creatures that wants it more still than we do—sure it's thankful to the Almighty we ought to be—an' is, I hope—that this woful sickness hasn't come upon us yet. Even Condy Dalton an' his family—ay, God be praised for givin' me the heart to do it—I can forgive *him* and *them*."

"Don't say them, Jerry ahagur," observed his wife, "we never had any bad feelin' against *them*."

"Well, well," continued the husband, "I can forgive him an' all o' them now—for God help them, they're in a state of most heart-breakin' distitution, livin' only upon the bits that the poor starvin' neighbors is able to crib from their own hungry mouths for them!" And here the tears—the tears that did honor not only to him, but to human nature and his country—rolled slowly down his emaciated cheeks, for the deep distress to which the man that he believed to be the murdherer of his brother had been brought.

"Indeed, Donnel," said Mrs. Sullivan, "it would be a hard an' uncharitable heart that wouldn't relent if it knew what they are suffering. Young Con is jist risin' out of the faver that was in the family, and it would wring your——"

* Bitter misfortune.

A glance at Mave occasioned her to pause. The gentle girl, upon whom the Prophet had kept his eye during the whole conversation, had been reflecting, in her wasted but beautiful features, both the delicacy and depth of the sympathy that had been expressed for the unhappy Daltons. Sometimes she became pale as ashes, and again her complexion assumed the subdued hue of the wild rose; for—alas that we must say it—sorrow and suffering—in other words, want, in its almost severest form, had thrown its melancholy hue over the richness of her blush—which, on this occasion, borrowed a delicate grace from distress itself. Such, indeed, was her beauty, and so gently and serenely did her virtues shine through it, that it mattered not to what condition of calamity they were subjected; in every situation they seemed to shed some new and unexpected charm upon the eyes of those who looked upon her. The mother, we said on glancing at her, paused—but the chord of love and sorrow had been touched, and poor Mave, unable any longer to restrain her feelings, burst out into tears, and wept aloud on hearing the name and sufferings of her lover. Her father looked at her, and his brow got sad; but there was no longer the darkness of resentment or indignation there; so true is it that suffering chastens the heart into its noblest affections, and purges it of the gloomier and grosser passions.

"Poor Mave," he exclaimed, "when *I* let the *tears* down for the man that has my brother's blood on his hands, it's no wonder *you* should cry for him you love so well."

"Oh, dear father," she exclaimed, throwing herself into his arms, and embracing him tenderly, "I feel no misery nor sorrow now—the words you have spoken have made me happy. All these sufferings will pass away; for it cannot be but God will, sooner or later, reward your piety and goodness. Oh, if I could do anything for—for—for any one," and she blushed as she spoke; "but I cannot. There is nothing here that I can do at home; but if I could go out and work by the day, I'd do it an' be happy, in order to help the—that—family that's now brought so low, and that's so much to be pitied!"

We have already said that the Prophet's eye had been bent upon her ever since he came into the house, but it was with an expression of benignity and affection which, notwithstanding the gloomy character of his countenance, no one could more plausibly or willingly assume.

Mave, in the mean time, could scarcely bear to look upon him; and it was quite clear from her manner that she had, since their last mysterious interview, once more fallen back into those feelings of strong aversion with which she had regarded him at first. M'Gowan saw this, and without much difficulty guessed at the individual who had been instrumental in producing the change.

"God pardon an' forgive me," he exclaimed, as if giving unconscious utterance to his own reflections—"for what I had thoughts of about that darlin' an' lovely girl; but sure I'll make it up to her; an', indeed, I feel the words of goodness that's to befall her breakin' out o' my lips. *A colleen dhas*, I had some private discoorse wid you when I was here last, an' will you let me spake a few words to you by ourselves agin?"

"No," she replied, "I'll hear nothing from you: I don't like you—I can't like you, an' I'll hold no private discoorse with you."

"Oh, then, but that voice is music itself, an' you are, by all accounts, the best of girls; but sure we have all turned over a new leaf, poor child. I discovered how I was taken in an' dasaved; but sure I can't ait you—an' a sweet morsel you'd be, *a lanna dhas*—nor can I run away wid you—an' I seen the day that it's not my heart would hinder me to do that same. Oh, my goodness, what a head o' hair! an' talkin' about *that*—you understand—I'd like to have a word or two wid yourself.'

"Say whatever you have to say before my father and mother, then," she replied; "I have no——" she paused a moment and seemed embarrassed. The Prophet, who skilfully threw in the allusion to her hair, guessed the words she was on the point of uttering, and availing himself of her difficulty, seemed to act as if she had completed what she was about to say.

"I know, dear," he added, "you have no saicrets from them: I'm glad to hear it, an' for that raison I'm willin' to say what I had to say in their presence; so far as *I'm* concerned, it makes no difference."

The allusion to her hair, added to the last observations, reminded her that it might be possible that he had some message from her lover, and she consequently seemed to waver a little, as if struggling against her strong, instinctive abhorrence of him.

"Don't be afeard, Mave dear," said her mother, "sure, poor honest Donnel wishes you well, an' won't prophesize any harm to *you*. Go with him."

"Do, achora," added the father; "Donnel can have nothing to say to you that can have any harm in it—go for a minute or two, since he wishes it."

Reluctantly, and with an indomitable feeling against the man, she went out, and stood

under the shelter of a little elder hedge that adjoined the house.

"Now, tell me," she asked, quickly, "what is it you have to say to me?"

"I gave young Condy Dalton the purty ringlet of hair you sent him."

"What did he say?" she inquired.

"Not much," he replied, "till I tould him it was the last token that ever you could send him afther what your father said to you."

"Well?"

"Why, he cursed your father, an' said he desarved to get his neck broke."

"I don't believe that," she replied, "I know he never said them words, or anything like them. Don't mislead me, but tell me what he *did* say."

"Ah! poor Mave," he replied, "you little know what hot blood runs in the Daltons' veins. He said very little that was creditable to himself—an' indeed I won't repate it—but it was enough to make any girl of spirit have done wid him."

"An' don't *you* know," she replied, mournfully, "that I *have* done with him; an' that there never can be anything but sorrow and good will between us? Wasn't that my message to him by yourself?"

"It was, dear, an' I hope you're still of the same mind."

"I am," she said; "but you are not tellin' me the truth about him. He never spoke disrespectfully of my father or me."

"No, indeed, asthore, he did not then—oh, the sorra syllable—oh no; if I said so, don't believe me." And yet the very words he uttered, in consequence of the meaning which they received from his manner, made an impression directly the reverse of their natural import.

"Well then," she said, "that's all you have to say to me?"

"No," he replied, "it is not; I want to know from you when you'll be goin' to your uncle's, at Mullaghmore."

"To-morrow," replied the artless and unsuspicious girl, without a moment's hesitation.

"Well, then," said he, "you pass the Grey Stone, at the foot of Mullybenagh—of coorse, I know you must. Now, my dear Mave, I want to show you that I have some insight into futurity. What hour will you pass it at?"

"About three o'clock, as near as I think; it may be a little more or a little less."

"Very well, acushlee; when you pass the Grey Stone about a few hundred yards on the right hand side, the *first* person you will meet will be a young man, well made, and very handsome. That young man will be the person, whosoever he is—an' I don't know myself—that will bring you love, and wealth, and happiness, and all that a woman can wish to have with a man. Nor, dear, if this doesn't happen, never believe anything *I* say again; but if this *does* happen, I hope you'll have good sense, acushla machree, to be guided by one that's your true friend—an' that's myself. The *first* person you meet, afther passin' the Grey Stone, on your right hand side; remember the words. I know there's great luck an' high fortune before you; for, indeed, your beauty an' goodness well desarves it, an' they'll get both."

They then returned into the house; Mave somewhat surprised, but no way relieved, while the Prophet seemed rather in better spirits by the interview.

"Now, Jerry Sullivan," said he, "an' you, Bridget his wife, lend your ears an' listen. The heart of Prophet is full of good to you and yours, and the good must come to his lips, and flow from them when it comes. There are three books known to the wise: the Book of Marriage, the Book of Death, and the Book of Judgment. Open a leaf, says the Angel of Marriage—the Garden Angel of Jericho—where he brings all love, happiness and peace to; open a leaf, says the Angel of Marriage—him that has one head and ten horns—and read us a page of futurity from the prophecy of St. Nebbychodanazor, the divine. The child is a faymale child, says the angel with one head and ten horns—by name Mabel Sullivan, daughter to honest Jerry Sullivan and his daicent wife Bridget, of Aughnamurrin. Amin, says the Prophet. Time is not tide, nor is tide time; and neither will wait for man. Three things will happen. A girl, young and handsome, will walk forth upon the highway, and there she will meet a man, young and handsome too, who will rise her to wealth, happiness and grandeur. So be it, says the Book of Marriage, and amin, agin, says the Prophet. Open a new leaf, says Nebbychodanazor, the divine; a new leaf in the Book of Judgment, and another in the Book of Death. A man was killed and his body hid, and a man lived with his blood upon him. Fate is fate, and Justice is near. For years he will keep the murther to himself, till a man's to come that will bring him to judgment. Then will judgment be passed, and the Book of Death will be opened. Read, says the Prophet; it is done at last; Judgment is passed, and Death follows; the innocent is set free, and the murdherer that consaled the murdher so long swings at last; and all these things is to be found by the Wise in the Books of Marriage, Death, and Judgment." He then added, as he had done at the conclusion of his former prophecy:

"Be kind and indulgent to your daughter, for she'll soon make all your fortunes; an' take care of her and yourselves till I see yez again."

As before, he gave them no further opportunity of asking for explanations, but immediately departed; and as if he had been moved by some new impulse or afterthought, he directed his steps once more to the Grange, where he saw young Henderson, with whom he had another private interview, of the purport of which our readers may probably form a tolerably accurate conjecture.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mysterious Disappearance of the Tobacco-box.

M'Gowan's mind, at this period of our narrative, was busily engaged in arranging his plans—for we need scarcely add here, that whether founded on justice or not, he had more than one ripening. Still there preyed upon him a certain secret anxiety, from which, by no effort, could he succeed in ridding himself. The disappearance of the Tobacco-box kept him so ill at ease and unhappy, that he resolved, on his way home, to make a last effort at finding it out, if it could be done; and many a time did he heartily curse his own stupidity for ever having suffered it to remain in his house or about it, especially when it was so easy to destroy it. His suspicions respecting it most certainly rested upon Nelly, whom he now began to regard with a feeling of both hatred and alarm. Sarah, he knew, had little sympathy with him; but then he also knew that there existed less in common between her and Nelly. He thought, therefore, that his wisest plan would be to widen the breach of ill-feeling between them more and more, and thus to secure himself, if possible, of Sarah's co-operation and confidence, if not from affection or good feeling towards himself, at least from ill-will towards her step-mother. For this reason, therefore, as well as for others of equal, if not of more importance, he came to the determination of taking, to a certain extent, Sarah into his confidence, and thus making not only her quickness and activity, but her impetuosity and resentments, useful to his designs. It was pretty late that night when he reached home; and, as he had devoted the only portion of his time that remained between his arrival and bed-time, to a description of the unsettled state of the country, occasioned by what were properly called the Famine Outrages, that were then beginning to take place, he made no allusion to anything connected with his projects, to either Nelly or his daughter, the latter of whom, by the way, had been out during the greater part of the evening. The next morning, however, he asked her to take a short stroll with him along the river, which she did; and both returned, after having had at least an hour's conversation—Sarah, with a flushed cheek and indignant eye, and her father, with his brow darkened, and his voice quivering from suppressed resentment; so that, so far as observation went, their interview and communication had not been very agreeable on either side. After breakfast, Sarah put on her cloak and bonnet, and was about to go out, when her father said—

"Pray, ma'am, where are you goin' now?"

"It doesn't signify," she replied; "but at all events you needn't ax me, for I won't tell you."

"What kind of answer is that to give me? Do you forget that I'm your father?"

"I wish I could; for indeed I am sorry you are."

"Oh, you know," observed Nelly, "she was always a dutiful girl—always a quiet good erathur. Why, you onbiddable sthrap, what kind o' an answer is that to give to your father?"

Ever since their stroll that morning, Sarah's eyes had been turned from time to time upon her step-mother with flash after flash of burning indignation, and now that she addressed her, she said—

"Woman, you don't know how I scorn you! Oh, you mane an' wicked wretch, had you no pride during all your life! It's but a short time you an' I will be undher the same roof together—an' so far as I am concerned, I'll not stoop ever to bandy abuse or ill tongue with you again. I know only one other person that is worse an' meaner still than you are—an' there, I am sorry to say, he stands in the shape of my father."

She walked out of the cabin with a flushed cheek, and a step that was full of disdain, and a kind of natural pride that might almost be termed dignity. Both felt rebuked; and Nelly, whose face got blanched and pale at Sarah's words, now turned upon the Prophet with a scowl."

"Would it be possible," said she, "that you'd dare to let out anything to that madcap?"

"Now," said he, "that the coast is clear, I desire you to answer *me* a question that I'll put to you—an' mark my words—by all that's above us, an' undher us, an' about us, if you don't spake thruth, I'll be apt to make short work of it."

"What is it?" she inquired, looking at

him with cool and collected resentment, and an eye that was perfectly fearless.

"There was a Tobaccy-Box about this house, or in this house. Do you know anything about it?"

"A tobaccy-box—is it?"

"Ay, a tobaccy-box."

"Well, an' what about it? What do you want wid it? An ould, rusty Tobaccy-box; musha, is that what's throublin' you this mornin'?"

"Come," said he darkening, "I'll have no humbuggin'—answer me at wanst. Do you know anything about it?"

"Is it about your ould, rusty Tobaccy-box? Arrah, what 'ud I know about it? What the sorra would a man like you do wid a Tobaccy-box, that doesn't ever smoke? Is it mad or ravin' you are? Somehow I think the stroll you had wid the vagabone gipsy of a daughter of yours, hasn't put you into the best of timper, or her aither. I hope you didn't act the villain on me: for she looks at me as if she could eit me widout salt. But, indeed, she's takin' on her own hands finely of late; she's gettin' too proud to answer me now when I ax her a question."

"Well, why don't you ax her as you ought?"

"She was out all yesterday evenin', and when I said 'You idle sthrap, where wor you?' she wouldn't even think it worth her while to give me an answer, the vagabone."

"Do *you* give me one in the manetime. What about the Box I want? Spake the truth, if you regard your health."

"I know nothing about your box, an' I wish I could say as much of yourself. However, I won't long trouble you, that I can tell you—ay, an' her too. She needn't fear that I'll be long undher the same roof wid her. I know, any way, I wouldn't be safe. She would only stick me in one of her fits, now that she's able to fight me."

"Now, Nelly," said the Prophet, deliberately shutting the door, "I know you to be a hardened woman, that has little fear in your heart. I think you know me, too, to be a hardened and a determined man. There, now, I have shut an' boulted the door an' by Him that made me, you'll never leave this house, nor go out of that door a livin' woman, unless you tell me all you know about that Tobaccy-Box. Now you know my mind an' my coorse—act as you like now."

"Ha, ha, ha! Do you think to frighten me?" she asked, laughing derisively. "Me!—oh, how much you're mistaken, if you think so! Not that I don't believe you to be dangerous, an' a man that one ought to fear; but *I* have no fear of you."

"Answer me quickly," he replied—and as he spoke, he seized the very same knife from which she had so narrowly escaped in her conflict with Sarah—"answer me, I say; an' mark, *I* have no reason to wish you alive."

And as he spoke, the glare in his eyes flashed and became fearful.

"Ah," said she, "there's your daughter's look an' the same knife, too, that was near doin' for me wanst. Well, don't think that it's fear makes me say what I'm goin' to say; but that's the *same knife;* an' besides I dhramed last night that I was dressed in a black cloak—an' a black cloak, they say, is *death!* Ay, death—an' I know *I'm not fit to die,* or to meet judgment, an' *you* know that too. Now, then, tell *me* what it is you want wid the Box."

"No," he replied, sternly and imperatively, "I'll tell you nothing about it; but get it at wanst, before my passion rises higher and deadlier."

"Well, then, mark me, I'm not afeard of you—but I have the box."

"An' how did you come by it?" he asked.

"Sarah was lookin' for a cobweb to stop the blood where she cut me in our fight the other day. an' it came tumblin' out of a cranny in the wall."

"An' where is it now?"

"I'll get it for you," she replied; "but you must let me out first."

"Why so?"

"Because it's not *in* the house."

"An' where is it? Don't think you'll escape me."

"It's in the thatch o' the roof."

The Prophet deliberately opened the door, and catching her by the shoulder, held her prisoner, as it were, until she should make her words good. The roof was but low, and she knew the spot too well to make any mistake about it.

"Here," said she, "is the cross I scraped on the stone undher the place."

She put up her hand as she spoke, and searched the spot—but in vain. There certainly was the cross as she had marked it, and there was the slight excavation under the thatch where it had been; but as for the box itself, all search for it was fruitless—it had disappeared.

CHAPTER XVII.

National Calamity—Sarah in Love and Sorrow.

The astonishment of the Prophet's wife on discovering that the Tobacco-box had been removed from the place of its concealment

was too natural to excite any suspicion of deceit or falsehood on her part, and he himself, although his disappointment was dreadful on finding that it had disappeared, at once perceived that she had been perfectly ignorant of its removal. With his usual distrust and want of confidence, however, he resolved to test her truth a little further, lest by any possibility she might have deceived him.

"Now, Nelly," said he sternly, "mark me—is this the way you produce the box? You acknowledge that you had it—that you hid it even—an' now, when I tell you I want it, an' that it may be a matther of life an' death to me—you purtend its gone, an' that you know nothing about it—I say again, mark me well—produce the box!"

"Here," she replied, chafed and indignant as well at its disappearance as at the obstinacy of his suspicions—"here's my throat—dash your knife into it, if you like—but as for the box, I tell you, that although I *did* put it in there, you know as much about it now as I do."

"Well," said he, "for wanst I believe you—but mark me still—this box *must* be gotten, an' it's to *you* I'll look for it. That's all—you know me."

"Ay," she replied, "I know you."

"Eh—what do you mane by that?" he asked—"what do you know? come now; I say, what do you know?"

"That you're a hardened and a bad man:—oh! you needn't brandish your knife—nor your eyes needn't blaze up that way, like your daughter's," she added, "except that you're hard an' dark, and widout one spark o' common feelin', I know nothin' particularly wicked about you—but, at the same time, I suspect enough."

"What do you suspect, you hardened vagabond?"

"It doesn't matther what I suspect," she answered; "only I think you'd have bad heart for anything—so go about your business, for I want to have nothing more either to do or say to you—an' I wish to glory I had been always of that way o' thinkin', *a chiernah!*—many a scalded heart I'd a missed that I got by you."

She then walked into the cabin, and the Prophet slowly followed her with his fixed, doubtful and suspicious eye, after which he flung the knife on the threshold, and took his way, in a dark and disappointed mood, towards Glendhu.

It is impossible for us here to detail the subject matter of his reflections, or to intimate to our readers how far his determination to bring Condy Dalton to justice originated in repentance for having concealed his knowledge of the murder, or in some other less justifiable state of feeling. At this moment, indeed, the family of the Daltons were in anything but a position to bear the heavy and terrible blow which was about to fall upon them. Our readers cannot forget the pitiable state in which we left them, during that distressing crisis of misery, when the strange woman arrived with the oat-meal, which the kind-hearted Mave Sullivan had so generously sent them. On that melancholy occasion her lover complained of being ill, and, unfortunately, the symptoms were, in this instance, too significant of the malady which followed them. Indeed, it would be an infliction of unnecessary pain to detail here the sufferings which this unhappy family had individually and collectively borne. Young Condy, after a fortnight's prostration from typhus fever, was again upon his legs, tottering about, as his father had been, in a state of such helplessness between want of food on the one hand, and illness on the other, as it is distressing even to contemplate. If, however, the abstract consideration of it, even at a distance, be a matter of such painful retrospect to the mind, what must not the actual endurance of that and worse have been to the thousands upon thousands of families who were obliged, by God's mysterious dispensation, to encounter these calamities in all their almost incredible and hideous reality.

At this precise period, the state of the country was frightful beyond belief; for it is well known that the mortality of the season we are describing was considerably greater than that which even cholera occasioned in its worst and most malignant ravages. Indeed, the latter was not attended by such a tedious and lingering train of miseries as that, which in so many woful shapes, surrounded typhus fever. The appearance of cholera was sudden, and its operations quick, and although, on that account, it was looked upon with tenfold terror, yet for this very reason, the consequences which it produced were by no means so full of affliction and distress, nor presented such strong and pitiable claims on human aid and sympathy as did those of typhus. In the one case, the victim was cut down by a sudden stroke, which occasioned a shock or moral paralysis both to himself and the survivors—especially to the latter—that might be almost said to neutralize its own inflictions. In the other, the approach was comparatively so slow and gradual, that all the sympathies and afflictions were allowed full and painful time to reach the utmost limits of human suffering, and to endure the wasting series of those struggles and details which long illness, sur-

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"NO," HE REPLIED, STERNLY AND IMPERATIVELY, "I'LL TELL YOU NOTHING ABOUT IT; BUT GET IT AT WANST, BEFORE MY PASSION RISES HIGHER AND DEADLIER."—*The Black Phophet*, chap. xvi, *p.* 847.

rounded by destitution and affliction, never fails to inflict. In the cholera, there was no time left to feel—the passions were wrenched and stunned by a blow, which was over, one may say, before it could be perceived; while in the wide-spread but more tedious desolation of typhus, the heart was left to brood over the thousand phases of love and misery which the terrible realities of the one, joined to the alarming exaggerations of the other, never failed to present. In cholera, a few hours, and all was over; but in the awful fever which then prevailed, there was the gradual approach—the protracted illness—the long nights of racking pain—day after day of raging torture—and the dark period of uncertainty when the balance of human life hangs in the terrible equilibrium of suspense—all requiring the exhibition of constant attention—of the eye whose affection never sleeps—the ear that is deaf only to every sound but the moan of pain—the touch whose tenderness is felt as a solace, so long as suffering itself is conscious—the pressure of the aching head—the moistening of the parched and burning lips—and the numerous and indescribable offices of love and devotedness, which always encompass, or should encompass, the bed of sickness and of death. There was, we say, all this, and much more than the imagination itself, unaided by a severe acquaintance with the truth, could embody in its gloomiest conceptions.

In fact, Ireland during the season, or rather the year, we are describing, might be compared to one vast lazar-house filled with famine, disease and death. The very skies of Heaven were hung with the black drapery of the grave; for never since, nor within the memory of man before it, did the clouds present shapes of such gloomy and funereal import. Hearses, coffins, long funeral processions, and all the dark emblems of mortality were reflected, as it were, on the sky, from the terrible work of pestilence and famine, which was going forward on the earth beneath them. To all this, the thunder and lightning too, were constantly adding their angry peals, and flashing, as if uttering the indignation of Heaven against our devoted people; and what rendered such fearful manifestations ominous and alarming to the superstitious, was the fact of their occurrence in the evening and at night—circumstances which are always looked upon with unusual terror and dismay.

To any person passing through the country, such a combination of startling and awful appearances was presented as has probably never been witnessed since. Go where you might, every object reminded you of the fearful desolation that was progressing around you. The features of the people were gaunt, their eyes wild and hollow, and their gait feeble and tottering. Pass through the fields, and you were met by little groups bearing home on their shoulders, and that with difficulty, a coffin, or perhaps two of them. The roads were literally black with funerals, and as you passed along from parish to parish, the death-bells were pealing forth, in slow but dismal tones, the gloomy triumph which pestilence was achieving over the face of our devoted country—a country that each successive day filled with darker desolation and deeper mourning.

Nor was this all. The people had an alarmed and unsettled aspect; and whether you met them as individuals or crowds, they seemed, when closely observed, to labor under some strong and insatiable want that rendered them almost reckless. The number of those who were reduced to mendicancy was incredible, and if it had not been for the extraordinary and unparalleled exertions of the clergy of all creeds, medical men, and local committees, thousands upon thousands would have perished of disease or hunger on the highways. Many, indeed, did so perish; and it was no unusual sight to meet the father and mother, accompanied by their children, going they knew not whither, and to witness one or other of them lying down on the road side; and well were they off who could succeed in obtaining a sheaf of straw, on which, as a luxury, to lay down their aching head, that was never more to rise from it, until borne, in a parish shell, to a shallow and hasty grave.

Temporary sheds were also erected on the road sides, or near them, containing fever-stricken patients, who had no other home; and when they were released, at last, from their sorrows, nothing was more common than to place the coffin on the road side also, with a plate on the lid of it, in order to solicit, from those who passed, such aid as they could afford to the sick or starving survivors.

That, indeed, was the trying and melancholy period in which all the lingering traces of self-respect—all recollection of former independence—all sense of modesty was cast to the winds. Under the terrible pressure of the complex destitution which prevailed, everything like shame was forgotten, and it was well known that whole families, who had hitherto been respectable and independent, were precipitated, almost at once, into all the common cant of importunity and clamor during this frightful struggle

between life and death. Of the truth of this, the scenes which took place at the public Soup Shops, and other appointed places of relief, afforded melancholy proof. Here were wild crowds, ragged, sickly, and wasted away to skin and bone, struggling for the dole of charity, like so many hungry vultures about the remnant of some carcase which they were tearing, amid noise, and screams, and strife, into very shreds; for, as we have said, all sense of becoming restraint and shame was now abandoned, and the timid girl, or modest mother of a family, or decent farmer, goaded by the same wild and tyrannical cravings, urged their claims with as much turbulent solicitation and outcry, as if they had been trained, since their very infancy, to all the forms of impudent cant and imposture.

This, our readers will admit, was a most deplorable state of things; but, unfortunately, we cannot limit the truth of our descriptions to the scenes we have just attempted to portray. The misery which prevailed, as it had more than one source, so had it more than one aspect. There were, in the first place, studded over the country, a vast number of strong farmers with bursting granaries and immense haggards, who, without coming under the odious denomination of misers or mealmongers, are in the habit of keeping up their provisions, in large quantities, because they can afford to do so, until a year of scarcity arrives, when they draw upon their stock precisely when famine and prices are both at their highest. In addition to these, there was another still viler class; we mean the hard-hearted and well known misers—men who, at every time, and in every season, prey upon the distress and destitution of the poor, and who can never look upon a promising spring or an abundant harvest, without an inward sense of ingratitude against God for his goodness, or upon a season of drought, or a failing crop, unless with a thankful feeling of devotion for the approaching calamity.

During such periods, and under such circumstances, these men—including those of both classes—and the famished people, in general, live and act under antagonistic principles. Hunger, they say, will break through stone walls, and when we reflect, that in addition to this irresistible stimulus, we may add a spirit of strong prejudice and resentment against these heartless persons, it is not surprising that the starving multitudes should, in the ravening madness of famine, follow up its outrageous impulses, and forget those legal restraints, or moral principles, that protect property under ordinary or different circumstances. It was just at this precise period, therefore, that the people, impelled by hunger and general misery, began to burst out into that excited stupefaction which is, we believe, peculiar to famine riots. And what rendered them still more exasperated than they probably would have been, was the long lines of provision carts which met or intermingled with the funerals on the public thoroughfares, while on their way to the neighboring harbors, for exportation. Such, indeed, was the extraordinary fact! Day after day, vessels laden with Irish provisions, drawn from a population perishing with actual hunger, as well as with the pestilence which it occasioned, were passing out of our ports, while, singular as it may seem, other vessels came in freighted with our own provisions, sent back through the charity of England to our relief.

It is not our business, any more than it is our inclination, to dwell here upon the state of those sumptuary enactments, which reflected such honor upon the legislative wisdom, that permitted our country to arrive at the lamentable condition we have attempted to describe. We merely mention the facts, and leave to those who possess position and ability, the task of giving to this extraordinary state of things a more effectual attention. Without the least disposition, however, to defend or justify any violation of the laws, we may be permitted to observe, that the very witnessing of such facts as these, by destitute and starving multitudes, was in itself such a temptation to break in upon the provisions thus transmitted, as it was scarcely within the strength of men, furious with famine, to resist. Be this as it may, however, it is our duty as a faithful historian to state, that at the present period of our narrative, the famine riots had begun to assume something of an alarming aspect. Several carts had been attacked and pillaged, some strong farmers had been visited, and two or three misers were obliged to become benevolent with rather a bad grace. At the head of these parties were two persons mentioned in these pages; to wit, Thomas Dalton and Red Rody Duncan, together with several others of various estimation and character; some of them, as might be naturally expected, the most daring and turbulent spirits in the neighborhood.

Such, then, was the miserable state of things in the country at that particular period. The dreadful typhus was now abroad in all his deadly power, accompanied, on this occasion, as he always is among the Irish, by a panic which invested him with tenfold terrors. The moment fever was ascertained, or even supposed to visit a

family, that moment the infected persons were avoided by their neighbors and friends, as if they carried death, as they often did, about them; so that its presence occasioned all the usual interchanges of civility and good neighborhood to be discontinued. Nor should this excite our wonder, inasmuch as this terrific scourge, though unquestionably an epidemic, was also ascertained to be dangerously and fatally contagious. None, then, but persons of extraordinary moral strength, or possessing powerful impressions of religious duty, had courage to enter the houses of the sick or dead, for the purpose of rendering to the afflicted those offices of humanity which their circumstances required; if we except only their nearest relatives, or those who lived in the same family.

Having thus endeavored to give what we feel to be but a faint picture of the state of the kingdom at large in this memorable year, we beg our readers to accompany us once more to the cabin of our moody and mysterious friend, the Black Prophet.

Evening was now tolerably far advanced; Donnel Dhu sat gloomily, as usual, looking into the fire, with no agreeable aspect; while on the opposite side sat Nelly, as silent and nearly as gloomy-looking as himself. Every now and then his black, piercing eye would stray over to her, as if in a state of abstraction, and again with that undetermined kind of significance which made it doubtful whether the subject-matter of his cogitations was connected with her at all or not. In this position were they placed when Sarah entered the cabin, and throwing aside her cloak, seated herself in front of the fire, something about halfway between each. She also appeared moody; and if one could judge by her countenance, felt equally disposed to melancholy or ill-temper.

"Well, madam," said her father, "I hope it's no offence to ask you where you have been sportin' yourself since? I suppose you went to see Charley Hanlon; or, what is bether, his masther, young Dick o' the Grange?"

"No," she replied, "I did not. Charley Hanlon! Oh, no!"

"Well, his masther?"

"Don't vex me — don't vex me," she replied, abruptly; "I don't wish to fight about nothing, or about thrifles, or to give bad answers; but still, don't vex me, I say."

"There's something in the wind now," observed Nelly; "she's gettin' fast into one o' her tantrums. I know it by her eyes; she'd as soon whale me now as cry; and she'd jist as soon cry as whale me. Oh! my lady, I know you. Here, at any rate, will you have your supper?"

The resentment which had been gathering at Nelly's coarse observations, disappeared the moment the question as to supper had been put to her.

"Oh! why don't you," she said; "and why didn't you always spake to me in a kind voice?"

"But about young Dick," said the suspicious prophet; "did you see *him* since?"

"No," she replied, calmly and thoughtfully; but, as if catching, by reflection, the base import of the query, she replied, in a loud and piercing voice, rendered at once full and keen by indignation. "No! I say; an' don't *dare* to suspect *me* of goin' to Dick o' the Grange, or any sich profligate."

"Hollo! there's a breeze!" After a pause, "You won't bate us, I hope. Then, madame, where were you?"

Short as was the period that had passed since her reply and the putting of this last question, she had relapsed or fallen into a mood of such complete abstraction, that she heard him not. With her naturally beautiful and taper hand under her still more finely chiseled chin, she sat looking, in apparent sorrow and perplexity, into the fire, and while so engaged, she sighed deeply two or three times.

"Never mind her, man," said Nelly; "let her alone, an' don't draw an ould house on our heads. She has had a fight with Charley Hanlon, I suppose; maybe he has refused to marry her, if he ever had any notion of it—which I don't think he had."

Sarah rose up and approaching her, said:

"What is that you wor saying? Charley Hanlon!—never name him an' me together, from this minute out. I like him well enough as an acquaintance, but never name us together as sweethearts—mark my words now. I would go any length to sarve Charley Hanlon, but I care nothin' for him beyond an acquaintance, although I *did* like him a little, or I *thought* I did."

"Poor Charley!" exclaimed Nelly, "he'll break his heart. Arra what'll he do for a piece o' black crape to get into murnin'? eh—ha! ha! ha!"

"If you had made use of them words to me only yesterday," she replied, "I'd punish you on the spot; but now, you unfortunate woman, you're below my anger. Say what you will or what you wish, another quarrel with you I will never have."

"What does she mane?" said the other, looking fiercely at the Prophet; "I ax you, you traitor, what she manes?"

"Ay, an' you'll ax me till you're hoarse, before you get an answer," he replied.

"You're a dark an' deep villain," she uttered, while her face became crimson with

rage, and the veins of her neck and temples swelled out as if they would burst; "however, I tould you what your fate would be, an' that Providence was on your bloody trail. Ay did I, and you'll find it true soon."

The Prophet rose and rushed at her; but Sarah, with the quickness of lightning, flew between them.

"Don't be so mane," she said—"don't now, father, if you rise your hand to her I'll never sleep a night undher the roof. Why don't you separate yourself from her? Oh, no, the man that would rise his hand to sich a woman—to a woman that must have the conscience she has—especially when he could put the salt seas between himself an' her—is worse and meaner than she is. As for me, I'm lavin' this house in a day or two, for my mind's made up that the same roof won't cover us."

"The divil go wid you an' sixpence then," replied Nelly, disdainfully—"an' then you'll want neither money nor company; but before you go, I'd thank you to tell me what has become o' the ould Tobaccy Box, that you pulled out o' the wall the other day. I know you were lookin' for it, an' I'm sure you got it—there was no one else to take it; so before you go, tell me—unless you wish to get a knife put into me by that dark lookin' ould father of yours."

"I know nothing about your ould box, but I wish I did."

"That's a lie, you sthrap; you know right well where it is."

"No," replied her father, "she does not, when she says she doesn't. Did you ever know her to tell a lie?"

"Ay—did I—fifty."

The Prophet rushed at her again, and again did Sarah interpose.

"You vile ould tarmagint," he exclaimed, "you're statin' what you feel to be false when you say so; right well you know that neither you nor I, nor any one else, ever heard a lie from her lips, an' yet you have the brass to say to the contrary."

"Father," said Sarah, "there's but one coorse for you; as for me, my mind's made up—in this house I don't stay if she does."

"If you'd think of what I spoke to you about," he replied, "all would soon be right wid us; but then you're so unraisonable, an' full of foolish notions, that it's hard for me to know what to do, especially as I wish to do all for the best."

"Well," rejoined Sarah, "I'll spake to you again, about it; at this time I'm disturbed and unaisy in my mind; I'm unhappy—unhappy—an' I hardly knows on what hand to turn. I'm afeared I was born for a hard fate, an' that the day of my doom isn't far from me. All, father, is dark before me—my heart is, indeed, low an' full of sorrow; an' sometimes I could a'most tear any one that 'ud contradict me. Any way I'm unhappy."

As she uttered the last words, her father, considerably surprised at the melancholy tenor of her language, looked at her, and perceived that, whilst she spoke, her large black eyes were full of distress, and swam in tears.

"Don't be a fool, Sarah," said he, "it's not a thrifle should make any one cry in sich a world as this. If Charley Hanlon and you has quarrelled, it was only the case with thousands before you. If he won't marry you, maybe as good or better will; for sure, as the ould proverb says, there's as good fish in the *say* as ever was catched. In the mane time think what I said to you, an' all will be right."

Sarah looked not at him; but whilst he spoke, she hastily dried her tears, and ere half a minute had passed, her face had assumed a firm and somewhat of an indignant expression. Little, however, did her father then dream of the surprising change which one short day had brought about in her existence, nor of the strong passions which one unhappy interview had awakened in her generous but unregulated heart.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Love Wins the Race from Profligacy.

Donnel Dhu M'Gowan's reputation as a prophecy-man arose, in the first instance, as much on account of his mysterious pretensions to a knowledge of the quack prophecies of his day—Pastorini, Kolumbkille, &c., and such stuff—as from any pretensions he claimed to foretell the future. In the course of time, however, by assuming to be a seventh son, he availed himself of the credulity and ignorance of the people, and soon added a pretended insight into futurity to his powers of interpreting Pastorini, and all the catchpenny trash of the kind which then circulated among the people. This imposture, in course of time, produced its effect. Many, it is true, laughed at his impudent assumptions, but on the other hand, hundreds were strongly impressed with a belief in the mysterious and rhapsodical predictions which he was in the habit of uttering. Among the latter class we may reckon simple-hearted Jerry Sullivan and family, all of whom, Mave herself included, placed the most religious confidence in the oracles he

DALTON LOOKED AT HIM, AND HIS EYE, LIKE THAT OF HIS FATHER WHEN ENRAGED, GLARED WITH A DEADLY LIGHT.
—*The Black Phophet*, chap. xviii. p. 853.

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gave forth. It was then with considerable agitation and a palpitating heart, that on the day following that of Donnel's visit to her father's she approached the Grey Stone, where, in the words of the prophet, she should meet "the young man who was to bring her love, wealth, and happiness, and all that a woman can wish to have with a man." The agitation she felt, however, was the result of a depression that almost amounted to despair. Her faithful heart was fixed but upon one alone, and she knew that her meeting with any other could not, so far as she was concerned, realize the golden visions of Donnel Dhu. The words, however, could not be misunderstood; the first person she met, on the right hand side of the way, after passing the Grey Stone, was to be the individual; and when we consider her implicit belief in Donnel's prophecy, contrasted with her own impressions and the state of mind in which she approached the place, we may form a tolerably accurate notion of what she must have experienced. On arriving within two hundred yards or so of the spot mentioned, she observed in the distance, about a half mile before her, a gentleman, on horseback, approaching her at rapid speed. Her heart, on perceiving him, literally sank within her, and she felt so weak as to be scarcely able to proceed.

"Oh! what," she at length asked herself, "would I not now give but for one glance of young Condy Dalton! But it is not to be. The unfortunate murdher of my uncle has prevented that for ever; although I can't get myself to b'lieve that any of the Daltons ever did it; but maybe that's because I wish they didn't. The general opinion is, that his father is the man that did it. May the Lord forgive them, whoever they are, that took his life—for it was a black act to me at any rate!"

Across the road before her, ran one of those little deep valleys, or large ravines, and into this had the horseman disappeared as she closed the soliloquy. He had not, however, at all slackened his pace, but, on the contrary, evidently increased it, as she could hear by the noise of his horse's feet. At this moment she reached the brow of the ravine, and our readers may form some conception of what she felt when, on looking down it she saw her lover, young Dalton, toiling up towards her with feeble and failing steps, while pressing after him from the bottom, came young Henderson, urging his horse with whip and spur. Her heart, which had that moment bounded with delight, now utterly failed her, on perceiving the little chance which the poor young man had of being the first to meet her, and thus fulfil the prophecy. Henderson was gaining upon him at a rapid rate, and must in a few minutes have passed him, had not woman's wit and presence of mind come to her assistance.

"If he cannot run up the hill," she said to herself, "I can run to him down it"—and as the thought occurred to her, she started towards him at her greatest speed, which indeed was considerable, as her form was of that light and elastic description which betokens great powers of activity and exertion. The struggle indeed was close; Henderson now plied whip and spur with redoubled energy, and the animal was approaching at full speed. Mave, on the other hand, urged by a thousand motives, forgot everything but the necessity of exertion. Dalton was incapable of running a step, and appeared not to know the cause of the contest between the parties. At length Mave, by her singular activity and speed reached her lover, into whose arms she actually ran, just as Henderson had come within about half a dozen yards of the spot where she met him. This effort, on the part of Mave, was in perfect accordance with the simple earnestness of her character; her youthful figure, her innocence of manner, the glow of beauty, and the crowd of blushing graces which the act developed, together with the joyous exultation of her triumph on reaching her lover's arms, and thus securing to herself and him completion of so delightful a prediction—all, when taken in at one view, rendered her being so irresistibly fascinating, that her lover could scarcely look upon the incident as a real one, but for a moment almost persuaded himself that his beloved Mave had undergone some delightful and glorious transformation—such as he had seen her assume in the dreams of his late illness.

Henderson, finding himself disappointed, now pulled up his horse and addressed her:

"Upon my word, Miss Sullivan—I believe," he added, "I have the pleasure of addressing Jeremy Sullivan's daughter—so far famed for her beauty—I say, upon my word, Miss Sullivan, your speed outstrips the wind—those light and beautiful feet of yours scarcely touch the ground—I am certain you must dance delightfully."

Mave again blushed, and immediately extricated herself from her lover's arms, but before she did, she felt his frame trembling with indignation at the liberty Henderson had taken in addressing her at all.

"Dalton," the latter proceeded, unconscious of the passion he was exciting, "I cannot but envy you at all events; I would myself delight to be a winning post under such circumstances."

Dalton looked at him, and his eye, like

that of his father, when enraged, glared with a deadly light.

"Pass on, sir," he replied; "Mave Sullivan is no girl for the like of you to address. She wishes to have no conversation with you, and she will not."

"I shan't take your word for that, my good friend," replied Henderson, smiling; "she can speak for herself; and will, too, I trust."

"Dear Condy," whispered Mave, "don't put yourself in a passion; you are too weak to bear it."

"Miss Sullivan," proceeded young Dick, "is a pretty girl, and as such I claim a portion of her attention, and—should she so far favor me—even of her conversation; and that with every respect for your very superior judgment, my good Mr. Dalton."

"What is your object, now, in wishin' to spake to her?" asked the latter, looking him sternly in the face.

"I don't exactly see that I'm bound to answer your catechism," said Dick; "it is to Miss Sullivan I would address myself. I speak to you, Miss Sullivan; and, allow me to say, that I feel a very warm interest in your welfare, and nothing would give me greater pleasure than to promote it by any means in my power."

Mave was about to reply, but Dalton anticipated her.

"The only favor you can bestow upon Miss Sullivan, as you are plaised to call her, is to pass her by," said Dalton; "she wishes to have no intimacy nor conversation of any kind with such a noted profligate. She knows your carrechter, Mr. Henderson; or if she doesn't, I do—an' that it's as much as a daicent girl's good name is worth to be seen spakin' to you. Now, I tell you again to pass on. Don't force either yourself or your conversation upon her, if you're wise. I'm here to protect her—an' I won't see her insulted for nothing."

"Do you mean that as a threat, my good fellow?"

"If you think it a threat, don't deserve it, an' you won't get it. If right was to take place, our family would have a heavy account to settle with you and yours; and it wouldn't be wise in you to add this to it."

"Ha! I see—oh, I understand you, I think—more threatening—eh?"

"As I said before," replied Dalton, "that's as you may deserve it. Your cruelty, and injustice, and oppression to our family, we might overlook; but I tell you, that if you become the means of bringin' a stain—the slightest that ever was breathed—upon the fair name of this girl, it would be a thousand times betther that you never were born."

"Ah! indeed, Master Dalton! but in the mean time, what does Miss Sullivan herself say? We are anxious to hear your own sentiments on this matter, Miss Sullivan."

"I would feel obliged to you to pass on, sir," she replied; "Condy Dalton is ill, and badly able to bear sich a conversation as this."

"Here," said Dalton, fiercely, laying his hand upon Mave's shoulder, "if you cross my path *here*—or lave but a shadow of a stain, as I said, upon her name, woe betide you!"

"Your wishes are commands to me, Miss Sullivan," replied Henderson, without noticing Dalton's denunciation in the slightest degree; "and, I trust that when we meet again, you won't be guarded by such a terrible bow-wow of a dragon as has now charge of you. Good bye! and accept my best wishes until then."

He immediately set spurs once more to his horse, and in a few minutes had turned at the cross roads, and taken that which led to his father's house.

"It was well for him," said Dalton, immediately after he had left them, "that I hadn't a loaded pistol in my hand—but no, dear Mave," he added, checking himself, "the hasty temper and the hasty blow is the fault of our family, an' so far as I am consarned, I'll do everything to overcome it."

Mave now examined him somewhat more earnestly than she had done; and although grieved at his thin and wasted appearance, yet she could not help being forcibly struck by the singular clearness and manly beauty of his features. And yet this beauty filled her heart with anything but satisfaction; for on contemplating it, she saw that it was over-shadowed by an expression of such settled sorrow and dejection, as it was impossible to look upon without the deepest compassion and sympathy.

"We had betther rest a little, dear Mave," he said; "you must be fatigued, and so am I. Turn back a little, will you, an' let us sit upon the Grey Stone; it's the only thing in the shape of a seat that is now near us. Have you any objection?"

"None in the world," she replied; "I'll be time enough at my uncle's, especially as I don't intend to come home to-night."

They accordingly sauntered back, and took their seat upon a ledge of the stone in question, that almost concealed them from observation; after which the dialogue proceeded as follows:

"Condy," observed Mave, "I was glad to hear that you recovered from the fever; but I'm sorry to see you look so ill: there is a great deal of care in your face."

"There is, dear Mave; there is," he replied, with a melancholy smile, "an' a great deal of care in my heart. You look thin yourself, and careworn too, dear."

"We are not without our own struggles at home," she replied, "as, indeed, who is now? But *I* had more than ourselves to fret for."

"Who?" he asked; but on putting the question, he saw a look of such tender reproach in her eye as touched him.

"Kind heart!" he exclaimed; "kindest and best of hearts, why should I ax such a question? Surely I ought to know you. I am glad I met you, Mave, for I have many things to say to you, an' it's hard to say when I may have an opportunity again."

"I know that is true," said she; "but I did not expect to meet you here."

"Mave," he proceeded, in a voice filled with melancholy and sadness, "you acknowledged that you loved me."

She looked at him, and that look moved him to the heart.

"I know you do love me," he proceeded, "and *now*, dear Mave, the thought of that fills my heart with sorrow."

She started slightly, and looked at him again with a good deal of surprise; but on seeing his eyes filled with tears, she also caught the contagion, and asked with deep emotion:

"Why, dear Condy? Why does my love for you make your heart sorrowful?"

"Because I have no hope," said he—"no hope that ever you can be mine."

Mave remained silent; for she knew the insurmountable obstacles that prevented their union; but she wept afresh.

"When I saw your father last, behind your garden, the day I struck Donnel Dhu," Dalton proceeded, "I tould him what I then believed to be true, that my father never had a hand in your uncle's death. Mave, dear, I cannot tell a lie; nor I will not. I couldn't say as much to him now; I'm afeard that his death is on my father's sowl."

Mave started and got pale at the words.

"Great God!" she exclaimed, "don't say so, Con dear. Oh, no, no—is it your father that was always so good, an' so generous to every one that stood in need of it at his hands, an' who was also so charitable to the poor?"

"Ay," said he, "he was charitable to the poor; but of late I've heard him say things that nobody but a man that has some great crime to answer for could or would say. I believe too that what the public says is right: that it's the hand of God Himself that's upon him an' us for that murdher."

"But maybe," said Mave, who still continued pale and trembling; "maybe it was accidentally afther all; a chance blow, maybe; but whatever it was, dear Con, let us spake no more about it. I am not able to listen to it; it would sicken me soon."

"Very well, dear, we'll drop it; an' I hope I'm wrong; for I can't think, afther all, that a man with such a kind and tendher heart as my father—a pious man, too; could—" he paused a moment, and then added; "oh! no; I'm surely wrong; he never did the act. However, as we said, I'll drop it; for indeed, dear Mave, I have enough that's sorrowful and heartbreakin' to spake about, over and above that unfortunate subject."

"I hope," said Mave, "that there's nothing worse than your own illness; an' you know, thanks be to the Almighty, you're recoverin' fast from that."

"My poor lovin' sister Nancy," said he, "was laid down yesterday morning with this terrible faver; she was our chief dependence; we could stand it out no longer; I could, an' can do nothing; an' my mother this mornin'"—His tears fell so fast, and his affliction was so deep, that he was not able, for a time to proceed.

"Oh! what about *her?*" asked Mave, participating in his grief; "oh! what about her that *every one* loves?"

"She was obliged to go out this mornin'," he proceeded, "to beg openly in the face of day among the neighbors! Now, Mave Sullivan, farewell!" said he rising, while his face was crimsoned over with shame; "farewell, Mave Sullivan; all, from this minute, is over between you an' me. The son of a beggar must never become your husband; will never call you his wife; even if there was no other raison against it."

The melancholy but lovely girl rose with him; she trembled; she blushed—and again got pale; then blushed once more; at length she spoke:

"An' is that, dear Con, all that you yet know of Mave Sullivan's heart, or the love for *you* that's in it? Your mother! Oh! an' is it come to that with her? But—but—do you think that even that, or anything that wouldn't be a crime in yourself; or, do you think; oh! I know not what to say; I see now, dear Con, the raison for the sorrow that's in your face; the heart-break an' the care that's there; I see, indeed, how low in spirits, an' how hopeless you are; an' I see that although your eye is clear, still it's heavy; heavy with hard affliction; but then, what is love, Con dear, if it's to fly away when these things come on us? Is it now, then, that you'd expect me to desert you?—to keep cool with you, or to have you

when you have no other heart to go to for any comfort but mine? Oh, no! Con dear. You own Mave Sullivan is none of these. God knows it's little comfort," she proceeded, weeping bitterly; "it's little comfort's in my poor heart for any one; but there's one thing in it, Con, dear; that, poor as I stand here this minute; an' where, oh! where is there or could there be a poorer girl than I am; still there's one thing in it that I wouldn't exchange for this world's wealth; an' that, that, dear Con, is my love for you! That's the love, dear Con, that neither this world nor its cares, nor its shame, nor its poverty, nor its sorrow, can ever overcome or banish; that's the love that would live with you in wealth; that would keep by your side through good and through evil; that would share your sickness; that would rejoice with you; that would grieve with you; beg with you, starve with you, an', to go where you might, die by your side. I cannot bid you to throw care and sorrow away; but if it's consolation to you to know an' to feel how your own Mave Sullivan loves you, then you have that consolation. Dear Con, I am ready to marry you, an' share your distress to-morrow; ay, this day, or this minute, if it could be done."

There was a gentle, calm, but firm enthusiasm about her manner, which carried immediate conviction with it, and as her tears fell in silence, she bestowed a look upon her lover which fully and tenderly confirmed all that her tongue had uttered.

Both had been standing; but her lover, taking her hand, sat down, as she also did; he then turned around and pressed her to his heart; and their tears in this melancholy embrace of love and sorrow both literally mingled together.

"I would be ungrateful to God, my beloved Mave," he replied, "and unworthy of you—and, indeed, at best I'm not worthy of you—if I didn't take hope an' courage, when I know that sich a girl loves me; as it is, I feel my heart aisier, an' my spirits lighter; although, at the same time, dear Mave, I'm very wake, and far from being well."

"That's bekaise this disturbance of your mind is too much for you yet—but keep your spirits up; you don't know," she continued, smiling sweetly through her tears; "what a delightful prophecy was fulfilled for us this day—ay, awhile ago, even when I met you."

"No," he replied, "what was it?"

She then detailed the particulars of Donnel Dhu's prediction, which she dwelt upon with a very cheerful spirit, after which she added:

"And now, Con dear, don't you think that's a sign we'll be yet happy?"

Dalton, who placed no reliance whatever on Donnel Dhu's impostures, still felt reluctant to destroy the hope occasioned by such an agreeable illusion. "Well," he replied, "although I don't much believe in anything that ould scoundrel says, I trust, for all that, that he has tould you truth for wanst."

"But how did you happen to come here, Con?" she asked; "to be here at the very minute, too?"

"Why," said he, "I was desired to be the first to meet you after you passed the Grey Stone—the very one we're sittin' on—if I loved you, an' wished to sarve you."

"But who on earth could tell you this?" she asked; "bekaise I thought no livin' bein' knew of it but myself and Donnel Dhu."

"It was Sarah, his daughter," said Dalton; "but when I asked her *why* I should come to do so, she wouldn't tell me—she said if I wished to save you from evil, or at any rate from trouble. That's a strange girl—his daughter," he added; "she makes one do whatever she likes."

"Isn't she very handsome?" said Mave, with an expression of admiration. "I think she's without exception, the prettiest girl I ever seen; an' her beautiful figure beats all; but somehow they say every one's afraid of her, an' durstn't vex her."

"She examined me well yesterday, at all events," replied Con. "I thought them broad, black, beautiful eyes of hers would look through me. Many a wager has been laid as to which is the handsomest—you or she; an' I know hundreds that 'ud give a a great deal to see you both beside one another."

"Indeed, an' she has it then," said Mave, "far an' away, in face, in figure, an' in everything."

"*I* don't think so," he replied; "but at any rate not in everything—not in the heart, dear Mave—not in the heart."

"They say she's kind hearted, then," replied Mave.

"They do," said Con, "an' I don't know how it comes; but somehow every one loves her, and every one fears her at the same time. She asked me yesterday if I thought my father murdhered Sullivan."

"Oh! for God's sake, don't talk about it," said Mave, again getting pale; "I can't bear to hear it spoken of."

The Grey Stone—on a low ledge of which, nearly concealed from public view, our lovers had been sitting—was, in point of size, a very large rock of irregular size. After the last words, alluding to the murder, had been uttered, an old man, very neatly but plainly dressed, and bearing a pedlar's pack, came

round from behind a projection of it, and approached them. From his position, it was all but certain that he must have overheard their whole conversation. Mave, on seeing him, blushed deeply, and Dalton himself felt considerably embarrassed at the idea that the stranger had been listening, and become acquainted with circumstances that were never designed for any other ears but their own.

The old man, on making his appearance, surveyed our lovers from head to foot with a curious and inquisitive eye—a circumstance which, taken in connection with his eaves-dropping, was not at all relished by young Dalton.

"I think you will know us again," said he in no friendly voice. "How long have you been sittin' behind the corner there?" he inquired.

"I hope I *may* know yez agin," replied the pedlar, for he was one; "I was jist long enough behind the corner to hear some of what you were spakin' about last."

"An' what was that?" said Dalton, putting him to the test.

"You were talkin' about the murdher of one Sullivan."

"*We were*," replied Dalton; "but I'll thank *you* to say nothing further about it; it's disagreeable to both of us—distressin' to both of us."

"I don't understand that," said the old pedlar; "how can it be so to either of you, if you're not consarned in it one way or other?"

"We are, then," said Dalton, with warmth; "the man that was killed was this girl's uncle, and the man that was supposed to take his life is my father. Maybe you understand me now?"

The blood left the cheeks of the old man, who staggered over to the ledge whereon they sat, and placed himself beside them.

"God of Heaven!" said he, with astonishment, "can this be thrue?"

"Now that you know what you *do* know," said Dalton, "we'll thank you to drop the subject."

"Well, I will," said he; "but first, for Heaven's sake, answer me a question or two. What's your name, avick?"

"Condy Dalton."

"Ay, Condy Dalton!—the Lord be about us! An' Sullivan—Sullivan was the name of the man that was murdhered, you say?"

"Yes, Bartley Sullivan—God rest him!"

"An' whisper—tell me—God presarve us!—was there anything done to your father, avick? What was done to him?"

"Why, he was taken up on suspicion soon after it happened; but—but—there was nothing done: they had no proof against him, an' he was let go again."

"Is your father alive still?"

"He is livin'," replied Dalton; "but come—pass on, ould man," he added, bitterly; "I'll give you no more information."

"Well, thank you, dear," said the pedlar; "I ax your pardon for givin' you pain—an' the colleen here—ay, you're a Sullivan, then—an' a purty but sorrowful lookin' crature your are, God knows. Poor things! God pity you both an' grant you a betther fate than what appears to be before you! for I did hear a thrifle of your discoorse."

There was something singularly benevolent and kind in the old pedlar's voice, as he uttered the last words, and he had not gone many perches from the stone, when Dalton's heart relented as he reflected on his harsh and unfriendly demeanor towards him.

"That is a good ould man," he observed, "and I am now sorry that I spoke to him so roughly—there was kindness in his voice and in his eye as he looked upon us."

"There was," replied Mave, "and I think him a good ould man too. I don't think he would harm any one."

"Dear Mave," said Dalton, "I must now get home as soon as I can; I don't feel so well as I was—there is a chill upon me, and I'm afeared I won't have a comfortable night."

"And I can do nothing for you!" added Mave, her eyes filling with tears.

"I didn't thank you for that lock of hair you sent me by Donnel Dhu," he added. "It is here upon my heart, and I needn't say that if anything had happened me, or if anything should happen me, it an' that heart must go to dust together."

"You are too much cast down," she replied, her tears flowing fast, "an' it can't surely be otherwise; but, dear Con, let us hope for better days—an' put our trust in God's goodness."

"Farewell, dear Mave," he replied, "an may God bless and presarve you till I see you again!"

"An' may He send down aid to you all," she added, "an' give consolation to your breakin' hearts!"

An embrace, long, tender, and mournful, accompanied their words, after which they separated in sorrow and in tears, and with but little hope of happiness on the path of life that lay before them.

CHAPTER XIX.

Hanlon Secures the Tobacco-box.—Strange Scene at Midnight.

THE hour so mysteriously appointed by Red Rody for the delivery of the Tobacco-box to Hanlon, was fast approaching, and

the night though by no means so stormy as that which we have described on the occasion of that person's first visit to the Grey Stone, was nevertheless dark and rainy, with an occasional slight gust of wind, that uttered a dreary and melancholy moan, as it swept over the hedges. Hanlon, whose fear of supernatural appearances had not been diminished by what he had heard there before as well as on his way home, now felt alarmed at every gust of wind that went past him. He hurried on, however, and kept his nerves as firmly set as his terrors would allow him, until he got upon the plain old road which led directly to the appointed place. The remarkable interest which he had felt at an earlier stage of the circumstances that compose our narrative, was beginning to cool a little, when it was revived by his recent conversation with Red Rody concerning the Black Prophet, and the palpable contradictions in which he detected that person, with reference to the period when the Prophet came to reside in the neighborhood. His anxiety therefore, about the Tobacco-box began, as he approached the Grey Stone, to balance his fears; so that by the time he arrived there, he found himself cooler and firmer a good deal than when he first crossed the dark fields from home. Hanlon, in fact, had learned a good deal of the Prophet's real character, from several of those who had never been duped by his impostures; and the fact of ascertaining that the very article so essential to the completion of his purpose, had been found in the Prophet's house or possession, gave a fresh and still more powerful impulse to his determinations. The night, we have already observed, was dark, and the heavy gloom which covered the sky was dismal and monotonous. Several flashes of lightning, it is true, had shot out from the impervious masses of black clouds, that lay against each other overhead. These, however, only added terror to the depression which such a night and such a sky were calculated to occasion.

"I trust," thought Hanlon, as he approached the stone, "that there will be no disappointment, and that I won't have my journey on sich a dark and dismal night for nothing. How this red ruffian can have any authority over a girl like Sarah, is a puzzle that I can't make out."

It was just as these thoughts occurred to him that he arrived at the Stone, where he stood anxiously waiting and listening, and repeating his *pater noster*, as well as he could, for several minutes, but without hearing or seeing any one.

"I might have known," thought he, "that the rascal could bring about nothing of the kind, an' I am only a fool for heedin' him at all."

At this moment, however, he heard the noise of a light, quick footstep approaching, and almost immediately afterwards Sarah joined him.

"Well, I am glad you are come," said he, "for God knows when I thought of our last stand here, I was anything but comfortable."

"Why," replied Sarah, "what wor you afeard of? I hate a cowardly man, an' you are cowardly."

"Not where mere flesh and blood is consarned," he replied; "I'm afeard of neither man nor woman—but I wouldn't like to meet a ghost or spirit, may the Lord presarve us!"

"Why, now? What harm could a ghost or spirit do you? Did you ever hear that they laid hands on or killed any one?"

"No; but for all that, it's well known that several persons have died of fright, in consequence."

"Ay, of cowardliness; but it wasn't the ghost killed them. Sure the poor ghost only comes to get relief for itself—to have masses said; or, maybe, to do justice to some one that is wronged in this world. There's Jimmy Beatty, an' he lay three weeks of fright from seein' a ghost, an' it turned out when all was known, that the ghost was nothing more or less than Tom Martin's white-faced cow—ha! ha! ha!"

"At any rate, let us change the subject," said Hanlon; "you heard yourself the last night we wor here, what I'll never forget."

"We heard some noise like a groan, an' that was all; but who could tell what it was, or who cares either?"

"I, for one, do; but, dear Sarah, have you the box?"

"Why does your voice tremble that way for? Is it fear? bekaise if I thought it was, I wouldn't scruple much to walk home without another word, an' bring the box with me."

"You have it, then?"

"To be sure I have, an' my father an' Nelly is both huntin' the house for it."

"Why, what could your father want with it?"

"How can I tell?—an' only that I promised it to you, I wouldn't fetch it at all?"

"I thought you had given it up for lost; how did you get it again?"

"That's nothing to you, an' don't trouble your head about it. There it is now, an' I have kept my word; for while I live, I'll never break it if I can. Dear me, how bright that flash was!"

As Hanlon was taking the box out of

her hand, a fearful flash of sheeted lightning opened out of a cloud almost immediately above them, and discovered it so plainly, that the letters P. M. were distinctly legible on the lid of it, and nearly at the same moment a deep groan was heard, as if coming out of the rock.

"Father of Heaven!" exclaimed Hanlon, "do you hear that?"

"Yes," she replied, "I *did* hear a groan; but here, do you go—oh, it would be useless to ask you—so I must only do it myself; stand here an' I'll go round the rock; at any rate let us be sure that it is a ghost."

"Don't, Sarah," he exclaimed, seizing her arm; "for God's sake, don't—it is a spirit—I know it—don't lave me. I understand it all, an' maybe you will some day, too."

"Now," she exclaimed indignantly, and in an incredulous voice; "in God's name, what has a spirit to do with an old rusty Tobaccy-box? It's surely a curious box; there's my father would give one of his eyes to find it; an' Nelly, that hid it the other day, found it gone when she went to get it for him."

"Do you tell me so?" said Hanlon, placing it as he spoke in his safest pocket.

"I do," she replied; "an' only that I promised it to you, and would not break my word, I'd give it to my father; but I don't see myself what use it can be of to him or anybody."

Hanlon, despite of his terrors, heard this intelligence with the deepest interest—indeed, with an interest so deep, that he almost forgot them altogether; and with a view of eliciting from her as much information in connection with it as he could, he asked her to accompany him a part of the way home.

"It's not quite the thing," she replied, "for a girl like me to be walkin' with a young fellow at this hour; but as I'm not afeard of you, and as I know you are afeard of the ghost—if there is a ghost—I will go part of the way with you, although it does not say much for your courage to ask me."

"Thank you, Sarah; you are a perfect treasure."

"Whatever I was, or whatever I am, Charley, I can never be anything more to you than a mere acquaintance—I don't think ever we were much more—but what I want to tell you is, that if ever you have any serious notion of me, you must put it out of your head."

"Why so, Sarah?"

"Why so," she replied, hastily; "why, bekaise *I* don't wish it—isn't that enough for you, if you have spirit?"

"Well, but I'd like to know why you changed your mind."

"Ah," said she; "well, afther all, that's only natural—it is but raisonable; an' I'll tell you; in the first place, there's a want of manliness about you that I don't like—I think you've but little heart or feelin'. You toy with the girls—with this one and that one—an' you don't appear to love any one of them—in short, you're not affectionate, I'm afeard. Now, here am I, an' I can scarcely say, that ever you courted me like a man that had feelin'. I think you're revengeful, too; for I have seen you look black an' angry at a woman, before now. You never loved me, I know—I say I know you did not. There, then, is some of my raisons—but I'll tell you one more, that's worth them all. *I love another now*—ay," she added, with a convulsive sigh, "I love another; and, I know, Charley, that he can't love me—there's more lightnin'—what a flash! Oh, I didn't care this minute if it went through my heart."

"Don't talk so, Sarah."

"I know what's before me—disappointment—disappointment in everything—the people say I'm wild and very wicked in my temper—an' I am, too; but how could I be otherwise? for what did I ever see or hear undher our own miserable roof, but evil talk and evil deeds? A word of kindness I never got from my father or from Nelly; nothing but the bad word an' the hard blow—until now that she is afeard of me; but little she knew, that many a time when I was fiercest, an' threatened to put a knife into her, there was a quiver of affection in my heart; a yearnin', I may say, afther kindness, that had me often near throwin' my arms about her neck, and askin' her why she mighn't as well be kind as cruel to me; but I couldn't, bekaise I knew that if I did, she'd only tramp on me, an' despise me, an' tyrannize over me more and more.

She uttered these sentiments under the influence of deep feeling, checkered with an occasional burst of wild distraction, that seemed to originate from much bitterness of heart.

"Is it a fair question," replied Hanlon, whose character she had altogether misunderstood, having, in point of fact, never had an opportunity of viewing it in it's natural light; "is it a fair question to ask you who is it that you're in love wid?"

"It's not a fair question," she replied; "I know he loves another, an' for that raison I'll never breathe it to a mortal."

"Bekaise," he added, "if I knew, maybe I might be able to put in a good word for you, now and then, accordin' as I got an opportunity,"

"For me!" she replied indignantly; "what!—to beg him get fond o' me! Oh,

its wondherful the maneness that's in a'most every one you meet. No," she proceeded, vehemently; "if he was a king on his throne, sooner than stoop to that, or if he didn't, or couldn't love me on my own account, I'd let the last drop o' my heart's blood out first. Oh, no!—no, no, no—ha! He loves another," she added, hastily; "he loves another!"

"An' do you know her?" asked Hanlon.

"Do I know her!" she replied; "do I know her! it's I that do; ay, an' I have her in my power, too; an' if I set about it, can prevent a ring from ever goin' on them. Ha! ha! Oh, ay; that divil, Sarah M'Gowan, what a fine character I have got! Well, well, good night, Charley! Maybe it's a folly to have the bad name for nothin'; at laist they say so. Ha! ha! Good-night; I'll go home. Oh, I had like to forgot; Red Rody tould me he was spakin' to you about something that he says you can't but understhand yourself; and he desired me to get you, if I could, to join him in it. I said I would, if it was right an' honest; for I have great doubts of it bein' either the one or the other, if it comes from him. He said that it was both; but that it 'ud be a great piece of roguery to have it undone. Now, if it is what *he* says it is, help him in it, if you can; but if it isn't, have no hand in it. That's all I tould him I would say, an' that's all I do say. Keep out of his saicrets I advise you; an', above all things, avoid everything mane an' dishonest; for, Charley, I have a kind o' likin' for you that I can't explain, although I don't love you as a sweetheart. Good-night again!"

She left him abruptly, and at a rapid pace proceeded back to the Grey Stone, around which she walked, with a view of examining whether or not there might be any cause visible, earthly or otherwise, for the groans which they had heard; but notwithstanding a close and diligent search, she could neither see nor hear anything whatsoever to which they might possibly be ascribed.

She reached home about one o'clock, and after having sat musing for a time over the fire, which was raked for the night—that is, covered over with *greeshaugh*, or living ashes—she was preparing to sleep in her humble bed, behind a little partition wall about five feet high, at the lower end of the cabin, when her father, who had been moaning, and staring, and uttering abrupt exclamations in his sleep, at length rose up, and began deliberately to dress himself, as if with an intention of going out.

"Father," said she, "in the name of goodness, where are you goin' at this time o' the night?"

"I'm goin' to the murdhered man's grave," he replied, "I'm goin' to tell them all how he was murdhered, an' who it was that murdhered him."

A girl with nerves less firm would have felt a most deadly terror at such language, on perceiving, as Sarah at once did, that her father, whose eyes were shut, was fast asleep at the time. In her, however, it only produced such a high degree of excitement and interest, as might be expected from one of her ardent and excitable temperament, imbued as it was with a good deal of natural romance.

"In God's name," she said to herself, "what can this mean? Of late he hasn't had one hour's quiet rest at night; nothin' but startin' and shoutin' out, and talkin' about murdher an' murdherers! What can it mane? for he's now walkin' in his sleep? Father," said she, "you're asleep; go back to bed, you had betther."

"No, I'm not asleep," he replied; "I'm goin' down to the grave here below, behind the rocks down in Glendhu, where the murdhered man is lyin' buried."

"An' what brings *you* there at this time o' the night?"

"Ha! ha!" he replied, uttering an exclamation of caution in a low, guarded voice—"what brings me?—whisht, hould your tongue, an' I'll tell you."

She really began to doubt her senses, notwithstanding the fact of his eyes being shut.

"Whisht yourself," she replied; "I don't want to hear anything about it; I have no relish for sich saicrets. I'm ready enough with my own hand, especially when there's a weapon in it—readier then ever I'll be again; but for all that I don't wish to hear sich saicrets. Are you asleep or awake?"

"I'm awake, of coorse," he replied.

"An' why are your eyes shut then? You're frightful, father, to look at; no corpse ever had sich a face as you have; your heavy brows are knit in sich a way; jist as if you were in agony; your cheeks are so white too, an' your mouth is down at the corners, that a ghost—ay, the ghost of the murdhered man himself—would be agreeable compared to you. Go to bed, father, if you're awake."

To all this he made no reply, but having dressed himself, he deliberately, and with great caution, raised the latch, and proceeded out at that dismal and lonely hour. Sarah, for a time, knew not how to act. She had often heard of sleep-walking, and she feared now, that if she awakened him, he might imagine that she had heard matters which he wished no ears whatever to hear;

for the truth was, that some vague suspicions of a dreadful nature had lately entered her mind; suspicions, which his broken slumbers — his starts, and frequent exclamations during sleep, had only tended to confirm.

"I will watch him at all events," said she to herself, "and see that he comes to no danger." She accordingly shut the door after her, and followed him pretty closely into the deep gloom of the silent and solitary glen. With cautious, but steady and unerring steps, he proceeded in the direction of the loneliest spot of it, which having reached, he went by a narrow and untrodden circuit—a kind of broken, but natural pathway—to the identical spot where the body, which Nelly had discovered, lay.

He then raised his hand, as if in caution, and whispered—"Whisht! here is where the murdhered man's body lies."

"I'll not do it," said Sarah, "I'll not do it; it would be mane and ungenerous to ax him a question that might make him betray himself."

At this moment the moon which had been for some time risen, presented a strange and alarming aspect. She seemed red as blood; and directly across her centre there went a black bar—a bar so ominously and intensely black, that it was impossible to look upon it without experiencing something like what one might be supposed to feel in the presence of a supernatural appearance; at the performance of some magic or unnatural rite, where the sorcerer, by the wickedness of his spell, forced her, as it were, thus to lend a dreadful and reluctant sanction to his proceedings.

Her father, however, proceeded: "Ay—who murdhered him, my lord? Why, my lord—hem—it was—Condy Dalton, an' I have another man to prove it along wid myself—one Rody Duncan; now Rody answer strong; swear home; mind yourself, Rody."

These words were spoken aside, precisely as one would address them when instructing any person to give a particular line of evidence. He then stooped down, and placed his hand upon the grave said, as if he were addressing the dead man:

"Ha! you sleep cool there, you guilty villain! an' it wasn't my fault that the unfaithful an' dishonest sthrap that you got that for, didn't get as much herself. There you are, an' you'll tell no tales at all events! You know, Rody," he proceeded, "it was Dalton that murdhered him; mind that—but you're a coward at heart; as for myself there's nothing troubles me but that Tobacey-Box; but *you* know nothing about that; may the divil confound me, at any rate, for not destroyin' it! an' that ould sthrap, Nelly, suspects something; for she's always riugin Providence into my ears; but if I had that box destroyed, I'd disregard Providence; if there *is* a Providence."

The words had barely proceeded out of his lips, when a peal of thunder, astonishingly loud, broke, as it were, over their very heads, having been preceded by a flash of lightning, so bright, that the long, well-defined grave was exposed, in all its lonely horrors, to Sarah's eye.

"That's odd, now," said she, "that the thunder should come as he said them very words; but thank God that it was Dalton that did the deed, for if it was himself he'd not keep it back now, when the truth would be sure to come out."

"It was he, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury," proceeded her father, "an' my conscience, my lord, during all this long time——"

He here muttered something which she could not understand, and after stooping down, and putting his hand on the grave a second time, he turned about and retraced his steps home. It appeared, however, that late as the hour was, there were other persons abroad as well as themselves, for Sarah could distinctly hear the footsteps of several persons passing along the adjoining road, past the Grey Stone, and she also thought that among the rest might be distinguished the voice of Red Rody Duncan. The Prophet quietly opened the door, entered as usual, and went to bed; Sarah having also retired to her own little sleeping place, lay for some time, musing deeply over the incidents of the night.

CHAPTER XX.

Tumults—Confessions of Murder.

The next morning opened with all the dark sultry rain and black cloudy drapery, which had, as we have already stated, characterized the whole season. Indeed, during the year we are describing, it was known that all those visible signs which prognosticate any particular description of weather, had altogether lost their significance. If a fine day came, for instance, which indeed was a rare case, or a clear and beautiful evening, it was but natural that after such a dark and dreary course of weather, the heart should become glad and full of hope, that a permanent change for the better was about to take place; but alas, all cheerful hope and expectation were in vain. The morrow's sun rose as before, dim and gloomy, to wade

along his dismal and wintry path, without one glimpse of enlivening light from his rising to his setting.

We have already mentioned slightly, those outrages, to which the disease and misery that scourged the country in so many shapes had driven the unfortunate and perishing multitudes. Indeed, if there be any violation of the law that can or ought to be looked upon with the most lenient consideration and forbearance, by the executive authorities, it is that which takes place under the irresistible pressure of famine. And singular as it may appear, it is no less true, that this is a subject concerning which much ignorance prevails, not only throughout other parts of the empire, but even at home here in Ireland, with ourselves. Much for instance is said, and has been said, concerning what are termed "Years of Famine," but it is not generally known that since the introduction of the potato in this country, no year has ever past, which in some remote locality or other, has not been such to the unfortunate inhabitants. The climate of Ireland is so unsettled, its soil so various in quality and the potato so liable to injury from excess of either drought or moisture, that we have no hesitation in stating the startling fact of this annual famine as one we can vouch for, upon our personal knowledge, and against the truth of which we challenge contradiction. Neither does an autumn pass without a complaint peculiar to those who feed solely upon the new and unripe potato, and which, ever since the year '32 is known by the people as the *potato cholera*. With these circumstances the legislature ought to be acquainted, inasmuch as they are calamities that will desolate and afflict the country so long as the potato is permitted to be, as it unfortunately is, the staple food of the people. That we are subject in consequence of that fact, to periodical recurrences of dearth and disease, is well known and admitted; but that *every season* brings its partial scourge of both these evils to various remote and neglected districts in Ireland, has not been, what it ought long since to have been, an acknowledged and established fact in the sanatory statistics of the country. Indeed, one would imagine, that after the many terrible visitations which we have had from destitution and pestilence, a legislature sincerely anxious for the health and comfort of the people, would have devoted itself, in some reasonable measure, to the human consideration of such proper sumptuary and sanatory enactments, as would have provided not only against the recurrence of these evils, but for a more enlightened system of public health and cleanliness, and a better and more comfortable provision of food for the indigent and poor. As it is at present, provision dealers of all kinds, meal-mongers, forestallers, butchers, bakers, and hucksters, combine together, and sustain such a general monopoly in food, as is at variance with the spirit of all law and humanity, and constitutes a kind of artificial famine in the country; and surely these circumstances ought not to be permitted, so long as we have a deliberative legislature, whose duty it is to watch and guard the health and morals of the people.

At the present period of our narrative, and especially on the gloomy morning following the Prophet's unconscious visit to the grave of the murdered man, the popular outrages had risen to an alarming height. Up to the present time occasional outbreaks, by small and detached groups of individuals, had taken place at night or before dawn, and rather in a timid or fugitive manner, than with the recklessness of men who assemble in large crowds, and set both law and all consequences at open defiance. Now, however, destitution and disease had wrought such woeful work among the general population, that it was difficult to know where or how to prescribe bounds to the impetuous resentment with which they expressed themselves against those who held over large quantities of food in order to procure high prices. At this moment the country, with its waste, unreaped crops, lying in a state of plashy and fermenting ruin, and its desolate and wintry aspect, was in frightful keeping with the appearance of the people when thus congregated together. We can only say, that the famine crowds of that awful year should have been seen in order to have been understood and felt. The whole country was in a state of dull but frantic tumult, and the wild crowds as they came and went in the perpetration of their melancholy outrages, were worn down by such starling evidences of general poverty and suffering, as were enough to fill the heart with fear as well as pity, even to look upon. Their cadaverous and emaciated aspects had something in them so wild and wolfish, and the fire of famine blazed so savagely in their hollow eyes, that many of them looked like creatures changed from their very humanity by some judicial plague, that had been sent down from Heaven to punish and desolate the land. And in truth there is no doubt whatsoever, that the intensity of their sufferings, and the natural *panic* which was occasioned by the united ravages of disease and famine, had weakened the powers of their understanding, and impressed upon their bearing and features an expression which seemed partly the

wild excitement of temporary frenzy, and partly the dull, hopeless apathy of fatuity—a state to which it is well known that misery, sickness, and hunger, all together, had brought down the strong intellect and reason of the wretched and famishing multitudes. Nor was this state of feeling confined to those who were goaded by the frightful sufferings that prevailed. On the contrary, thousands became victims of a quick and powerful contagion which spread the insane spirit of violence at a rapid rate, affecting many during the course of the day, who in the early part of the morning had not partaken of its influence. To no other principle than this can we attribute the wanton and irrational outrages of many of the people. Every one acquainted with such awful visitations must know that their terrific realities cause them, by wild influences that run through the whole masses, to forget all the decencies and restraints of ordinary life, until fear and shame, and becoming respect for order, all of which constitute the moral safety of society—are thrown aside or resolved into the great tyrannical instinct of self-preservation, which, when thus stimulated, becomes what may be termed *the insanity of desolation*. We know that the most savage animals as well as the most timid wil, when impelled by its ravenous clamors, alike forget every other appetite but that which is necessary for the sustainment of life. Urged by it alone, they will sometimes approach and assail the habitations of man, and, in the fury of the moment, expose themselves to his power, and dare his resentment; just as a famine mob will do, when urged by the same instinct, in a year of scarcity.

There is no beast, however, in the deepest jungle of Africa itself, so wild, savage and ferocious, as a human mob, when left to its own blind and headlong impulses. On the morning in question, the whole country was pouring forth its famished hordes to intercept meal-carts and provision vehicles of all descriptions, on their way to market or to the next sea-port for shipment; or to attack the granaries of provision dealers, and all who, having food in large quantities, refused to give it *gratis*, or at a nominal price to the poor. Carts and cars, therefore, mostly the property of unoffending persons, were stopped on the highways, there broken, and the food which they carried openly taken away, and, in case of resistance, those who had charge of them were severely beaten. Mills were also attacked and pillaged, and in many instances large quantities of flour and grain not only carried off, but wantonly and wickedly strewn about the streets and destroyed.

In all these acts of violence there was very little shouting; the fact being that the wretched people were not able to shout: unless on rare occasions; and sooth to say, their vociferations were then but a faint and feeble echo of the noisy tumults which in general characterize the proceedings of excited and angry crowds. Truly, those pitiable gatherings had their own peculiarities of misery. During the progress of the pillage, individuals of every age, sex, and condition—so far as condition can be applied to the lower classes—might be seen behind ditches, in remote nooks—in porches of houses, and many on the open highways and streets, eating, or rather gobbling up raw flour, or oat-meal; others, more fortunate, were tearing and devouring bread, with a fury, to which only the unnatural appetites of so many famished maniacs could be compared. As might be expected, most of these inconsiderate acts of license were punished by the consequences which followed them. Sickness of various descriptions, giddiness, retchings, fainting fits, convulsions, and in some cases, death itself, were induced by this wolfish and frightful gluttony on the part of the starving people. Others, however, who possessed more sense, and maintained a greater restraint over their individual sufferings, might be seen in all directions, hurrying home, loaded with provisions of the most portable descriptions, under which they tottered and panted, and sometimes fell utterly prostrate from recent illness or the mere exhaustion of want. Aged people, grey-haired old men, and old women bent with age, exhibited a wild and excited alacrity that was grievous to witness, while hirpling homewards—if they had a home, or if not, to the first friendly shelter they could get — a kind of dim exulting joy feebly blazing in their heavy eyes, and a wild sense of unexpected good fortune working in unnatural play upon the muscles of their wrinkled and miserable faces. The ghastly impressions of famine, however, were not confined to those who composed the crowds. Even the children were little living skeletons, wan and yellow, with a spirit of pain and suffering legible upon their fleshless but innocent features—while the very dogs, as was well observed, were not able to bark, unless they stood against a wall; for, indeed, such of them as survived, were nothing but ribs and skin. At all events, they assisted in making up the terrible picture of general misery which the country at large presented. Both day and night, but at night especially their hungry howlings could be heard over the country, or mingling with wailings which the people were in the habit of pouring over

those whom the terrible typhus was sweeping away with such wide and indiscriminate fatality.

Our readers may now perceive, that the sufferings of these unhappy crowds, before they had been driven to these acts of violence, were almost beyond belief. At an early period of the season, when the potatoes could not be dug, miserable women might be seen early in the morning, and in fact, during all hours of the day, gathering weeds of various descriptions, in order to sustain life; and happy were they who could procure a few handfuls of young nettles, chickenweed, sorrel, preshagh, buglass, or seaweed, to bring home as food, either for themselves or their unfortunate children. Others, again, were glad to creep or totter to stock-farms, at great distances across the country, in hope of being able to procure a portion of blood, which, on such melancholy occasions, is taken from the heifers and bullocks that graze there, in order to prevent the miserable poor from perishing by actual starvation and death.

Alas! little do our English neighbors know or dream of the horrors which attend a year of severe famine in this unhappy country. The crowds which kept perpetual and incessant siege to the houses of wealthy and even of struggling small farmers, were such as scarcely any pen could describe. Neither can we render anything like adequate justice to the benevolence and charity—nay, we ought to say, the generosity and magnanimity of this and the middle classes in general. In no country on earth could such noble instances of self-denial and sublime humanity be witnessed. It has happened in thousands of instances that the last miserable morsel, the last mouthful of nourishing liquid, the last potato, or the last six-pence, has been divided with wretched and desolate beings who required it more, and this, too, by persons who, when that was gone, knew not to what quarter they could turn with a hope of replacing for themselves that which they had just shared in a spirit of such genuine and exalted piety.*

It was to such a state of general tumult that the Prophet and his family arose on the morning of the following day. As usual, he was grim and sullen, but on this occasion his face had a pallid and sunken look in it, which apparently added at least ten years to his age. There was little spoken, and after breakfast he prepared to go out. Sarah,

* It is as well to state here that the season described in this tale is the dreadful and melancholy one of 1817; and we may add, that in order to avoid the charge of having exaggerated the almost incredible sufferings of the people in that year, we have studiously kept our descriptions of them within the limits of truth. DR. CORRIGAN, in his able and very sensible pamphlet on "*Fever and Famine as Cause and Effect in Ireland*"—a pamphlet, by the way, which has been the means of conveying most important truths to statesmen, and which ought to be looked on as a great public benefit—has confirmed the accuracy of the gloomy pictures I was forced to draw. Here follow an extract or two:

"It is scarcely necessary to call to recollection the summer of 1816, cold and wet—corn uncut in November, or rotting in the sheaves on the ground—potatoes not ripened (and when unripe there cannot be worse food), containing more water than nutriment—straw at such an extravagant price as to render the obtaining of it for bedding almost impossible, and when procured, retaining from its half-fermented state, so much moisture, that the use was, perhaps, worse than the want of it. The same agent that destroyed the harvest spoiled the turf. Seldom had such a multiplication of evils come together. In some of the former years, although food and bedding were deficient, the portion saved was of good quality, and fuel was not wanting: but in 1816 every comfort that might have compensated for partial want was absent. This description applies to the two years of 1816 and 1817. In midsummer of 1817, the blaze of fever was over the entire country. It had burst forth in almost a thousand different points. Within the short space of a month, in the summer of 1817, the epidemic sprung forth in Tramore, Youghal, Kinsale, Tralee, and Clonmel, in Carrick-on-Suir, Roscrea, Ballina, Castlebar, Belfast, Armagh, Omagh, Londonderry, Monasterevan, Tullamore and Slane. This simultaneous break-out shows that there must have been some universal cause."

Again:

"The poor were deprived of employment and were driven from the doors where before they had always received relief, lest they should introduce disease with them. Thus, destitution and fever continued in a vicious circle, each impelling the other, while want of presence of mind aggravated a thousandfold the terrible infliction. Of the miseries that attend a visitation of epidemic fever, few can form a conception. The mere relation of the scenes that occurred in the country, even in one of its last visitations, makes one shudder in reading them. As Barker and Cheyne observe in their report, 'a volume might be filled with instances of the distress occasioned by the visitation of fever in 1817.'"

"'On the road leading from Cork, within a mile of the town (Kanturk), I visited a woman laboring under typhus; on her left lay a child very ill, at the foot of the bed another child just able to crawl about, and on her right the corpse of a third child who had died two days previously, which the unhappy mother could not get removed.'—*Letter from Dr. O'Leary, Kanturk.*

"'Ellen Fagan, a young woman, whose husband was obliged, in order to seek employment, to leave her almost destitute in a miserable cabin, with three children, gave the shelter of her roof to a poor beggar who had fever. She herself caught the disease, and from the terror created in the neighborhood, was, with her three children, deserted—except that some person left a little water and milk at the window for the children,—one about four, the other about three years old, and the other an infant at her breast. In this way she continued for a week, when a neighbor sent her a loaf of bread, which was left in the window. Four days

during the whole morning, watched his looks, and paid a marked attention to every thing he said. He appeared, however, to be utterly unconscious of the previous night's adventure, a fact which his daughter easily perceived, and which occasioned her to feel a kind of vague compassion for him, in consequence of the advantage it might give Nelly over him; for of late she began to participate in her father's fears and suspicions of that stubborn and superstitious personage.

"Father," said she, as he was about to go out, "is it fair to ax where you are going?"

"It's neither fair nor foul," he replied; "but if it's any satisfaction to you to know, I won't tell you."

"Have you any objections then, that I should walk a piece of the way with you?"

"Not if you have come to your senses, as you ought, about what I mentioned to you."

"I have something to say to you," she replied, without noticing the allusion he had made; "something that you ought to know."

"An' why not mention it where we are?"

"Bekaise I don't wish her there to know it."

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Nelly; "I feel your kindness—an,' dear me, what a sight o' wisdom I'll lose by bein' kep' out o' the saicret—saicret indeed! A fig for yourself an' your saicret; maybe I have *my* saicret as well as you."

"Well, then," replied Sarah, "if you have, do you keep yours as I'll keep mine, and then we'll be aiquil. Come, father, for I must go from home too. Indeed I think this is the last day I'll be with either of you for some time—maybe ever."

"What do you mane?" said the father.

"Hut!" said the mother, "what a goose you are! Charley Hanlon, to be sure; I suppose she'll run off wid him. Oh, thin, God pity him or any other one that's doomed to be blistered wid you!"

Sarah flashed like lightning, and her frame began to work with that extraordinary energy which always accompanied the manifestation of her resentment.

"You will," said she, approaching the other—"you will, after your escape the other day; you—no, ah! no—I won't now; I forgot myself. Come, father,—come, come; my last quarrel with her is over."

"Ay," returned Nelly, as they went out, "there you go, an' a sweet pair you are—father and daughter!"

"Now, father," resumed Sarah, after they had got out of hearing, "will you tell me if you slep' well last night?"

"Why do you ax?" he replied; "to be sure I did."

"I'll tell you why I ax," she answered; "do you know that you went last night—in the middle of the night—to the murdhered man's grave, in the glen there?"

It is impossible to express the look of astonishment and dismay which he turned upon her at these words.

"Sarah!" he said, sternly; but she interrupted him.

"It's thruth," said she; "an' I went with you."

"What are you spakin' about? Me go out, an' not know it! Nonsense!"

"You went in your sleep," she rejoined.

"Did I spake?" said he, with a black and ghastly look.

"You did."

"What, what—tell me—eh? What did I say?"

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after this he grew uneasy about her, and one night having prepared some tea and bread, he set off to her relief. When he arrived, the following scene presented itself:—In the window lay the loaf, where it had been deposited four days previously; in one corner of the cabin, on a little straw, without covering of any kind, lay the wretched mother, actually dying, and her infant dead by her side, for the want of that sustenance which she had not to give; on the floor lay the children, to all appearance dying also of cold and hunger. At first they refused to take anything, and he had to pour a little liquid down their throats—with the cautious administration of food they gradually recovered. The woman expired before the visitor quitted the house.'—*Letter from Dr. Macarthney, Monivea.*

"'A man, his wife, and two children lay together in a fever. The man died in the night; his wife, nearly convalescent, was so terrified with his corpse in the same bed with her, that she relapsed, and died in two days after; the children recovered from fever, but the eldest lost his reason by the fright. Many other scenes have I witnessed, which would be too tedious to relate.'—*Barker & Cheyne's Report.*

"I know not of any visitation so much to be dreaded as epidemic fever; it is worse than the plague, for it lasts throughout all seasons. Cholera may seem more frightful, but it is in reality less destructive. It terminates rapidly in death, or in as rapid recovery. Its visitation, too, is short, and it leaves those who recover unimpaired in health and strength. Civil war, were it not for its crimes, would be, as far as regards the welfare of a country, a visitation less to be dreaded than epidemic fever.

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"It is not possible, then, to form an exaggerated picture of the sufferings *of a million and a half* of people in these countries, in their convalescence from fever, deprived of, not only the comforts, but even the necessaries of life, with scanty food, and fuel, and covering, only rising from fever to slowly fall victims to those numerous chronic diseases that are sure to seize upon enfeebled constitutions. Death would be to many a more merciful dispensation than such a recovery."—*Famine and Fever, as Cause and Effect in Ireland, &c., &c.* By D. J. Corrigan, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.S.E. Dublin: J. Fannin & Co., Grafton Street.

"You talked a good deal, an' said that it was Condy Dalton that murdhered him, and that you had Red Rody to prove it."

"That was what I said?—eh, Sarah?"

"That's what you said, an' I thought it was only right to tell you."

"It was right, Sarah; but at the same time, at the peril of your life, never folly me there again. Of coorse, you know now that Sullivan is buried there."

"I do," said she; "but that's no great comfort, although it is to know that you didn't murdher him. At any rate, father, remember what I tould you about Condy Dalton. Lave him to God; an' jist that you may feel what you ought to feel on the subject, suppose you were in his situation—suppose for a minute that it was yourself that murdhered him—then ask, would you like to be dragged out from us and hanged, in your ould age, like a dog—a disgrace to all belongin' to you. Father, I'll believe that Condy Dalton murdhered him, when I hear it from his own lips, but not till then. Now, good-bye. You won't find me at home when you come back, I think."

"Why, where are you goin'?"

"There's plenty for me to do," she replied; "there's the sick an' the dyin' on all hands about me, an' it's a shame for any one that has a heart in their body, to see their fellow-creatures gaspin' for want of a dhrop of cowld wather to wet their lips, or a hand to turn them where they lie. Think of how many poor strangers is lyin' in ditches an' in barns, an' in outhouses, without a livin' bein' almost to look to them, or reach them any single thing they want; no, even to bring the priest to them, that they might die reconciled to the Almighty. Isn't it a shamè, then, for me, an' the likes o' me, that has health an' strength, an' nothin' to do, to see my fellow-creatures dyin' on all hands about me, for want of the very assistance that I can afford them. At any rate, I wouldn't live in the house with that woman, an' you know that, an' that I oughtn't."

"But aren't you afeard of catchin' this terrible faver, that's takin' away so many, if you go among them?"

"Afeard!" she replied; "no, father, I feel no fear either of that or anything else. If I die, I lave a world that I never had much happiness in, an' I know that I'll never be happy again in it. What then have I to fear from death? Any change for me must now be for the betther; at all events it can hardly be for the worse. No; my happiness is gone."

"What in Heaven's name is the matther with you?" asked her father; "an' what brings the big tears into your eyes that way?"

"Good-bye," said she; and as she spoke, a melancholy smile—at once sad and brilliant—irradiated her features. "It's not likely, father, that ever you'll see me under your roof again. Forgive me all my follies now, maybe it's the last time ever you'll have an opportunity."

"Tut, you foolish girl; it's enough to sicken one to hear you spake such stuff!"

She stood and looked at him for a moment, and the light of her smile gradually deepened, or rather faded away, until nothing remained but a face of exquisite beauty, deeply shadowed by anxiety and distress.

The Prophet pursued his way to Dick o' the Grange's, whither, indeed, he was bent; Sarah, having looked after him for a moment with a troubled face, proceeded in the direction of old Dalton's, with the sufferings and pitiable circumstances of whose family she was already but too well acquainted. Her journey across the country presented her with little else than records of death, suffering, and outrage. Along the roads the funerals were so frequent, that, in general, they excited no particular notice. They could, in fact scarcely be termed funerals, inasmuch as they were now nothing more than squalid and meagre-looking knots of those who were immediately related to the deceased, hurrying onward, with reckless speed and disturbed looks to the churchyard, where their melancholy burthen was hastily covered up with scarcely any exhibition of that simple and affecting decorum, or of those sacred and natural sorrows, which in other circumstances throw their tender but solemn light over the last offices of death. As she went along, new and more startling objects of distress attracted her notice. In dry and sheltered places she observed little temporary sheds, which, in consequence of the dreadful panic which always accompanies an epidemic in Ireland, had, to a timid imagination, something fearful about them, especially when it is considered that death and contagion were then at work in them in such terrible shapes. To Sarah, however, they had no terrors; so far from that, a great portion of the day was spent by her in relieving their wretched, and, in many cases, dying inmates, as well as she could. She brought them water, lit fires for them, fixed up their shed, and even begged aid for them from the neighbors around, and, as far as she could, did everything to ease their pain, or smooth their last moment by the consolation of her sympathy. If she met a family on the highway, worn with either illness or fatigue—perhaps an unhappy mother, surrounded by a helpless brood, bearing, or rather tottering under a couple of sick children, who were

unable to walk—she herself, perhaps, also ill, as was often the case—she would instantly take one of them out of the poor creature's arms, and carry it in her own as far as she happened to go in that direction, utterly careless of contagion, or all other consequences.

In this way was she engaged towards evening when at a turn of the road she was met by a large crowd of rioters, headed by Red Rody, Tom Dalton, and many others in the parish who were remarkable only for a tendency to ruffianism and outrage; for we may remark here, that on occasions such as we are describing, it is generally those who have suffered least, and have but little or nothing to complain of, that lead the misguided and thoughtless people into crime, and ultimately into punishment.

The change that had come over young Dalton was frightful; he was not half his former size; his clothes were now in rags, his beard grown, his whole aspect and appearance that of some miscreant, in whom it was difficult to say whether the ruffian or the idiot predominated the most. He appeared now in his glory—frantic and destructive; but amidst all this drivelling impetuosity, it was not difficult to detect some desperate and unshaken purpose in his heavy but violent and bloodshot eyes.

Far different from him was Red Rody, who headed his own section of them with an easy but knowing swagger; now nodding his head with some wonderful purpose which nobody could understand; or winking at some acquaintance with an indefinite meaning, that set them a guessing at it in vain. It was easy to see that he was a knave, but one of those knaves on whom no earthly reliance could be placed, and who would betray to-morrow, for good reasons, and without a moment's hesitation, those whom he had corrupted to-day.

"Come, Tom," said Rody, "we have scattered a few of the meal-mongin' vagabonds; weren't you talkin' about that blessed voteen, ould Darby Skinadre? The villain that allowed Peggy Murtagh an' her child to starve to death! Aren't we to pay him a visit?"

Dalton coughed several times, to clear his throat; a settled hoarseness having given a frightful hollowness to his voice. "Ay," said he—"ha, ha, ha—by the broken-heart she died of—well—well—eh, Rody, what are we to do to him?"

Rody looked significantly at the crowd, and grinned, and touched his forehead, and pointed at Dalton.

"That boy's up to everything," said he; "he's the man to head us all—ha, ha!"

"Never mind laughin' at him, anyway," observed one of his friends; "maybe if you suffered what he did, poor fellow, an' his family too, that it's not fun you'd be makin' of him."

"Why," asked a new comer; "what's wrong wid him?"

"He's not *at* himself," replied the other, "ever since he had the faver; that, they say, an' the death of a very purty girl he was goin' to be married to, has put him beside himself, the Lord save us!"

"Come on now," shouted Tom, in his terrible voice; "here's the greatest of all before us still. Who wants meal now? Come on, I say—ha, ha, ha! Is there any of you hungry? Is there any of you goin' to die for want of food? Now's your time—ho, ho! Now, Peggy, now. Amn't I doin' it? Ay, am I, an' it's all for your sake, Peggy dear, for, I swore by the broken heart you died of—ay, an' didn't I tell you that last night on your grave where I slep'. No, he wouldn't—he wouldn't—but now—now—he'll see the differ—ay, an' feel it too. Come on," he shouted, "whoever's hungry, folly me! ha, ha, ha!"

This idiotic, but ferocious laugh, echoing such a dreadful purpose, was appalling; but the people who knew what he had suffered, only felt it as a more forcible incentive to outrage. Darby's residence was now quite at hand, and in a few minutes it was surrounded by such a multitude, both of men and women, as no other occasion could ever bring together. The people were, in fact, almost lost in their own garments; some were without coats or waistcoats to protect them from the elements, having been forced, poor wretches, to part with them for food; others had nightcaps or handkerchiefs upon their heads instead of hats; a certain proof that they were only in a state of convalescence from fever—the women stood with dishevelled hair—some of them half naked, and others leading their children about, or bearing them in their arms; altogether they presented such an appearance as was enough to wring the benevolent heart with compassion and sorrow for their sufferings.

On arriving at Darby's house, they found it closed, but not deserted. At first, Tom Dalton knocked, and desired the door to be opened, but the women who were present, whether with shame or with honor to the sex, we are at a loss to say, felt so eager on the occasion, probably for the purpose of avenging Peggy Murtagh, that they lost not a moment in shivering in the windows, and attacking the house with stones and missiles of every description. In a few minutes the movement became so general and simultaneous that the premises were a perfect wreck, and nothing was to be seen but meal and

flour, and food of every description, either borne off by the hungry crowd, or scattered most wickedly and wantonly through the streets, while, in the very midst of the tumult, Tom Dalton was seen dragging poor Darby out by the throat, and over to the centre of the street.

"Now," said he, "here I have you at last—ha, ha, ha!"—his voice, by the way, as he spoke and laughed, had become fearfully deep and hollow—"now, Peggy dear, didn't I swear it—by the broken heart you died of, I said, an' I'll keep that sacred oath, darlin'."

While speaking, the thin fleshless face of the miser was becoming black—his eyes were getting blood-shot, and, in a very short time, strangulation must have closed his wretched existence, when a young and tall female threw herself by a bound upon Dalton, whom she caught by the throat, precisely as he himself had caught Darby. It was Sarah, who saw that there was but little time to lose in order to save the wretch's life. Her grip was so effectual, that Dalton was obliged to relax his hold upon the other for the purpose of defending himself.

"Who is this?" said he; "let me go, you had better, till I have his life—let me go, I say."

"It's one," she replied, "that's not afeard but ashamed of you. You, a young man, to go strangle a weak, helpless ould creature, that hasn't strength or breath to defend himself no more then a child."

"Didn't he starve Peggy Murtagh?" replied Tom; "ha, ha, ha!—didn't he starve her and her child?"

"No," she replied aloud, and with glowing cheeks; "it's false—it wasn't he but yourself that starved her and her child. Who deserted her—who brought her to shame, an' to sorrow, in her own heart an' in the eyes of the world? Who left her to the bitter and vile tongues of the whole country? Who refused to marry her, and kept her so that she couldn't raise her face before her fellow cratures? Who sent her, without hope, or any expectation of happiness in this life—this miserable life—to the glens and lonely ditches about the neighborhood, where she did nothing but shed bitther tears of despair and shame at the heartless lot you brought her to? An' when she was desarted by the wide world, an' hadn't a friendly face to look to but God's, an' when one kind word from *your* lips would give her hope, an' comfort, an' happiness, where were you? and where was that kind word that would have saved her? Let the old man go, you unmanly coward; it wasn't him that starved her—it was yourself that starved her, and broke her heart!"

"Did yez hear that?" said Dalton; "ha, ha, ha—an' it's all thrue; she has tould me nothing but the thruth—here, then, take the ould vagabond away with you, and do what you like with him—

"'I am a bold and rambling boy,
My lodging's in the isle of Throy;
A rambling boy, although I be,
I'd lave them all an' folly thee.'

Ha, ha, ha!—but come, boys, pull away; we'll finish the wreck of this house, at any rate."

"Wreck away," said Sarah, "I have nothin' to do with that; but I think them women—man-women I ought to call them—might consider that there's many a starvin' mouth that would be glad to have a little of what they're throwin' about so shamefully. Do you come with me, Darby; I'll save you as far as I can, an' as long as I'm able."

"I will, achora," replied Darby, "an' may God bless you, for you have saved my life; but why should they attack me? Sure the world knows, an' God knows, that my heart bleeds——"

"Whisht," she exclaimed, "the world an' God both know it's a lie, if you say your heart bleeds for any thing but the destruction that you see on your place. If you *had* given Peggy Murtagh the meal, she might be a livin' woman to-day; so no more falsehoods now, or I'll turn you back to Tom Dalton's clutches."

"No, then," replied the trembling wretch, "I won't; but between you an' me, then,—an' it needn't go farther—troth my heart bleeds for the severity that's——"

"One word more," she replied, "an' I lave you to what you'll get."

Sarah's interference had a singular effect upon the crowd. The female portion of it having reflected upon her words, soon felt and acknowledged their truth, because they involved a principle of justice and affection to their sex; while the men, without annexing any moral consideration to the matter, felt themselves influenced by her exquisite figure and great beauty.

"She's the Black Prophet's daughter," exclaimed the women; "an' if the devil was in her, she tould Tom Dalton nothing but the truth, at any rate."

"An' they say the devil *is* in her, the Lord save us, if ever he was in any one—keep away from her—my sowl in Heaven! but she'd think no more of tearin' your eyes out, or stickin' you wid a case-knife, than you would of aitin' bread an' butther."

"Blessed Father!" exclaimed another, "did you see the brightness of her eyes while she was spakin?"

"No matther what she is," said a young fellow beside them; "the devil a purtier crature ever was made; be my soul, I only wish I had a thousand pounds, I wouldn't be long without a wife at any rate."

The crowd having wrecked Skinadre's dwelling, and carried off and destroyed almost his whole stock of provisions, now proceeded in a different direction, with the intention of paying a similar visit to some similar character. Sarah and Darby — for he durst not venture, for the present, towards his own house — now took their way to the cabin of old Condy Dalton, where they arrived just in time to find the house surrounded by the officers of justice, and some military.

"Ah," thought Sarah, on seeing them; "it is done, then, an' you lost but little time about it. May God forgive you, father."

They had scarcely entered, when one of the officers pulling out a paper, looked at it and asked, "Isn't your name Condy or Cornelius Dalton?"—

"That is my name," said the old man.

"I arrest you, then," he continued, "for the murder of one Bartholomew Sullivan."

"It is the will of God," replied the old man, while the tears flowed down his cheeks — "it's God's will, an' I won't consale it any longer; take me away — I'm guilty — I'm guilty."

CHAPTER XXI.

Condy Dalton goes to Prison.

The scene that presented itself in Condy Dalton's miserable cabin was one, indeed, which might well harrow any heart not utterly callous to human sympathy. The unhappy old man had been sitting in the armchair we have alluded to, his chin resting on his breast, and his mind apparently absorbed in deep and painful reflection, when the officers of justice entered. Many of our Landlord readers, and all, probably, of our Absentee ones, will, in the simplicity of their ignorance regarding the actual state of the lower classes, most likely take it for granted that the picture we are about to draw exists nowhere but in our own imagination. Would to God that it were so! Gladly and willingly would we take to ourselves all the shame; acknowledge all the falsehood; pay the highest penalty for all the moral guilt of our misrepresentations, provided only any one acquainted with the country could prove to us that we are wrong, change our nature, or, in other words, falsify the evidence of our senses and obliterate our experience of the truths we are describing.

Old Dalton was sitting, as we have said, in the only memorial of his former respectability now left him — the old arm-chair — when the men bearing the warrant for his arrest presented themselves. The rain was pouring down in that close, dark, and incessant fall, which gives scarcely any hope of its ending, and throws the heart into that anxious and gloomy state which every one can feel and perhaps no one describe.

The cabin in which the Daltons now lived was of the poorest description. When ejected from their large holding by Dick o' the Grange, or in other words, were *auctioned out*, they were unhappily at a loss where to find a place in which they could take a temporary refuge. A kind neighbor who happened to have the cabin in question lying unoccupied, or rather waste upon his hands, made them an offer of it; not, as he said, in the expectation that they could live in it for any length of time, but merely until they could provide themselves with a more comfortable and suitable abode.

"He wished," he added, "it was better for their sakes; and sorry he was to see such a family brought so low as to live in it at all!"

Alas! he knew not at the time how deeply the unfortunate family in question were steeped in distress and poverty. They accepted this miserable cabin; but in spite of every effort to improve their condition, days, weeks, and months passed, and still found them unable to make a change for the better.

When Darby and Sarah entered, they found young Con, who had now relapsed, lying in one corner of the cabin, on a wretched shake-down bed of damp straw; while on another of the same description lay his amiable and affectionate sister Nancy. The cabin stood, as we have said, in a low, moist situation, the floor of it being actually lower — which is a common case — than the ground about it outside. It served, therefore, as a receptacle for the damp and under-water which the incessant down-pouring of rain during the whole season had occasioned. It was therefore, dangerous to tread upon the floor, it was so soft and slippery. The rain, which fell heavily, now came down through the roof in so many places that they were forced to put under it such vessels as they could spare, not even excepting the beds, over each of which were placed old clothes, doubled up under dishes, pots, and little bowls, in order, if possible, to keep them dry. The house — if such it could be called — was almost destitute of furniture, nothing but a few pots, dishes, wooden nog-

gins, horn spoons, and some stools being their principal furniture, with the exception of one standing short-posted bed, in a corner, near the fire. There, then, in that low, damp, dark, pestilential *kraal*, without chimney or window, sat the old man, who, notwithstanding its squalid misery, could have looked upon it as a palace, had he been able to say to his own heart—I am not a murderer.

There, we say, he sat alone, surrounded by pestilence and famine in their most fearful shapes, listening to the moanings of his sick family, and the ceaseless dropping of the rain, which fell into the vessels that were placed to receive it. Mrs. Dalton was "*out*," a term which was used in the bitter misery of the period, to indicate that the person to whom it applied had been driven to the last resource of mendicancy; and his other daughter, Mary, had gone to a neighbor's house to beg a little fire.

As the old man uttered the words, no language could describe the misery which was depicted on his countenance.

"Take me," he exclaimed; "ah, no; for then what will become of these?" pointing to his son and daughter, who were sick.

The very minions of the law felt for him; and the chief of them said, in a voice of kindness and compassion:

"It's a distressin' case; but if you'll be guided by me, you won't say anything that may be brought against yourself. I was never engaged," said he, looking towards Darby and Sarah, to whom he partly addressed his discourse, "in anything so painful as this. A man of his age, now afther so many years! However—well—it can't be helped; we must do our duty."

"Where is the rest of your family?" asked another of them; "is this young woman a daughter of yours?"

"Not at all," replied a third; "this is a daughter of the Black Prophet himself; and, by japers, you hardened gipsey, it's a little too bad for you to come to see how your blasted ould father's work gets on. It's his evidence that's bringin' this dacent ould man from his family to a gaol, this miserable evenin'. Be off out o' this, I desire you; I wondher you're not ashamed to be present here, above all places in the world, you brazen devil."

Sarah's whole soul, however, in all its best and noblest sympathies, had passed into and mingled with the scene of unparalleled misery which was then before her. She went rapidly to the bed in which young Con was stretched; stooped down, and looking closely at him, perceived that he was in a broken and painful slumber. She then passed to that in which his sister lay, and saw that she was also asleep. After a glance at each, she rubbed her hands with a kind of wild satisfaction, and going up to old Dalton, exclaimed—for she had not heard a syllable of the language used towards her by the officer of justice—

"Ay," said she, laying her hand upon his white hairs; "you are to be pitied this night, poor ould man; but which of you, oh, which of you is to be pitied most, you or them! an' your wife, too; an' your other daughter, an' your other son, too; but he's past understandin' it; oh, what will they do? At your age, too—at your age! Oh, couldn't you die?—couldn't you contrive, someway, to die?—couldn't you give one great struggle, an' then break your heart at wanst, an' forever!"

These words were uttered rapidly, but in a low and cautious voice, for she still feared to awaken those who slept.

The old man had also been absorbed in his own misery; for he looked at her inquiringly, and only replied, "Poor girl, what is it you're saying?"

"I'm biddin' you to die," she replied, "if you can, you needn't be afeard of God—he has punished you enough for the crime you have committed. Try an' die, if you can—or if you can't—oh," she exclaimed, "I pray God that you—that he, there—" and she ran and bent over young Con's bed for a moment; "that you—that *you* may never recover, or live to see what you *must* see."

"It's a fact, that between hunger and this sickness," continued he who had addressed her last, "they say an' I know that there's great number of people silly; but I think this lady is downright mad; what do you mane, you clip?"

Sarah stared at him impatiently, but without any anger.

"He doesn't hear me," she added, again putting her hand in a distracted manner upon Dalton's gray hair; "no, no, but since it can't be so, there's not a minute to be lost. Oh, take him away, now," she proceeded, "take him away while they're asleep, an' before his wife and daughter comes home—take him away, now; and spare him—spare them—spare them all as much sufferin' as you can."

"There's not much madness in that, Jack," returned one of them; "I think it would be the best thing we could do. Are you ready to come now, Dalton?" asked the man.

"Who's that," said the old man, in a voice of indescribable woe and sorrow; "who's that was talkin' of a broken heart? Oh, God," he exclaimed, looking up to Heaven, with a look of intense agony, "support me—support them; an' if it be your blessed

will, pity us all; but above all things, pity them, oh, Heavenly Father, and don't punish them for my sin!"

"It's false," exclaimed Sarah, looking on Dalton, and reasoning apparently with herself; "he never committed a could blooded murdher; an' the Sullivans are—are—oh—take him away," she said, still in a low, rapid voice; "take him away! Come now," she added, approaching Dalton again; "come—while they're asleep, an' you'll save them an' yourself much distress. I'm not afeard of your wife—for she can bear it if any wife could—but I do your poor daughter, an' she so weak an' feeble afther her illness; come."

Dalton looked at her, and said:

"Who is this girl that seems to feel so much for me? but whoever she is, may God bless her, for I feel that she's right. Take me away before they waken! oh, she is right in every word she says, for I am not afeard of my wife—her trust in God is too firm for anything to shake. I'm ready; but I fear I'll scarcely be able to walk all the way—an' sich an evenin' too—Young woman, will you break this business to these ones, and to my wife, as you can?"

"Oh, I will, I will," she replied; "as well as I can; you did well to say so," she added, in a low voice to herself; "an' I'll stay here with your sick family, an' I'll watch an' attend them. Whatever can be done by the like o' me for them, I'll do. I'll—I'll not have them—I'll nurse them—I'll take care of them—I'll beg for them—oh, what would I not do for them?" and while speaking she bent over young Con's bed, and clasping her hands, and wringing them several times, she repeated "oh what wouldn't I do for you!"

"May God bless you, best of girls, whoever you are! Come, now, I'm ready."

"Ay," said Sarah, running over to him, "that's right—I'll break the bitter news to them as well as it can be done; come, now."

The old man stood in the midst of his desolation, with his hat in his hand, and he looked towards the beds.

"Poor things!" he exclaimed; "what a change has come over you, for what you wanst, an' that not long since, wor. Never, my darlin' childhre—oh, never did one harsh or undutiful word come from your lips to your unhappy father. In my ould age and misery I'm now lavin' you—may be forever—never, maybe, to see you again in this world; an' oh, my God, if we are never to meet in the other; if the innocent and the guilty is never to meet, then this is my last look at you, for everlastin', for everlastin'! I can't do it," he added, weeping bitterly—"I must take my lave of them; I must kiss their lips."

Sarah, while he spoke, had uttered two or three convulsive sobs; but she shed no tears; on the contrary, her eyes were singularly animated and brilliant. She put her arms about him, and said, in a soothing and solicitous tone:

"Oh, no, it's all thrue; but if you kiss them, you'll disturb and waken them; and then, you know, when they see you taken away in this manner, an' hears what it's for, it may be their death."

"Thrue, achora; thrue: well, I will only look at them, then. Let me keep my eyes on them for a little; may be *they* may go first, an' may be *I* may go first; the last time, may be, for everlastin', that I'll see them!"

He went over, as he spoke, Sarah still having her hand upon his arm, as if to intimate her anxiety to keep him under such control as might prevent him from awakening them; and, standing first over the miserable bed where Nancy slept, he looked down upon her.

"Ay," said he, while the tears showered down his cheeks, "there lies the child that never vexed a parent's heart or ruffled one of our tempers. May the blessin', if it is a blessin', or can be a blessin'——"

"It is, it is," said Sarah, with a quick, short sob; "it is a blessin', an' a holy blessin'; but bless *him*—bless him, too!"

"May my blessin' rest upon you, or rather may the blessin' of Almighty God, rest upon you, daughter of my heart! And you too, he proceeded, turning to the other bed, "here is him that among them all I loved the best; my youngest, an' called afther myself—may my blessin' an' the blessin' of God and my Saviour rest upon you, my darlin' son; an' if I never see either of you in this unhappy world, grant, oh, merciful Father, that we may meet in the glory of Heaven, when that stain will be taken away from me for that crime that I have repented for so long an' so bittherly?"

Sarah, while he spoke, had let go his arm, and placing her two hands over her eyes, her whole breast quivered; and the men, on looking at her, saw the tears gushing out in torrents from between her finger. She turned round, however, for a few moments, as if to compose herself; and, when she again approached the old man, there was a smile—a smile, brilliant, but agitated, in her eyes and upon her lips.

"There now," she proceeded; "you have said all you can say; come, go with them. "Ah," she exclaimed with a start of pain, "all we've done or tried to do is lost, I doubt. Here's his wife and daughter. Come out now," said she addressing him; "say a word or two to them outside."

Just as she spoke, Mrs. Dalton and the poor invalid, Mary, entered the house: the one with some scanty supply of food, and the other bearing a live coal between two turf, one under and the other over it.

"Wait," said Sarah, "I'll speak to them before they come in." And, ere the words were uttered, she met them.

"Come here, Mrs. Dalton," said she; "stop a minute, speak to this poor girl, and support her. These sogers, and the constables inside, is come about Sullivan's business, long ago."

"I know it," replied Mrs. Dalton; "I've just heard all about it, there beyond; but she," pointing to her daughter, "has only crossed the ditch from the commons, and joined me this minute."

"Give me these," said Sarah to the girl, "and stay here till I come out again, wet as it is. Your mother will tell you why."

She took the fire from her as she spoke, and, running in, laid it upon the hearth, placing, at the same time, two or three turf about in a hurried manner, but still in a way that argued great presence of mind, amid all her distraction. On going out again, however, the first object she saw was one of the soldiers supporting the body of poor Mary, who had sunk under the intelligence. Mrs. Dalton having entered the cabin, and laid down the miserable pittance of food which she had been carrying, now waved her hand with authority and singular calmness, but at the same time with a face as pallid as death itself.

"This is a solemn hour," said she, "an' a woful sight in this place of misery. Keep quiet, all of you. I know what this is about, dear Condy," she said; "I know it; but what is the value of our faith, if it doesn't teach us obedience? Kiss your child, here," said she, "an' go—or come, I ought to say, for I will go with you. It's not to be wondhered at that she couldn't bear it, weak, and worn, and nearly heartbroken as she is. Bless her, too, before you go. An' this girl," she said, pointing at Mary, and addressing Sarah, "you will spake to her, an' support her as well as you can, and stay with them all for an hour or two. *I* can't have *him*."

Dalton, while she spoke, had taken Mary in his arms, kissed her, and, as in the case of the others, blessed her with a fervor only surpassed by his sorrow and utter despair.

"I will stay with them," said Sarah; "don't doubt that—not for an hour or two, but till they come to either life or death; so I tould him."

"It's a bitther ease," said Mrs. Dalton; "a bitther case; but then it's God's gracious will, an' them that He loves He chastises. Blessed be His name for all He does, and blessed be His name ever for this!"

Mary now recovered in her father's arms; and her mother, in a low but energetic voice, pointing to the beds, said:

"Think of them, darlin'. There now, part with him. This world, I often tould you dear, Mary, is not our place, but our passage; an' although it's painful let us not forget that it is God Himself that is guidin' and directin' us through it. Come, Con dear, come."

A long mournful embrace, and another sorrowful but fervent blessing, and with a feeble effort at consolation, Dalton parted with the weeping girl; and placing his hat on his white head, he gave one long look—one indescribable look—upon all that was so dear to him in this scene of unutterable misery, and departed. He had not gone far, however, when he returned a step or two towards the door; and Mary, having noticed this, went to him, and throwing her arms once more about his neck, exclaimed:

"Oh! Father, darlin' an' is it come to this? Oh, did we ever complain or grumble about all we suffered, while we had you wid us? no, we wouldn't. What was our sufferins, father, dear—nothing. But, oh, nothing ever broke our hearts, or troubled us, but to see you in sich sorrow."

"It's thrue, Mary darlin'; you wor all—all a blessin' to me; but I feel, threasure of my heart, that my sorrows an' my cares will soon be over. It's about Tom I come back. Och, sure I didn't care what he or we might suffer, if it had plased God to lave him in his senses; but maybe now he's happier than we are. Tell him—if he can understand it, or when he does understand it—that I lave my blessin' and God's blessin' with him for evermore—for evermore: an' with you all; an' with you, too, young woman, for evermore, amen! And now come; I submit myself to the will of my marciful Saviour."

He looked up to heaven as he spoke, his two hands raised aloft; after which he covered his venerable head, and, with this pious and noble instance of resignation, did the affectionate old man proceed, as well as his feeble limbs could support him, to the county prison, accompanied by his pious and truly Christian wife.

As the men were about to go, he who had addressed Sarah so rudely, approached her with as much regret on his face as its hardened and habitual indifference to human misery could express, and said, tapping her on the shoulder:

"I was rather rough to you, jist now, my purty girl—an' be jabers, it's you that is the

purty girl. I dunna, by the way, how the ould Black Prophet came by the likes o' you; but, then he was a handsome vagabond in his day, himself, an' you are like him."

"What do you want to say?" she asked, impatiently; "but stand outside, I won't speak to you here—your voice would waken a corpse. Here, now," she added, having gone out upon the causeway, "what is it?"

"Why, devil a thing," he replied; "only you're a betther girl than I tuck you to be. It's a pitiful case, this—a woful case at his time o' life. Be heaventhers, but I'd rather a thousand times see Black Boy, your own precious father, swing, than this poor ould man."

A moment's temporary fury was visible, but she paused, and it passed away; after which she returned slowly and thoughtfully into the cabin.

It is unnecessary to say, that almost immediately the general rumor of Dalton's arrest for the murder had gone through the whole parish, together with the fact that it was upon the evidence of the Black Prophet and Red Rody Duncan, that the proof of it had been brought home to him. Upon the former occasion there had been nothing against him, but such circumstances of strong suspicion as justified the neighboring magistrates in having him taken into custody. On this, however, the two men were ready to point out the identical spot where the body had been buried, and to identify it as that of Bartholomew Sullivan. Nothing remained, therefore, now that Dalton was in custody, but to hold an inquest upon the remains, and to take the usual steps for the trial of Dalton at the following assizes, which were not very far distant. Indeed, notwithstanding the desolation that prevailed throughout the country, and in spite of the care and sorrow which disease and death brought home to so many in the neighborhood, there was a very general feeling of compassion experienced for poor old Dalton and his afflicted family. And among those who sympathized with them, there was scarcely one who expressed himself more strongly upon the subject than Mr. Travers, the head agent of the property on which they had lived, especially upon contrasting the extensive farm and respectable residence, from which their middleman landlord had so harshly and unjustly ejected them, with the squalid kennel in which they then endured such a painful and pitiable existence. This gentleman had come to the neighborhood, in order to look closely into the condition of the property which had been entrusted to his management, in consequence of a great number of leases having expired; some of which had been held by extensive and wealthy middlemen, among the latter of whom was our friend, Dick o' the Grange.

The estate was the property of an English nobleman, who derived an income of thirty-two or thirty-three thousand a year from it; and who though, as landlords went, was not, in many respects, a bad one; yet when called upon to aid in relieving the misery of those from whose toil he drew so large an income, did actually remit back the munificent sum of one hundred pounds! [A recent fact.] The agent, himself, was one of those men who are capable of a just, but not of a generous action. He could, for instance, sympathize with the frightful condition of the people—but to contribute to their relief was no part of his duty. Yet he was not a bad man. In his transactions with his landlord's tenancy, he was fair, impartial, and considerate. Whenever he could do a good turn, or render a service, without touching his purse, he would do it. He had, it is true, very little intercourse with the poorer class of under tenants, but, whenever circumstances happened to bring them before him, they found him a hard, just man, who paid attention to their complaints, but who, in a case of doubt, always preferred the interest of his employer, or his own, to theirs. He had received many complaints and statements against the middlemen who resided upon the property, and he had duly and carefully considered them. His present visit, therefore, proceeded from a determination to look closely into the state and condition of the general tenancy, by which he meant as well those who derived immediately from the head landlord, as those who held under middlemen. One virtue he possessed, which, in an agent, deserves every praise; he was inaccessible to bribery on the one hand, or flattery on the other; and he never permitted his religious or political principles to degenerate into prejudice, so far as to interfere with the impartial discharge of his duty. Such was Robert James Travers, Esq., and we only wish that every agent in the country at large would follow his example.

CHAPTER XXII.

Re-appearance of the Box—Friendly Dialogue Between Jimmy Branigan and the Pedlar.

The next morning but one after the committal of Condy Dalton, the strange woman who had manifested such an anxious interest in the recovery of the Tobacco-Box, was seated

at her humble fireside, in a larger and more convenient cottage than that which we have described, where she was soon joined by Charley Hanlon, who had already made it so comfortable and convenient that she was able to contribute something towards her own support, by letting what are termed in the country parts of Ireland, "Dry Lodgings." Her only lodger on this occasion was our friend the pedlar, who had been domiciled with her ever since his arrival in the neighborhood, and whose principal traffic, we may observe, consisted in purchasing the flowing and luxuriant heads of hair which necessity on the one hand, and fear of fever on the other, induced the country maidens to part with. This traffic, indeed, was very general during the period we are describing, the fact being that the poor people, especially the females, had conceived a notion, and not a very unreasonable one, too, that a large crop of hair not only predisposed them to the fever which then prevailed, but rendered their recovery from it more difficult. These notions, to be sure, resulted naturally enough from the treatment which medical men found it necessary to adopt in dealing with it—every one being aware that in order to relieve the head, whether by blister or other application, it is necessary to remove the hair. Be this, however, as it may, it is our duty to state here that the traffic we allude to was very general, and that many a lovely and luxuriant crop came under the shears of the pedlars who then strolled through the country.

"After all, aunt," said Hanlon, after having bidden her good morrow, "I'm afraid it was a foolish weakness to depend upon a dhrame. I see nothing clear in the business yet. Here now we have got the Box, an' what are we the nearer to the discovery?"

"Well," replied his aunt, for in that relation she stood to him, "is it nothing to get even that? Sure we know now that it was his, an' do you think that M'Gowan, or as they call him, the Black Prophet, would be in sich a state to get it—an' his wife, too, it seems—unless there was some raison on their part beyond the common, to come at it?"

"It's a dark business altogether; but arn't we thrown out of all trace of it in the mane time? Jist when we thought ourselves on the straight road to the discovery, it turns out to be another an' a different murdher entirely—the murdher of one Sullivan."

At this moment, the pedlar, who had been dressing himself in another small apartment, made his appearance, just in time to catch his concluding words.

"An' now," Hanlon added, "it appears that Sullivan's body has been found at last. The Black Prophet and Rody Duncan knows all about the murdher, an' can prove the act home to Condy Dalton, and identify the body, they say, besides."

The pedlar looked at the speakers with a face of much curiosity and interest, then mused for a time, and at length took a turn or two about the floor, after which he sat down and began to drum his fingers on the little table which had been placed for breakfast.

"After I get my breakfast," he said at length, "I'll thank you to let me know what I have to pay. It's not my intention to stop undher this roof any longer; I don't think I'd be overly safe."

"Safe!—arrah why so?" asked the woman.

"Why," he replied, "ever since I came here, you have done nothing but collogue—collogue—an' whisper, an' lay your heads together, an' divil a syllable can I hear that hasn't murdher at the front an' rear of it—either spake out, or get me my bill. If you're of that stamp, it's time for me to thravel; not that I'm so rich as to make it worth any body's while to take the mouthful of wind out o' me that's in me. What do you mean by this discoorse?"

"May God rest the sowls of the dead!" replied the woman, "but it's not for nothing that we talk as we do, an' if you knew but all, you wouldn't think so."

"Very likely," he replied, in a dry but dissatisfied voice; "maybe, sure enough, that the more I'd know of it, the less I'd like of it—here now is a man named Sullivan—Barney, Bill, or Bartley, or some sich name, that has been murdhered, an' it seems the murdherer was sent to gaol yesterday evenin'—the villain! Get me my bill, I say, it's an unsafe neighborhood, an' I'll take myself out of it, while I'm able."

"It's not widout raisin we talk of murdher then," replied the woman.

"Faith may be so—get me my bill, then, I bid you, an' in the mane time, let me have my breakfast. As it is, I tell you both that I carry no money to signify about me."

"Tell him the truth, aunt," said Hanlon, "there's no use in lyin' under his suspicion wrongfully, or allowin' him to lave your little place for no raison."

"The truth is, then," she proceeded, throwing the corner of her apron over her left shoulder, and rocking herself to and fro, "that this young man had a dhrame some time ago—he dremt that a near an' dear friend of his an' of mine too, that was murdhered in this neighborhood, appeared to

him, an' that he desired him to go of a sartain night, at the hour of midnight, to a stone near this, called the Grey Stone, an' that there he would get a clue to the murdherer."

"Well, an' did he?"

"He went—an'—but you had betther tell it yourself, avillish," she added, addressing Hanlon; "you know best."

The pedlar instantly fixed his anxious and lively eyes on the young man, intimating that he looked to him for the rest of the story.

"I went," proceeded Hanlon, "and you shall hear everything that happened."

It is unnecessary for us, however, to go over the same ground a second time. Hanlon minutely detailed to him all that had taken place at the Grey Stone, precisely as it occurred, if we allow for a slight exaggeration occasioned by his terrors, and the impressions of supernatural manifestations which they left upon his imagination.

The pedlar heard all the circumstances with an astonishment which changed his whole bearing into that of deep awe and the most breathless attention. The previous eccentricity of his manner by degrees abandoned him; and as Hanlon proceeded, he frequently looked at him in a state of abstraction, then raised his eyes towards heaven, utteriug, from time to time, "Merciful Father!"—"Heaven preserve us!" and such like, thus accompanying him by a running comment of exclamations as he went along.

"Well," said he, when Hanlon had concluded, "surely the hand of God is in this business; you may take that for granted."

"I would fain hope as much," replied Hanlon; "but as the matthers stand now, we're nearly as far from it as ever. Instead of gettin' any knowledge of the murdherer we want to discover, it proves to be the murdher of Sullivan that has been found out."

"Of Sul'ivan!" he exclaimed; "well, to be sure—oh, ay—well, sure that same is something; but, in the name time, will you let me look at this Box you spoke of? I feel a curiosity to see it."

Hanlon rose and taking the Box from a small deal chest which was strongly locked, placed it in the pedlar's hands. After examining it closely for about half a minute, they could observe that he got very pale, and his hands began to tremble, as he held and turned it about in a manner that was very remarkable.

"Do you say," he asked, in an agitated voice, "that you have no maues of tracin' the murdher?"

"None more than what we've tould you."

"Did this Box belong to the murdhered man?—I mane, do you think he had it about him at the time of his death?"

"Ay, an' for some time before it," replied the woman. "It's all belongin' to him that we can find now."

"And you got it in the keeping of this M'Gowan, the Black Prophet, you say?"

"We did," replied the woman, "from his daughter, at all events."

"Who is this Black Prophet?" he asked; "or what is he? for that comes nearer the mark. Where did he come from, where does he live, an' what way does he earn his bread?"

"The boy here," she replied, pointing to Hanlon, "can tell you that betther than I can; for although I've been at his place three or four times, I never laid eyes on him yet."

"Well," continued the pedlar, "you have both a right to be thankful that you tould me this. I now see the hand of God in the whole business. *I* know this box an' I can tell you something that will surprise you more than that. Listen—but wait—I hear somebody's foot. No matter—I'll surprise you both by an' by."

"God save all here," said the voice of our friend, Jemmy Branigan, who immediately entered. "In troth, this change is for the betther, at any rate," said he, looking at the house; "I gave you a lift wid the masther yesterday," he added, turning to the woman. "I think I'll get him to throw the ten shillings off—he as good as promised me he would."

"Masther!" exclaimed the pedlar, bitterly—"oh, thin, it's he that's the divil's masther, by all accounts, an' the divil's landlord, too. Be me sowl, he'll get a warm corner down here;" and as he uttered the words, he very significantly stamped with his heel, to intimate the geographical position of the place alluded to.

"It would be only manners to wait till *your* opinion is axed of him," replied Jemmy; "so mind your pack, you poor sprissaun, or when you do spake, endeavor to know something of what you're discoorsin' about. Masther, indeed! Divil take your impidence!"

"He's a scourge to the counthry," continued the pedlar; "a worse landlord never faced the sun."

"That's what we call in this part of the counthry—a lie," replied Jemmy. "Do you understand what that manes?"

"No one knows what an' outrageous ould blackguard he is betther than yourself," proceeded the pedlar; "an' how he harrishes the poor."

"That's ditto repated," responded Jemmy;

"you're improvin'—but tell me now do *you* know any one that he harrished?"

This was indeed a hazardous question on the part of Jemmy; who, by the way, put it solely upon the presumption of the pedlar's ignorance of Dick's proceedings as a landlord, in consequence of his (the pedlar) being a stranger.

"Who did *you* ever know that he harrished, i' you please?"

"Look at the Daltons," replied the other; "what do you call his conduct to them?"

Jemmy, who, whenever he felt himself deficient in truth, always made up for the want of it by warmth of temper, now turned shortly upon his antagonist, and replied, in a spirit very wide of the argument—

"What do I call his conduct to them? What do you call the nose on your face, my codger? Divil a sich an impideut crature ever I met."

"It would be no wondher that the curse o' God would come on him for his tratement to that unfortunate and respectable family," responded the pedlar.

"The curse o' God knows where to fall best," replied Jemmy, "or it's not in the county jail ould Condy Dalton 'ud be for murdher this day."

"But," returned the other, "isn't it a disgraceful thing to be, as they say he and yourself is, a pair o' scourges in the hands o' God for your fellow-creatures; an' in troth you're both fit for it by all accounts."

"Troth," replied Jemmy, whose gall was fast rising, "it's a scourge wid nine tails to it ought to go to your back. The Daltons desarved all they got at his hands; an' the same pack was never anything else than a hot-brained crew, that 'nd knock you on the head to-day, and groan over you to-morrow. He sarved them right, an' he's a liar that says to the contrary; so if you have a pocket for that put it in it."

Jemmy, in fact, was now getting rapidly into a towering passion, for it mattered little how high in violence his own pitched battles with Dick ran, he never suffered, nor could suffer a human being to abuse his master behind his back, but himself. So confirmed, however, by habit, was his spirit of contradiction, that had the pedlar begun to praise Dick, Jemmy would immediately have attacked him without remorse, and scarcely have left a rag of his character together.

"It's a shame for you," proceeded the pedlar, "to defend an' ould sinner like him: but then as there's a pair of you, that's not unnatural; every rogue will back his brother. I could name the place, any way, that'll hould you both yet."

"An' I could," replied Jemmy, "name the piece of machinery that'll be apt to hould you, if you give the masther any more abuse. Whether you'll grow in it or not, is more than I know, but be me sowl, we'll *plant* you there any how. Do you know what the stocks manes? Faith, many a spare hour you've sarved there, I go bail, that is, when you had nothing else to do—an' by the way of raycreation jist."

"Ay," said the pedlar, "listen how he sticks to the ould villain—but sure, if you put any other two blisthers together, they'll do the same."

"My own opinion is," observed Haulon's aunt, "that it's a pity of the Daltons, at any rate. Every one feels for them—but still the hand o' God an' his curse, I'm afeard, is upon them."

"An' that's more, maybe, than you know," replied Jemmy. "Maybe God's only punishing them, bekaise he loves them. It's good to have our sufferins in this world."

"Afther all," said the pedlar, "I'm afeard myself, too, that the wrath o' the Almighty has marked them out. Indeed, I'm sure of it."

"An' maybe that's not the only lie you're sure of," replied Jemmy. "It's a subject, any way, you don't undherstand. No," he proceeded, "by all accounts, Charley, it would wring any one's heart to see him taken away in his ould age from his miserable family and childre, and then he's so humble, too, and so resigned to the will an' way o' God. He's lyin' ill in the gaol. I seen him yesterday—I went to see him an' to say whatever I could to comfort him. God pity his gray hairs! an'—hem—have compassion on him and his this day!"

The poor fellow's heart could stand the sudden contemplation of Dalton's sorrow no louger—and on uttering the last words he fairly wept.

"If I had known what it was about," he proceeded; "but that ould scoundrel of a Prophet—ay, an' that other ould scoundrel of a masther o' mine—hem ay—whish—but—what am I sayin'?—but if I had known it, 'ud go hard but I'd give him a lift—so that he might get out o' the way, at any rate."

"Ay," said the pedlar, "at any rate, indeed—faith, you may well say it; but I say, that at any rate he'll be hanged as sure as he murdhered Sullivan, and as sure as he did, that he may swing, I pray this day!"

"I'll hould no more discoorse wid that circulatin' vagabone," replied Jemmy; "I'm a Christian man—a peaceable man; an' I know what my religion ordhers me to do when I meet the likes of him—and that is when he houlds the one cheek towardst me to give him a sound Christian rap upon the

other. So to the divil I pitch you, you villain, sowl and body, an' that's the worst I wish you. If you choose to be unchristian, be so; but, be my sowl, *I'll* not set you the example. Charley," he proceeded, addressing Hanlon, "I was sent for you in a hurry. Masther Dick wants you, and so does Red Rody—the villain! and I tell you to take care of him, for, like that vagabone, Judas, he'd kiss you this minute and betray you the next."

"I believe you're purty near the truth," replied Jemmy, "but I was near forgettin'—it seems the Crowner of the country is sick, an' there can't be an inquest held till he recovers; if he ever does recover, an' if it 'ud sarve poor ould Dalton, that he never may, I pray God this day!—come away, you'll be killed for stayin'."

Just then young Henderson himself called Hanlon forth, who, after some conversation with him, turned towards the garden, where he held a second conference with Red Rody, who, on leaving him appeared in excellent spirits, and kept winking and nodding, with a kind of burlesque good humor, at every one whom he knew, until he reached home.

In this state stood the incidents of our narrative, suspended for some time by the illness of the coroner, when Mr. Travers, himself a magistrate, came to the head inn of the county town in which he always put up, and where he held his office. He had for several days previously gone over the greater portion of the estate, and inspected the actual condition of the tenantry on it. It is unnecessary to say that he was grieved at the painful consequences of the middleman system, and of sub-letting in general. Wherever he went, he found the soil in many places covered with hordes of pauper occupants, one holding under another in a series that diminished from bad to worse in everything but numbers, until he arrived at a state of destitution that was absolutely disgraceful to humanity. And what rendered this state of things doubly painful and anomalous was the fact, that while these starving wretches lived upon his employer's property, they had no claim on him as a landlord, nor could he recognize them as tenants. It is true that these miserable creatures, located upon small patches of land, were obliged to pay their rents to the little tyrant who was over them, and he again, probably to a still more important little tyrant, and so on; but whenever it happened that the direct tenant, or any one of the series, neglected to pay his or their rent, of course the landlord had no other remedy than to levy it from off the soil, thus rendering it by no means an unfrequent case that the small occupiers who owed nothing to him or those above them were forced to see their property applied to the payment of the head rent, in consequence of the inability, neglect, or dishonesty of the middleman, or some other subordinate individual from whom they held. This was a state of things which Mr Travers wished to abolish, but to do so, without inflicting injury, however unintentional, or occasioning harshness to the people, was a matter not merely difficult but impossible.

As we are not, however, writing a treatise upon the management of property, we shall confine ourselves simply to the circumstances only of such of the tenants as have enacted a part in our narrative.

About a week had now elapsed since the abusive contest between Jemmy Branigan and the pedlar; the coroner was beginning to recover, and Charley Hanlon's aunt had disappeared altogether from the neighborhood. Previous to her departure, however, she, her nephew, and the pedlar, had several close, and apparently interesting conferences, into which their parish priest, the Rev. Anthony Devlin, was ultimately admitted. It was clear, indeed, that whatever secret the pedlar communicated, had inspired both Hanlon and his aunt with fresh energy in their attempts to discover the murderer of their relative; and there could be little doubt that the woman's disappearance from the scene of its perpetration was in some way connected with the steps they were taking to bring everything connected with it to light.

Travers, already acquainted with the committal of old Dalton, as he was with all the circumstances of his decline and eviction from his farm, was sitting in his office, about twelve o'clock, when our friend, the pedlar, bearing a folded paper in his hand, presented himself, with a request that he might be favored with a private interview. This, without any difficulty, was granted, and the following dialogue took place between them:—

"Well, my good friend," said the agent; "what is the nature of this private business of yours?"

"Why, plase your honor, it's a petition in favor of ould Condy Dalton."

"A petition! Of what use is a petition to Dalton? Is he not now in gaol, on a charge of murder? You would not have me attempt to obstruct the course of justice, would you? The man will get a fair trial, I hope."

"I hope so, your honor; but this petition is not about the crime the unfortunate man is in for; it's an humble prayer to your honor, hopin' you might restore him—or, I

ought rather to say, his poor family, to the farm that they wor so cruelly put out of. Will your honor read it, sir, and look into it, bekaise, at any rate, it sets forth too common a case."

"I am partly acquainted with the circumstances, already; however, let me see the paper."

"The pedlar placed it in Mr. Travers' hands, who, on looking over it, read, somewhat to his astonishment, as follows:—

"The humble Petition of Cornelius Dalton, to his Honor, Mr. John Robert Travers, Esq., on behalf of himself, his Wife, and his afflicted family; now lying in a state of almost superhuman Destitution — by Eugenius M'Grane, Philomath and classical Instructor in the learned Languages of Latin, English, and the Hibernian Vernacular, with an inceptive Initiation into the Rudiments of Greek, as far as the Gospel of St. John the Divine; attended with copious Disquisitions on the relative Merits of moral and physical Philosophy, as contrasted with the pusillanimous Lectures of that Ignoramus of the first Water, Phadrick M'Swagger, falsely calling himself Philomath—*cum multis aliis quos enumerare longum est:*

"Humbly Sheweth—

"That Cornelius Dalton, late of Cargah, gentleman agriculturist, held a farm of sixty-six Irish acres, under the *Right Honorable* (the reverse could be proved with sound and legitimate logic) Lord Mollyborough, an absentee nobleman, and proprietor of the Tullystretchem estate. That the said Cornelius Dalton entered upon the farm of Cargah, with a handsome capital and abundant stock, as became a man bent on improving it, for both the intrinsic and external edification and comfort of himself and family. That the rent was originally very high; and, upon complaint of this, several well indited remonstrances, urged with most persuasive and enthusiastic eloquence, as the inditer hereof can testify, were most insignificantly and superciliously disregarded. That the said Mr. Cornelius Dalton persisted notwithstanding this great act of contemptuosity and discouragement to his creditable and industrious endeavors, to expend, upon the aforesaid farm, in solid and valuable improvements, a sum of seven hundred pounds and upwards, in building, draining, enclosing, and manuring—all of which improvements transcendantly elevated the value of the farm in question, as the whole rational population of the country could depose to—*me ipso teste quoque.* That when this now highly emendated tenement was brought to the best condition of excellence of which it was susceptible, the middleman landlord—*va miseris agricolis!*—called upon him for an elevation of rent, which was reluctantly complied with, under the tyrannical alternative of threatened ejection, incarceration of cattle, &c., &c., and many other proceedings equally inhuman and iniquitous. That this rack-rent, being now more than the land could pay, began to paralyze the efforts, and deteriorate the condition of the said Mr. Cornelius Dalton; and which, being concatenated with successive failures in his crops, and mortality among his cattle, occasioned him, as it were, to retrogade from his former state; and in the course of a few calamitous years, to decline, by melancholy gradation and oppressive treatment from Richard Henderson, Esq., J.P., his landlord, to a state of painful struggle and poverty. That the said Richard Henderson, Esq., his unworthy landlord, having been offered a still higher rent, from a miserable disciple, named Darby Skinadre, among others, unfeelingly availed himself of Dalton's *res augusta*—and under play of his privileges as a landlord, levied an execution upon his property, auctioned him out, and expelled him from the farm; thus turning a respectable man and his family, hopeless and houseless, beggars upon the world, to endure misery and destitution. That the said Mr. Cornelius Dalton, now plain Corny Dalton—for vile poverty humilifies even the name—or rather his respectable family, among whom, *facile princeps*, for piety and unshaken trust in her Redeemer, stands his truly unparalleled wife, are lying in a damp wet cabin within about two hundred perches of his former residence, groaning with the agonies of hunger, destitution, dereliction, and disease, in such a state of complicated and multiform misery as rarely falls to the lot of human eyes to witness. That the burthen and *onus* of this petition is, to humbly supplicate that Mr. Cornelius Dalton, or rather his afflicted and respectable family, may be reinstated in their farm as aforesaid, or if not, that Richard Henderson, J.P., may be compelled to swallow such a titillating emetic from the head landlord as shall compel him to eructate to this oppressed and plundered man all the money he expended in making improvements, which remain to augment the value of the farm, but which, at the same time, were the means of ruining himself and his most respectable family: for, as the bard says, 'sio vos non vobis,' &c., &c. Of the remainder of this appropriate quotation, your honor cannot be incognizant, or any man who has had the advantage of being college-bred, as every

true gentleman or 'homo factus ad unguem' must have, otherwise he fails to come under this category.—And your petitioner will ever pray."

"Are you the Mr. Eugenius McGrane," asked the agent, "who drew up this extraordinary document?"

"No, your honor; I'm only merely a friend of the Daltons, although a stranger in the neighborhood."

"But what means have Dalton or his family, granting that he escapes from this charge of murder that's against him, of stocking or working so large a farm? I am aware myself that the contents of this petition, with all its pedantry, are too true."

"But consider, sir, that he sunk seven hundred pounds in it, an' that, according to everything like fair play, he ought either to get his farm again, at a raisonable rate, or his money that raised its value for the landlord, back again; sure, that's but fair, your honor."

"I'm not here to discuss the morality of the subject, my good friend, neither do I question the truth of your argument, simply as you put it. I only say, that what you ask, is impracticable. You probably know not Dick o' the Grange, for you say you are a stranger—if you did, you would not put yourself to the trouble of getting even a petition for such a purpose written."

"It's a hard case, your honor."

"It is a hard case; but the truth is, I see nothing that can be done for the Daltons. To talk of putting a family, in such a state as they are now in, back again, upon such a farm, is stark nonsense—without stock or capital of any kind—the thing is ridiculous."

"But suppose they had stock and capital?"

"Why, then, they certainly would have the best right to the farm—but where's the use of talking about stock or capital, so far as they are concerned?"

"I wish your honor would interfere for an oppressed and ill-treated family, against as great a rogue, by all accounts, as ever broke bread—I wish you would make me first sure that they'd get their farm."

"To what purpose, I say?"

"Why, sir, for a raison I have. If your honor will make me sure that they'll get their land again, that's all I want.'

"What is your reason? Have *you* capital, and are you willing to assist them?"

The pedlar shook his head.

"Is it the likes o' me, your honor? No, but maybe it might be made up for them some way."

"I believe," said the agent, "that your intentions are good; only that they are altogether impracticable. However, a thought strikes me. Go to Dick o' the Grange, and lay your case before him. Ask a new lease for your friends, the Daltons—of course he won't give it; but at all events, come back to me, and let me know, as nearly in his own words as you can, what answer he will give you; go now, that is all that I can do for you in the matter."

"Barrin' this, your honor, that set in case the poor heart-broken Daltons wor to get capital some way."

"Perhaps," said Travers, interrupting him, "you can assist them."

"Oh, if I could!—no, but that set in case, as I said, that it was to be forthcomin', you persave. Me!—oh, the Lord that *I* was able!"

"Very well," replied the other, anxious to rid himself of the pedlar, "that will do, now. You are, I perceive, one of those good-natured, speculating creatures, who are anxious to give hope and comfort to every one. The world has many like you; and it often happens, that when some good fortune does throw the means of doing good into your power, you turn out to be a poor, pitiful, miserable crew, without actual heart or feeling. Goodbye, now. I have no more time to spare—try Dick o' the Grange himself, and let me know his answer."

So saying, he rang the bell, and our friend the pedlar, by no means satisfied with the success of his interview, took his leave.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Darby in Danger—Nature Triumphs.

The mild and gentle Mave Sullivan, with all her natural grace and unobtrusive modesty, was yet like many of the fair daughters of her country, possessed of qualities which frequently lie dormant in the heart until some trying calamity or startling event of more than ordinary importance, awakens them into life and action. Indeed, any one in the habit of observing the world, may have occasionally noticed, that even within the range of his own acquaintances, there has been many a quiet and apparently diffident girl, without pretence or affectation of any kind, who when some unexpected and stunning blow has fallen either upon herself or upon some one within the circle of her affections, has manifested a spirit so resolute or a devotion so heroic, that she has at once constituted herself the lofty example whom all admire and endeavor to follow. The un-

recorded calamities of ordinary life, and the annals of human affection, as they occur from day to day around us, are full of such noble instances of courage and self sacrifice on the part of woman for the sake of those who are dear to her. Dear, holy, and heroic woman! how frequently do we who too often sneer at your harmless vanities and foibles, forget the light by which your love so often dispels the darkness of our affliction, and the tenderness with which your delicious sympathy charms our sorrows and our sufferings to rest, when nothing else can succeed in giving us one moment's consolation!

The situation of the Daltons, together with the awful blow which fell upon them at a period of such unexampled misery, had now become the melancholy topic of conversation among their neighbors, most, if not all, of whom were, however, so painfully absorbed in their own individual afflictions either of death, or famine, or illness, as to be able to render them no assistance. Such as had typhus in their own families were incapable of attending to the wants or distress of others, and such as had not, acting under the general terror of contagion which prevailed, avoided the sick houses as they would a plague.

On the morning after old Dalton's removal to prison, Jerry Sullivan and his family were all assembled around a dull fire, the day being, as usual, so wet that it was impossible to go out unless upon some matter of unusual importance; there was little said, for although they had hitherto escaped the fever, still their sufferings and struggles were such as banished cheerfulness from among them. Mave appeared more pale and dejected than they had ever yet seen her, and it was noticed by one or two of the family, that she had been occasionally weeping in some remote corner of the house where she thought she might do so without being observed.

"Mave, dear," said her father, "what is the matter wid you? You look, darlin', to be in very low spirits to-day. Were you cryin'?"

She raised her large innocent eyes upon him, and they instantly filled with tears.

"I can't keep it back from you, father," she replied, "let me do as I will—an' oh, father dear, when we look out upon the world that is in it, an' when we see how the hand o' God is takin' away so many from among us, and when we see how the people everywhere is sufferin' and strugglin' wid so much—how one is here this day, and in a week to come in the presence of their Judge! Oh, surely, when we see all the doin's of death and distress about us, we ought to think that it's no time to harbor hatred or any other bad or unchristian feelin' in our hearts!"

"It is not, indeed, darlin'; an' I hope nobody here does."

"No," she replied; and as she spoke, the vibrations of sorrow and of sympathy shook her naturally sweet voice into that tender expression which touches the heart of the hearer with such singular power—"no, father," she proceeded, "I hope not; religion teaches us a different lesson—not only to forgive our enemies, but to return good for evil."

"It does, achora machree," replied her father, whose eyes expressed a kind of melancholy pride, as he contemplated his beautiful but sorrowful looking girl, giving utterance to truths which added an impressive and elevated character to her beauty.

"Young and ould, achushla machree, is fallin' about us in every direction; but may the Father of Mercy spare you to us, my darlin' child, for if anything was to happen you, where—oh, where could we look upon your aiquil, or find anything that could console us for your loss?"

"If it's my fate to go, father, I'll go, an' if it isn't God will take care of me; whatever comes, I'm resigned to His will."

"Ay, dear, an' you ever wor, too—and for the same raison God's blessin' will be upon you; but what makes you look so low, avourneen? I trust in my Saviour, you are not unwell, Mave, dear."

"Thanks be to God, no, father; but there's a thing on my mind, that's distressin' me very much, an' I hope you'll allow me my way in it."

"I may say so, dear; because I know you wouldn't ax me for anything that 'ud be wrong to grant you. What is it, Mave?"

"It's the unhappy an' miserable state that these poor Daltons is in," she replied. "Father, dear, forgive me for what I'm about to say; for, although it may make you angry, there's nothin' farther from my heart than to give you offence."

"You needn't tell me so, Mave; you need not, indeed; but sure you know, darlin', that unfortunately, we have nothing in our power to do for them; I wish to the Lord we had! Didn't we do all that people in our poor condition could do for them? Didn't you, yourself, achora, make us send them such little assistance as we could spare?—ay, even to sharin' I may say, our last morsel wid them; an' now, darlin', you know we haven't it."

"I know that," she replied, as she wiped away the tears; "where is there a poorer family than we are, sure enough? but, father,

dear; we *can* assist them—relieve them; ay, maybe save them—for all that."

"God be praised then!" exclaimed Sullivan; "only show me how, an' we'll be glad to do it; for I can forget everything now, Mave, but their distress."

"But do you know the condition they're in at this moment?" she asked, "do you know, father, that they're stretched on the bed of sickness? I mean Nancy an'—an' young Con, who has got into a relapse; poor Mary is scarcely able to go about, she's so badly recovered from the fever; an' Tom, the wild unfortunate young man, is out of his senses, they say. Then there's nobody to look to them but Mrs. Dalton herself; an' she, you know, has to go '*out*' to ask their poor bit from the neighbors. Only think," she proceeded, with a fresh burst of sorrow, "oh, only think, father, of sich a woman bein' forced to this!"

"May the Lord pity her an' them, this woeful day!" exclaimed Sullivan.

"Now, father," proceeded Mave; "I know—oh who knows better or so well—what a good an' a kind an' a forgivin' heart you have; an' I know that even in spite of the feelin' that was, and maybe is, upon your mind against them, you'll grant me my wish in what I'm goin' to ask."

"What is it then?—let me hear it."

"It's this: you know that here, in our family I can do nothing to help ourselves—that is, there is nothing for me to do—an' I feel the time hang heavy on my hands. I have been thinkin', father dear, of this miserable state the poor Daltons is in, without any one to attend them in their sickness—to say a kind word to them, or to hand them even a drink of clean water, if they wanted it. Them that hasn't got the fever yet, won't go near them for fear of catchin' it. What, then, will become of them? There they are, without the face, or hand, or voice of kindness about them. Oh, what on God's blessed earth will become of them? They may die an' they must die, for want of care and assistance."

"But sure that's not our fault, dear Mave; we can't help them."

"We can, father—an' we must; for if we don't they'll die. Father," she added, laying her wasted hand in his; "it is my intention to go over to them—an' as I have nothing that I can do at home, to spend the greater part of the day with them in takin' care of them—an'—an' in doin' what I can for them. Yes, father dear—it is my intention—for there is none but me to do it for them."

"Saviour of earth, Mave dear, is it mad you are? You, achora machree, that's dearer to us all than the apple of our eye, or the very pulse of our hearts—to let you into a plague-house—to let you near the deadly fever that's upon them—where you'd be sure to catch it; an' then—oh, blessed Father, Mave what's come over you, to think of sich a thing?—ay, or to think that we'd let you expose yourself? But it's all the goodness and kindness of your affectionate heart; put it out of your head, however—don't name it, or let us hear of it again."

"But, father, it's a duty that our religion teaches us."

"Why—what's come over you, Mave?—all at wanst too—you that was so much afeard of it that you wouldn't go on a windy side of a feverish house, nor walk near any one that was even recoverin' from it. Why, what's come over you?"

"Simply, father, the thought if I don't go to them and help them, they will die. I was afeard of the fever, and I am afeard of it—but am I to let my own foolish fears prevent me from doin' the part of a Christian to them? Let us put ourselves in their place—an' who knows—although may God forbid!—but it may be our own before the season passes—suppose it was our own case—an' that all the world was afeard to come near us; oh, what would we think of any one, man or woman, that trustin' in God, would set their own fears at defiance an' come to our relief."

"Mave, I couldn't think of it; if anything happened you, an' that we lost you, I never would lay my head down without the bither thought that I had a hand in your death."

At this moment, the mother who had been in another room, came in to the kitchen—and having listened for a minute to the subject of their conversation, she immediately joined her husband; but still with feelings of deep and almost tearful sympathy for the Daltons.

"It's like her, poor affectionate girl," she exclaimed, looking tenderly at her daughter; "but it's a thing, Mave, we could never think of; so put it out of your head."

She approached her mother, and, seizing her hands, exclaimed:—

"Oh, mother, for the sake of the livin' God, make it your own case!—think of it—bring it home to you—look into the frightful state they're in. Are they to die in a Christian country for want of some kind person to attend upon them? Is it not our duty, when we know how they are sufferin'? I cannot rest, or be at ease; an' I am not afeard of fever here. You may say I love young Condy Dalton, an' that it is on his account I am wishin' to go. Maybe it is; an' I will now tell you at wanst, that I *do* love him.

and that if it was the worst plague that ever silenced the noise of life in a whole country, it wouldn't prevent me from goin' to his relief, nor to the relief of any one belongin' to him."

"I knew," said her father, "that that was at the bottom of it."

"I do love him," she continued, "an' this is more than ever I had courage to tell you openly before; but, father, I feel that I am called upon here to go to their assistance, and to see that they don't die from neglect in a Christian country. I have trust an' confidence in the Almighty God. I am not afeard of fever now; and even if I take it an' die, you both know that I'll die in actin' the part of a Christian girl; an' what brighter hope could anything bring to us than the happiness that such a death would open to me? But here I feel that the strength and protection of God is upon me, and I will not die."

"That's all very well Mave," said her mother; "but if you took it, and *did* die—oh, darlin'——"

"In God's name, then, I'll take my chance, an' do the duty that I feel myself called upon to do; and, father dear, just think for a minute—the thrue Christian doesn't merely forgive the injury but returns good for evil; and then, above all things, let us make it our own case. As I said before, if we were as they are—lyin' racked with pain, burnin' with druth, the head splittin', the whole strength gone—not able, maybe, to spake, and hardly able to make a sign—to wake ourselves, to put a drink to our lips;—suppose, I say, we wor lyin' in this state, an' that all the world had deserted us—oh, wouldn't we say that any fellow-crature that had the kindness and the courage to come and aid us—wet our lips, raise our heads, and cheer our sinkin' hearts by the sound of their voice alone—oh, wouldn't we say that it was God that in His mercy put it into their heart to come to us, and relieve us, and save us?"

The mother's feelings gave way at this picture; and she said, addressing her husband——

"Jerry, maybe it's right that she should go, bekaise, afther all, what if it's God Himself that *has* put it into her heart?"

He shook his head, but it was clear that his opposition began to waver.

"Think of the danger," he replied; "think of that. Still if I thought it was God's own will that was setting her to it——"

"Father," she replied, "let us do what is right, and lave the rest to God Himself. Surely you aren't afeard to trust in *Him?* I may take the fever here at home, without goin' at all, and die; for if it's His blessed will that I should die of it, nothing can save me, let me go or stay where I plaise; and if it's not, it matthers little where I go; His divine grace and goodness will take care of me and protect me. It's to God Himself, then, you are trustin' me, an' that ought to satisfy you."

Her parents looked at each other—then at her; and, with tears in their eyes, as if they had been parting with her as for a sacrifice, they gave a consent, in which that humble confidence in the will of God which constitutes the highest order of piety, was blended with a natural yearning and terror of the heart, lest they were allowing her to place herself rashly within the fatal reach of the contagion which prevailed. Having obtained their permission, she lost very little time in preparing for the task she had proposed to execute. A very small portion of meal, and a little milk, together with one or two jugs of gruel, whey, &c., she put under her cloak; and after getting the blessings of her parents, and kissing them and the rest of the family, she departed upon her pious—her sublime mission, followed by the tears and earnest prayers of her whole family.

How anomalous, and full of mysterious and inexplicable impulses is the human heart! Mave Sullivan, who, in volunteering to attend at the contagious beds of the unfortunate Daltons, gave singular and noble proof of the most heroic devotedness, absolutely turned from the common road, on her way to their cabin, rather than meet the funeral of a person who had died of fever, and on one or two occasions kept aloof from men who she knew to be invalids by the fact of their having handkerchiefs about their heads—a proof, in general, that they had been shaved or blistered, while laboring under its severest form.

When she had gone within about a quarter of a mile of her destination, she met two individuals, whose relative positions indicated anything but a state of friendly feeling between them. The persons we allude to were Thomas Dalton and the miserable object of his vengeance, Darby Skinadre. Our readers are aware that Sarah caused Darby to accompany her, for safety, to the cabin of the Daltons, as she feared that, should young Dalton again meet him at the head of his mob, and he in such a furious and unsettled state, the hapless miser might fall a victim to his vengeance. No sooner, therefore, had the meal-monger heard Tom's name mentioned by his father, when about to proceed to prison, than he left a dark corner of the cabin, into which he had slunk, and, passing out, easily disappeared, without being no-

ticed, in the state of excitement which prevailed.

The very name of Tom reminded him that he was in his father's house, and that should he return, and find him there, he might expect little mercy at his hands. Tom, however, amidst the melancholy fatuity under which he labored, never forgot that he had an account to settle with Skinadre. It ran through his unsettled understanding like a sound thread through a damaged web; for ever and anon his thought and recollection would turn to Peggy Murtagh, and the miser's refusal to give her credit for the food she asked of him. During the early part of that day he had gone about with a halter in his hand, as if seeking some particular individual; and whenever he chanced to be questioned as to his object, he always replied with a wild and ferocious chuckle—

"The fellow that killed her!—the fellow that killed her!"

Upon the present occasion, Mave was surprised by meeting him and the miser, whom he must have met accidentally, walking side by side, but in a position which gave fearful intimation of Dalton's purpose respecting him. Around the unfortunate wretch's neck was the halter aforesaid, made into a running noose, while, striding beside him, went his wild and formidable companion, holding the end of it in his hand, and eyeing him from time to time with a look of stupid but determined ferocity. Skinadre's appearance and position were ludicrously and painfully helpless. His face was so pale and thin that it was difficult to see, even in those frightful times of sickness and famine, a countenance from which they were more significantly reflected. He was absolutely shrunk up with terror into half his size, his little thin, corded neck appearing as if it were striving unsuccessfully to work its way down into his trunk, and his small ferret eyes looking about in every direction for some one to extricate him out of the deadly thrall in which he was held. Mave, who had been aware of the enmity which his companion bore him, as well as of its cause, and fearing that the halter was intended to hang the luckless meal-man, probably upon the next tree they came to, did not, as many another female would do, avoid or run away from the madman. On the contrary, she approached him with an expression singularly winning and sweet on her countenance, and in a voice of great kindness, laid her hand upon his arm to arrest his attention, asked him how he did. He paused a moment, and looking upon her with a dull but turbid eye, exclaimed with an insane laugh, pointing at the same time, to the miser—"This is the fellow that killed her—ha, ha, ha, but I have him now—here he is in the noose; in the noose. Ay, an' I swore it, an' there's another, too, that's to get it, but *I* won't *rob* any body, nor join in *that* at all; I'll hang *him* here, though—ha, Darby, I have you now."

As he spoke, poor Skinadre received a chuck of the halter which almost brought his tongue out as far as in the throttling process which we have before described.

"Mave, achora," said he, looking at her after his recovery from the powerful jerk he had just got, "for the sake of heaven, try an' save my life; if you don't he'll never let me out of his hands a livin' man."

"Don't be alarmed, Darby," she replied, "poor Tom won't injure you; so far from that, he'll take the halter from about your neck, an' let you go. Won't you let poor Darby go, Tom?"

"I will," he replied, "after I hang him—ha, ha, ha; 'twas he that killed her; he let her die wid hunger, but now he'll swing for it, ha, ha!"

These words were accompanied by another chuck, which pulled miserable Skinadre almost off his legs.

"Tom, for shame," said Mave, "why would you do sich an unmanly thing with this poor ould crature?—be a man, and let him go."

"Ay, when he's hangin', wid his tongue out, ha, ha, ha; wait till we get to the Rabbit Bank, where there's a tree to be had: I've sworn it, ay, on her very grave too; so good-by, Mave! Come along, Darby."

"Mave, as you expect to have the gates of Heaven opened to your sowl, an' don't lave me," exclaimed the miser with clasped hands.

Mave looked up and down the road, but could perceive no one approach who might render the unfortunate man assistance.

"Tom," said she, "I must insist on your settin' the poor man at liberty; I insist upon it. You cannot, an' you must not take his life in a Christian country; if you do, you know you will be hanged yourself. Let him go immediately."

"Oh, ay," he replied, "you insist, Mave; but I'll tell you what—I'll put Peggy in a coach yet, when I come into my fortune; an' so you'll insist, will you? Jest look at that wrist of yours," he replied, seizing hers, but with gentleness, "and then look at this of mine; an' now will you tell me that you'll insist? Come, Darby, we're bound for the Bank; there's not a beech there but's a hundred feet high, an' that's higher than ever I'll make you swing from. *Your heart bleed for her*, didn't it! but how will you look when I have you facin' the sun, wid your tongue out?"

"Tom," replied the wretch, "I go on my knees to you, an' as you hope, Tom——"

"Hope, you hard-hearted hound! isn't her father's curse upon me? ay, an' in me? Wasn't she destroyed among us? an' you bid me hope. By the broken heart she died of, you'll get a double tag for that," and he was about to drag him on in a state of great violence, when Mave again placed her hand upon his arm, and said—

"I am sure, Tom, you are not ungrateful; I am sure you would not forget a kind act done to poor Peggy, that's gone."

"Peggy!" he replied, "what's about her? gone!—Peggy gone!—*is* she gone?"

"She is gone," replied Mave, "but not lost; an' it is most likely that she is now looking down with displeasure at your conduct and intentions towards this poor man; but listen."

"Are you goin' to spake about Peggy, though?"

"I am, and listen. Do you remember one evenin' in the early part of this summer, it was of a Sunday, there was a crowd about old Brian Murtagh's house, and the report of Peggy's shame had gone abroad and couldn't be kept from people's eyes any longer. She was turned out of her father's house—she was beaten by her brother who swore that he would take the life of the first person, whether man or woman, young or ould, that would give her one hour's shelter. She was turned out, poor, young, misled and mistaken crature, and no one would resave her, for no one durst. There was a young girl then passin' through the village, on her way home, much about Peggy's own age, but barring in *one* respect, neither so good nor so handsome. Poor Peggy ran to that young girl, an' she was goin' to throw herself into her arms, but she stopped. 'I am not worthy,' she said, cryin' bitterly; 'I am not worthy,—but oh, I have no roof to shelter me, for no one dare take me in. What will become of me?'"

While she spoke, Dalton's mind appeared to have been stirred into something like a consciousness of his situation, and his memory to have been brought back, as it were, from the wild and turbulent images, which had impaired its efficacy, to a personal recollection of circumstances that had ceased to affect him. His features, for instance, became more human, his eye more significant of his feeling, and his whole manner more quiet and restored. He looked upon the narrator with an awakened interest, surveyed Darby, as if he scarcely knew how or why he came there, and then sighed deeply. Mave proceeded:

"'I am an outcast now,' said poor Peggy; 'I have neither house nor home; I have no father, no mother, no brother, an' he that I loved, an' said that he loved me, has deserted me. Oh,' said she, 'I have nothing to care for, an' nobody to care for me now, an' what was dearest of all—my good name—is gone: no one will shelter me, although I thought of nothing but my love for Thomas Dalton!' She was scorned, Thomas Dalton, she was insulted and abused by women who knew her innocence and her goodness till she met him; every tongue was against her, every hand was against her, and every door was closed against her; no, not every one—the young woman she spoke to, with tears in her eyes, out of compassion for one so young and unfortunate, brought Peggy Murtagh home, and cried with her, and gave her hope, and consoled her, and pleaded with her father and mother for the poor deluded girl in such a way that they forgot her misfortune and sheltered her; till, after her brother's death, she was taken in again to her own father's house. Now, Tom, wouldn't you like to oblige that girl who was kind to poor Peggy Murtagh?"

"It was in Jerry Sullivan's—it was into your father's house she was taken."

"It was Tom; and the young woman who befriended Peggy Murtagh is now standin' by your side and asks you to let Darby Skinadre go; do, then, let him go, for the sake of that young woman!"

Mave, on concluding, looked up into his face, and saw that his eyes were moist; he then smiled moodily, and, placing his hand upon her head in an approving manner, said—

"You wor always good, Mave—here, set Darby free; but my mind's uneasy; I'm not right, I doubt—nor as I ought to be; but I'll tell you what—I'll go back towards home wid you, if you'll tell me more about Peggy."

"Do so," she replied, delighted at such a proposal; "an' I will tell you many a thing about her; an' you, Darby," she added, turning round to that individual—short, however, as the time was, the exulting, but still trembling usurer was making his way, at full speed, towards his own house; so that she was spared the trouble of advising him, as she had intended, to look to his safety as well as he could. Such was the gentle power with which Mave softened and subdued this ferocious and unsettled young man to her wishes; and, indeed, so forcible in general was her firm but serene enthusiasm, that wherever the necessity for exerting it occurred, it was always crowned with success.

Thomas Dalton as might be expected, swayed by the capricious impulse of his un-

happy derangement, did not accompany her to his father's cabin. When within a few hundred yards of it, he changed his intention, and struck across the country like one who seemed uncertain as to the course he should take. Of late, indeed, he rambled about, sometimes directing, otherwise associating himself with, such mobs as we have described; sometimes wandering, in a solitary manner, through the country at large; and but seldom appearing at home. On the present occasion, he looked at Mave, and said:

"I hate sick people, Mave, an' I won't go home; but, whisper, when you see Peggy Murtagh's father, tell him that I'll have her in a coach, yet, plaise God, an' he'll take the curse off o' me, when he hears it, maybe, an' all will be right."

He then bid her good-bye, turned from the road, and bent his steps in the direction of the Rabbit Bank, on one of the beeches of which he had intended to hang the miser.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Rivalry.

If the truth were known, the triumph which Mave Sullivan achieved over the terror of fever which she felt in common with almost every one in the country around her, was the result of such high-minded devotion, as would have won her a statue in the times of old Greece, when self-sacrifice for human good was appreciated and rewarded. In her case, indeed, the triumph was one of almost unparalleled heroism; for among all the difficulties which she had to overcome, by far the greatest was her own constitutional dread of contagion. It was only on reaching the miserable pest-house in which the Daltons lived, and on witnessing, with her own eyes, the clammy atmosphere which, in the shape of dark heavy smoke, was oozing in all directions from its roof, that she became conscious of the almost fatal step that she was about to take, and the terrible test of Christian duty and exalted affection, to which she was in the act of subjecting herself.

On arriving at the door, and when about to enter, even the resolution she had come to, and the lofty principle of trust in God, on which it rested, were scarcely able to support her against the host of constitutional terrors, which, for a moment, rushed upon her heart. The great act of self-sacrifice, as it may almost be termed, which she was about to perform, became so diminished in her imagination, that all sense of its virtue passed away; and instead of gaining strength from a consciousness of the pure and unselfish motive by which she was actuated, she began to contemplate her conduct as the result of a rash and unjustifiable presumption on the providence of God, and a wanton exposure of the life he had given her. She felt herself tremble; her heart palpitated, and for a minute or two her whole soul became filled with a tumultuous and indistinct perception of all she had proposed to do, as well as of everything about her. Gradually, however, this state of feeling cleared away—by and by the purity and Christian principle that were involved in her conduct, came to her relief.

"What," she asked herself, "if they should die without assistance? In God's name, and with his strength to aid me, I will run all risks, and fulfil the task I have taken upon me to do. May he support and protect me through it."

Thus resolved, and thus fortified, she entered the gloomy scene of sickness and contagion.

There were but four persons within: that is to say, her lover, his sister Nancy, Mary the invalid, and Sarah M'Gowan. Nancy and her brother were now awake, and poor Mary occupied her father's arm-chair, in which she sat with her head reclined upon the back of it, somewhat, indeed, after his own fashion—and Sarah opposite young Con's bed, having her eyes fixed, with a mournful expression, on his pale and almost deathlike countenance. Mave's appearance occasioned the whole party to feel much surprise—and Mary rose from her arm-chair, and greeting her affectionately, said—

"I cannot welcome you, dear Mave, to sich a place as this—and indeed I am sorry you came to see us—for I needn't tell you what I'd feel—what we'd *all* feel," and here she looked quickly, but with the slightest possible significance at her brother, "if anything happened you in consequence; which may God forbid! How are you all at home?"

"We are all free from sickness, thank God," said Mave, whom the presence of Sarah caused to blush deeply; "but how are you all here? I am sorry to find that poor Nancy is ill—and that Con has got a relapse."

She turned her eyes upon him as she spoke, and, on contemplating his languid and sickly countenance, she could only, by a great effort, repress her tears.

"Do not come near us, dear Mave," said Dalton, "and, indeed, it was wrong to come here at all."

"God bless you, an' guard you, Mave," said Nancy, "an' we feel your goodness; but

as Con says, it was wrong to put yourself in the way of danger. For God's sake, and as you hope to escape this terrible sickness, lave the house at wanst. We're sensible of your kindness—but lave us—lave us—for every minute you stop, may be death to you."

Sarah, who had never yet spoken to Mave, turned her black mellow eyes from her to her lover, and from him to her alternately. She then dropped them for a time on the ground, and again looked round her with something like melancholy impatience. Her complexion was high and flushed, and her eyes sparkled with unaccustomed brilliancy.

"It's not right two people should run sich risk on our account," said Con, looking towards Sarah; "here's a young woman who has come to nurse, tend and take care of us, for which, may God bless her, and protect her!—it's Sarah M'Gowan, Donnel Dhu's daughter."

"Think of Mave Sullivan," said Sarah—"think only of Mave Sullivan—*she's* in danger—ha—but as for me—suppose I should take the fever and die?"

"May God forbid, poor girl," exclaimed Con; "it would lave us all a sad heart. Dear Mave don't stop here—every minute is dangerous."

Sarah went over to the bedside, and putting her hand gently upon his forehead, said—

"Don't spake to pity me—I can't bear pity; anything at all but pity from *you*. Say you don't care what becomes of me, or whether I die or not—but don't pity me."

It is extremely difficult to describe Sarah's appearance and state of mind as she spoke this. Her manner towards Con was replete with tenderness, and the most earnest and anxious interest, while at the same time there ran through her voice a tone of bitter feeling, an evident consciousness of something that pressed strongly on her heart, which gave a marked and startling character to her language.

Mave for a moment forgot everything but the interest which Sarah, and the mention of her, excited. She turned gently round from Mary, who had been speaking to her, and fixing her eyes on Sarah, examined her with pardonable curiosity, from head to foot; nor will she be blamed, we trust, if, even then and there, the scrutiny was not less close, in consequence of it having been known to her that in point of beauty, and symmetry of figure, they had stood towards each other, for some time past, in the character of rivals. Sarah who had on, without stockings, a pair of small slippers, a good deal the worse for wear, had risen from the bed side, and now stood near the fire, directly opposite the only little window in the house, and, consequently, in the best light it afforded. Mave's glance, though rapid, was comprehensive; but she felt it was sufficient: the generous girl, on contemplating the wild grace and natural elegance of Sarah's figure, and the singular beauty and wonderful animation of her features, instantly, in her own mind, surrendered all claim to competition, and admitted to herself that Sarah was, without exception, the most perfectly beautiful girl she ever seen. Her last words, too, and the striking tone in which they were spoken, arrested her attention still more; so that she passed naturally from the examination of her person to the purport of her language.

We trust that our readers know enough of human nature, to understand that this examination of Sarah, upon the part of Mave Sullivan, was altogether an involuntary act, and one which occurred in less time than we have taken to write any one of the lines in which it is described.

Mave, who perceived at once that the words of Sarah were burdened by some peculiar distress, could not prevent her admiration from turning into pity without exactly knowing why; but in consequence of what Sarah had just said, she feared to express it either by word or look, lest she might occasion her unnecessary pain. She consequently, after a slight pause, replied to her lover—

"You must not blame me, dear Con, for being here. I came to give whatever poor attendance I could to Nancy here, and to sich of you as want it, while you're sick. I came, indeed, to stay and nurse you all, if you will let me; an' you won't be sorry to hear it, in spite of all that has happened, that I have the consent of my father an' mother for so doin'."

A faint smile of satisfaction lit up her lover's features, but this was soon overshadowed by his apprehension for her safety.

Sarah, who had for about a half minute been examining Mave on *her* part, now started, and exclaimed with flashing eyes, and we may add, a bursting and distracted heart—

"Well, Mave Sullivan, I have often seen you, but never so well as now. You have goodness an' truth in your face. Oh, it's a purty face—a lovely face. But why do you state a falsehood *here?*—for what you've just said is false; I know it."

Mave started, and in a moment her pale face and neck were suffused by one burning blush, at the idea of such an imputation. She looked around her, as if enquiring from all those who were present the nature of the

falsehood attributed to her; and then with a calm but firm eye, she asked Sarah what she could mean by such language.

"You're afther sayin'," replied Sarah, "that you're come here to nurse Nancy there. Now that's not true, and you know it isn't. You come here to nurse young Con Dalton; and you came to nurse him, bekaise you love him. No, I don't blame you for that, but I do for not saying so, without fear or disguise—for I hate both."

"That wouldn't be altogether true either," replied Mave, "if I said so; for I *did* come to nurse Nancy, and any others of the family that might stand in need of it. As to Con, I'm neither ashamed to love him, nor afeard to acknowledge it; and I had no notion of statin' a falsehood when I said what I did. I tell you, then, Sarah M'Gowan, that you've done me injustice. If there appeared to be a falsehood in my words, there was none in my heart."

"That's truth; I know, I feel that that's truth," replied Sarah, quickly; "but oh, how wrong I am," she exclaimed, "to mention that or anything else here that might distract *him!* Ah," she proceeded, addressing Mave, "I did you injustice—I feel I did, but don't be angry with me, for I acknowledge it."

"Why should I be angry with you?" replied Mave, "you only spoke what you thought, an' this, by all accounts, is what you always do."

"Let us talk as little as possible here," replied Sarah, the sole absorbing object of whose existence lay in Dalton's recovery. "I will speak to you on your way home, but not here—not here;" and while uttering the last words she pointed to Dalton, to intimate that further conversation might disturb him.

"Dear Mave," observed Mary, now rising from her chair, "you are stayin' too long; oh, for God's sake, don't stop; you can't dhrame of the danger you're in."

"But," replied Mave, calmly, "you know, Mary, that I came to stop and to do whatever I can do till the family comes round. You are too feeble to undertake anything, and might only get into a relapse if you attempted it."

"But, then we have Sarah M'Gowan," she replied, "who came, as few would—none livin' this day, I think, barrin' yourself and her—to stay with us, and to do anything that she can do for us all. May God for ever bless her! for short as the time is, I think she has saved some of our lives—Condy's without a doubt."

Mave turned towards Sarah, and, as she looked upon her, the tears started to her eyes.

"Sarah M'Gowan," said she, "you are fond of truth, an' you are right; I can't find words to thank you for doin' what you did. God bless and reward you!"

She extended her hand as she spoke, but Sarah put it back. "No," said she, indignantly, "never from you; above all that's livin' don't *you* thank me. You, you, why you an't his wife yet," she exclaimed, in a suppressed voice of deep agitation, "an maybe you never will. You don't know what may happen—you don't know——"

She immediately seemed to recollect something that operated as a motive to restrain any exhibition of strong feeling or passion on her part, for all at once she composed herself, and sitting down, merely said:—

"Mave Sullivan, I'm glad you love truth, and I believe you do; I can't, then, resave any thanks from you, nor I won't; an' I would tell you why, any place but here."

"I don't at all understand you," replied Mave; "but for your care and attention to him, I'm sure it's no harm to say, may God reward you! I will never forget it to you."

"While I have life," said Dalton feebly, and fixing his eyes upon Sarah's face, "I, for one, won't forget her kindness."

"Kindness!" she re-echoed—"ha, ha!—well, it's no matter—it's no matter!"

"She saved my life, Mave; I was lyin' here, and hadn't even a drink of water, and there was no one else in the house: Mary, there, was out, an' poor Nancy was ravin' an' ragin' with illness and pain; but *she*, Sarah, was here to settle us, to attend us, to get us a drink whenever we wanted it—to raise us up, an' to put it to our lips, an' to let us down with as little pain as possible. Oh, how could I forget all this? Dear, dear Sarah, how could I forget this if I was to live a thousand years?"

Con's face, while he spoke, became animated with the enthusiasm of the feeling to which he gave utterance, and, as his eyes were fixed on Sarah with a suitable expression, there appeared to be a warmth of emotion in his whole manner which a sanguine person might probably interpret in something beyond gratitude.

Sarah, after he had concluded, looked upon him with a long, earnest, but uncertain gaze, so long, indeed, and so intensely penetrating was it, that the whole energy of her character might, for a time, be read clearly in the singular expression of her eyes. It was evident that her thoughts were fluttering between pleasure and pain, cheerfulness and gloom; but at length her countenance lost, by degrees, its earnest character, the alternate play of light and shadow over it ceased, and the gaze changed, almost imperceptibly, into one of settled abstraction.

"It might be," she said, as if thinking aloud—"it might be—but time will tell; and, in the manetime, everything must be done fairly—fairly; still, if it shouldn't come to pass—if it should *not*—it would be betther if I had never been born; but it may be, an' time will tell."

Mave had watched her countenance closely, and without being able to discover the nature of the conflict that appeared in it, she went over, and placing her hand gently upon Sarah's arm, exclaimed—

"Don't blame me for what I'm goin' to say, Sarah—if you'll let me call you Sarah; but the truth is, I see that your mind is troubled. I wish to God I could remove that trouble, or that any one here could! I am sure they all would, as willingly as myself."

"She *is* troubled," said Mary; "I know by her manner that there's something distressing on her mind. Any earthly thing that we could do to relieve her we would; but I asked her, and she wouldn't tell me."

It is likely that Mary's kindness, and especially Mave's, so gently, but so sincerely expressed, touched her as they spoke. She made no reply, however, but approached Mave with a slight smile on her face, her lips compressed, and her eyes, which were fixed and brilliant, floating in something that looked like moisture, and which might as well have been occasioned by the glow of anger as the impulse of a softer emotion, or perhaps—and this might be nearer the truth—as a conflict between the two states of feeling. For some moments she looked into Mave's very eyes, and after a little, she seemed to regain her composure, and sat down without speaking. There was a slight pause occasioned by the expectation that she had been about to reply, during which Dalton's eyes were fixed upon her. In her evident distress, she looked upon him. Their eyes met, and the revelation that that glance of anguish, on the part of Sarah, gave to him, disclosed the secret.

"Oh, my God!" he exclaimed, involuntarily and unconsciously, "is this possible?"

Sarah felt that the discovery had been made by him at last; and seeing that all their eyes were still upon her, she rose up, and approaching Mave, said—

"It is true, Mave Sullivan. I am troubled—Mary, I am troubled;" and as she uttered the words, a blush so deep and so beautiful spread itself over her face and neck, that the very females present were, for the moment, lost in admiration of her radiant youth and loveliness. Dalton's eyes were still upon her, and after a little time, he said—

"Sarah, come to me."

She went to his bedside, and kneeling, bent her exquisite figure over him; and as her dark brilliant eyes looked into his, he felt the fragrance of her breath mingling with his own.

"What is it?" said she.

"You are too near me," said he.

"Ah, I feel I am," she said, shaking her head.

"I mane," he added, "for your own safety. Give me your hand, dear Sarah."

He took her hand, and raising himself a little on his right side, he looked upon her again; and as he did so, she felt a few warm tears falling upon it.

"Now," he said, "lay me down again, Sarah."

A few moments of ecstatic tumult, in which Sarah was unconscious of anything about her, passed. She then rose, and sitting down on the little stool, she wept for some minutes in silence. During this quiet paroxysm no one spoke; but when Dalton turned his eyes upon Mave Sullivan, she was pale as ashes.

Mary, who had noticed nothing particular in the incidents just related, now urged Mave to depart; and the latter, on exchanging glances with Dalton, could perceive that a feeble hectic had overspread his face. She looked on him earnestly for a moment, then paused as if in thought, and going round to his bedside, knelt down, and taking his hand, said—

"Con, if there is any earthly thing that I can do to give ease and comfort to your mind, I am ready to do it. If it would relieve you, forget that you ever saw me, or ever—ever—knew me at all. Suppose I am not living—that I am dead. I say this, dear Con, to relieve you from any pain or distress of mind that you *may* feel on my account. Believe me, I feel everything for you, an' nothing now for myself. Whatever you do, I tell you that a harsh word or thought from me you will never have."

Mave, while she spoke, did not shed a tear; nor was her calm, sweet voice indicative of any extraordinary emotion. Sarah, who had been weeping until the other began to speak, now rose up, and approaching Mave, said—

"Go, Mave Sullivan—go out of this dangerous house; and you, Condy Dalton, heed not what she has said. Mave Sullivan, I think I understand your words, an' they make me ashamed of myself, an' of the thoughts that have been troublin' me. Oh, what am I when compared to you?—nothing nothing."

Mave had, on entering, deposited the little matters she had brought for their comfort;

and Mary now came over, and placing her hand on her shoulder, said:

"Sarah is right, dear Mave; for God's sake do not stay here. Oh, think—only think if you tuck this faver, an' that anything happened you."

"Come," said Sarah, "leave this dangerous place; I will see you part of the way home—you can do nothing here that I won't do, and everything that I can do will be done."

Her lover's eyes had been fixed upon her, and with a feeble voice—for the agitation had exhausted him—he added his solicitations for her departure to theirs.

"I hope I will soon be better, dear Mave, and able to get up too—but may God bless you and take care of you till then!"

Mave again went round and took his hand, on which he felt a few tears fall.

"I came here, dear Con," she said, "to take care of you all, and why need I be ashamed to say so—to do all I could for yourself. Sarah here wishes me to spake the truth, an' why shouldn't I? Think of my words then, Con, and don't let me or the thoughts of me occasion you one moment's unhappiness. To see you happy is all the wish I have in this world."

She then bade them an affectionate farewell, and was about to take her departure, when Sarah, who had been musing for a moment, went to Dalton, and having knelt on one knee, was about to speak, and to speak, as was evident from her manner, with great earnestness, when she suddenly restrained herself, clasped her hands with a vehement action, looked distractedly from him to Mave, and then suddenly rising, took Mave's hand, and said:

"Come away—it's dangerous to stop where this fever is—*you* ought to be careful of yourself—*you* have friends that loves you, and that would feel for you if you were gone. You have a kind good father,—a lovin' mother—a lovin' mother, that you could turn to, an' may turn to, if ever you should have a sore heart—a mother—oh, that blessed word—what wouldn't I give to say that I have a mother! Many an' outrage—many a wild fit of passion—many a harsh word, too—oh, what mightn't I be now if I had a mother? All the world thinks I have a bad heart—that I'm without feelin'; but, indeed, Mave Sullivan, I'm not without feelin', an' I don't think I have a bad heart."

"You have not a bad heart," replied Mave, taking her hand; "no one, dear Sarah, could look into your face and say so; no, but I think so far from that, your heart is both kind and generous."

"I hope so," she replied, "I hope I have—now come you and leave this dangerous house; besides I have something to say to you."

Mave and she proceeded along the old causeway that led to the cabin, and having got out upon the open road, Sarah stood.

"Now, Mave Sullivan," said she, "listen,—you do me only justice to say that I love truth, an' hate a lie, or consalement of any kind. I ax you now this—you discovered awhile ago that I love Condy Dalton? Isn't that thrue?"

"I wasn't altogether certain," replied Mave, "but I thought I did—an' now I think you do love him."

"I do love him—oh, I do—an' why as you said, should I be ashamed of it?—ay, an' it was my intention to tell you so the first time I'd see you, an' to give you fair notice that I did, an' that I'd have nothing undone to win him from you."

"Well," replied the other, "this is open and honest, at all events."

"That was my intention," pursued Sarah, "an' I had, for a short time, other thoughts; ay, an' worse thoughts; my father was pursuadin' me—but I can't spake on *that*—for he has my promise not to do so. Oh, I'm nothing, dear Mave—nothing at all to you. I can't forget your words awhile ago—bekaise I knew what you meant at the time, when you said to Con, 'any earthly thing that I can do to give aise and comfort to your mind I am ready to do it. If it would relieve you, forget that you ever saw me or ever knew me.' Now, Mave, I've confessed to you that I love Con Dalton—but I tell you not to trouble your heart by any thoughts of me; my mind's made up as to what I'll do—don't fear me, I'll never cross you here. I'm a lonely creature," she proceeded, bursting into bitter tears; "I'm without friends and relations, or any one that cares at all about me——"

"Don't say so," replied Mave, "I care about you, an' it's only now that people is beginning to know you—but that's not all, Sarah, if it's any consolation to you to know it—*know* it—Condy Dalton loves you—ay, loves you, Sarah M'Gowan—you may take my word for that—I am certain this day that what I say is true."

"Loves me!" she exclaimed.

"Loves you," repeated Mave, "is the word, an' I have said it."

"I didn't suspect that when I spoke," she replied.

Each looked upon the other, and both as they stood were as pale as death itself. At length Mave spoke.

"I have one only thought, Sarah, an' that is how to make *him* happy; to see him happy."

"I can scarcely spake," replied Sarah; "I wouldn't know what to say if I did. I'm all confused; Mave, dear, forgive me!"

"God bless you," replied Mave, "for you are truth an' honesty itself. God bless an' you, make *him* happy! Good-bye, dear Sarah."

She put her hand into Sarah's and felt that it trembled excessively—but Sarah was utterly passive; she did not even return the pressure which she had received, and when Mave departed, she was standing in a reverie, incapable of thought, deadly pale, and perfectly motionless.

CHAPTER XXV.

Sarah Without Hope.

How Sarah returned to Dalton's cabin she herself knew not. Such was the tumult which the communication then made to her by Mave, had occasioned in her mind, that the scene which had just taken place, altogether appeared to her excited spirit like a troubled dream, whose impressions were too unreal and deceptive to be depended on for a moment. The reaction from the passive state in which Mave had left her, was, to a temperament like her's, perfectly overwhelming. Her pulse beat high, her cheek burned, and her eye flashed with more than its usual fire and overpowering brilliancy, and, with the exception of one impression alone, all her thoughts were so rapid and indistinct as to resemble the careering clouds which fly in tumult and confusion along the troubled sky, with nothing stationary but the sun far above, and which, in this case, might be said to resemble the bright conviction of Dalton's love for her, that Mave's assurance had left behind it. On re-entering the cabin, without being properly conscious of what she either did or said, she once more knelt by the side of Dalton's bed, and hastily taking his unresisting hand, was about to speak; but a difficulty how to shape her language held her in a painful and troubled suspense for some moments, during which Dalton could plainly perceive the excitement, or rather rapture, by which she was actuated. At length a gush of hot and burning tears enabled her to speak, and she said:

"Con Dalton—dear Con, is it true? can it be true?—oh, no—no—but, then, she says it—is it true that you like me—like me!—no, no—that word is too wake—is it true that you *love* me? but no—it can't be—there never was so much happiness intended for me; and then, if it should be true—oh, if it was possible, how will I bear it? what will I do? what—is to be the consequence? for my love for you is beyond all belief—beyond all that tongue can tell. I can't stand this struggle—my head is giddy—I scarcely know what I'm sayin', or is it a dhrame that I'll waken from, and find it false—false?"

Dalton pressed her hand, and looking tenderly upon her face, replied:

"Dear Sarah, forgive me; your dhrame is both thrue and false. It is true that I like you—that I pity you; but you forbid me to say that—well it is true, I say, that I like you; but I can't say more. The only girl I love in the sense you mane, is Mave Sullivan. I could not tell you an untruth, Sarah; nor don't desave yourself. I *like you*, but I *love her*."

She started up, and in an instant dashed the tears from her cheeks; after which she said:

"I am glad to know it; you have said the truth—the bitther truth; ay, bitther it will prove, Condy Dalton, to more than me. My happiness in this world is now over forever. I never was happy; an' its clear that the doom is against me; I never will be happy. I am now free to act as I like. No matther what I do, it can't make me feel more than I feel now. I might take a life; ay, twenty, an' I couldn't feel more miserable than I am. Then, what is there to prevent me from workin' out my own will, an' doin' what my father wishes? I may make myself worse an' guiltier; but unhappier I cannot be. That poor, weak hope was all I had in this world; but that is gone; and I have no other hope now."

"Compose yourself, dear Sarah; calm yourself," said Dalton.

"Don't call me *dear* Sarah," she replied; "you were wrong ever to do so. Oh, why was I born! an' what has this world an' this life been to me but hardship an' sorrow? But still," she added, drawing herself up, "I will let you all see what pride can do. I now know my fate, an' what I must suffer: an' if one tear would gain your love, I wouldn't shed it—never, never."

"Sarah," said Mary, in a soothing voice, "I hope you won't blame poor Con. You don't know maybe that himself an' Mave Sullivan has loved one another ever since they were—"

"No more about Mave Sullivan," she replied, almost fiercely; "leave her to me. As for me, I'll not brake my word, either for good or evil; I was never the one to do an ungenerous—an ungenerous—no—" She paused, however, as if struck by some latent conviction, and, in a panting voice, she added, "I must lave you for a while, but I will be

back in an hour or two; oh, yes I will; an' in the mane time, Mary, anything that is to be done, you can do it for me till I come agin. Mave Sullivan! Mave Sullivan! lave Mave Sullivan to me!"

She then threw an humble garment about her, and in a few minutes was on her way to have an interview with her father. On reaching home, she found that he had arrived only a few minutes before her; and to her surprise he expressed something like good humor, or, perhaps, gratification at her presence there. On looking into her face more closely, however, he had little trouble in perceiving that something extraordinary had disturbed her. He then glanced at Nelly, who, as usual, sat gloomily by the fire, knitting her brows and groaning with suppressed ill-temper as she had been in the habit of doing, ever since she suspected that Donnel had made a certain disclosure, connecting with her, to Sarah.

"Well," said he, "has there been another battle? have you been *ding dust* at it as usual? What's wrong, Sally? eh? Did it go to blows wid you, for you looked raised?"

"You're all out of it," replied Nelly; "her blood's up, now, an' I'm not prepared for a sudden death. She's dangerous this minute, an' I'll take care of her. Blessed man, look at her eyes."

She repeated these words with that kind of low, dogged ridicule and scorn which so frequently accompany stupid and wanton brutality; and which are, besides, provoking, almost beyond endurance, when the mind is chafed by a consideration of an exciting nature.

Sarah flew like lightning to the old knife, which we have already mentioned, and, snatching it from the shelf of the dresser, on which it lay, exclaimed:

"I have now no earthly thought, nor any hope of good in this world, to keep my hand from evil; an' for all ever you made me suffer, take this—"

Her father had not yet sat down, and it was, indeed, well that he had not—for it required all his activity and strength united, to intercept the meditated blow, by seizing his daughter's arm.

"Sarah," said he, "what is this? are you mad, you murdhering jade, to attempt the vagabond's life? for she *is* a vagabond, and an ill-tongued vagabond. Why do *you* provoke the girl by sich language, you double-distilled ould sthrap? you do nothin' but growl an' snarl, an' curse, an' pray—ay, pray, from mornin' to night, in sich a way, that the very devil himself could not bear you, or live wid you. Begone out o' this, or I'll let her at you, an' I'll engage she'll give you what'll settle you."

Nelly rose, and putting on her cloak went out.

"I'm goin'," she replied, looking at, and addressing the Prophet; "an' praise God, before long I'll have the best wish o' my heart fulfilled, by seein' you hanged; but, until then, may my curse, an' the curse o' God light on you and pursue you. I know you have tould her everything, or she wouldn't act towards me as she has done of late."

Sarah stood like the Pythoness, in a kind of savage beauty, with the knife firmly grasped in her hand.

"I'm glad she's gone," she said; "but it is not her, father, that I ought to raise my hand against."

"Who then, Sarah?" he asked, with something like surprise.

"You asked me," she proceeded, "to assist in a plan to have Mave Sullivan carried off by young Dick o' the Grange—I'm now ready for anything, and I'll do it. This world, father, has nothing good or happy in it for me—now I'll be aquil to it; if it gives me nothing good, it'll get nothing out of me. I'll give it blow for blow; kindness, good fortune, if it was to happen—but it can't now—would soften me; but I know, an' I feel that ill-treatment, crosses, disappointments, an' want of all hope in this life, has made, an' will make me a devil—ay, an' oh! what a different girl I might be this day!"

"What has vexed you?" asked the father "for I see that something has."

"Isn't it a cruel thing," she proceeded, without seeming to have attended to him; "isn't it a cruel thing to think that every one you see about you has *some* happiness except yourself; an' that your heart is burstin, an' your brain burnin', an' no relief for you: no one point to turn to, for consolation—but everything dark and dismal, and fiery about you!"

"I feel all this myself," said the Prophet; "so, don't be disheartened, Sarah; in the coorse o' time your heart will get so hardened that you'll laugh at the world—ay, at all that's either bad or good in it, as I do."

"I never wish to come to that state," she replied; "an' you never felt what I feel—you never had that much of what was *good* in your heart. No," she proceeded, "sooner than come to that state—that is, to your state—I'd put this knife into my heart. You, father, never loved one of your own kind yet."

"Didn't I?" he replied, while his eyes lightened into a glare like those of a provoked

tiger; "ay, I loved *one* of our kind—of *your* kind; loved her—ay, an' was happy wid her—oh, how happy. Ah, Sarah M'Gowan, an' I loved my fellow-creatures *then*, too, like a fool as I was: loved, ay, loved; an' she that I so loved proved false to me—proved an adulteress; an' I tell you now, that it may harden your heart against the world, that that woman—my wife—that I so loved, an' that so disgraced me, was your mother."

"It's a lie—it's as false as the devil himself," she replied, turning round quickly, and looking him with frantic vehemence of manner in the face. "*My* mother never did what you say. She's now in her grave, an' can't speak for or defend herself; but if I were to stand here till judgment day, I'd say it was false. You were misled or mistaken, or your own bad, suspicious nature made you do her wrong; an' even if it was thrue—which it is *not*, but false as hell—why would you crush and wring her daughter's heart by a knowledge of it? Couldn't you let me get through the short but bitther passage of life that's before me, without addin' this to the other thoughts that's distractin' me?"

"I did it, as I said," he replied, "to make you harden your heart, an' to prevent you from puttin' any trust in the world, or expectin' anything either of thruth or goodness from it."

She started, as if some new light had broken in upon her, and turning to him, said—

"Maybe I undherstand you, father—I hope I do. Oh, could it be that you wor wanst—a—a—a better man—a man that had a heart for fellow-creatures, and cared for them? I'm lookin' into my own heart now, and I don't doubt but I might be brought to the same state yet. Ha, that's terrible to think of; but again, I can't believe it. Father, you can stoop to lies an' falsity—that I could not do; but no matther; you wor wanst a good man, maybe. Am I right?"

The Prophet turned round, and fixing his eyes upon his daughter, they stood each gazing upon the other for some time. He then looked for a moment into the ground, after which he sat down upon a stool, and covering his face with both his hands, remained in that position for two or three minutes.

"Am I right, father?" she repeated.

He raised his eyes, and looking upon her with his usual composure, replied—

"No—you are wrong—you are very wrong. When I was a light-hearted, affectionate boy, playing with my brothers and sisters, I was a villain. When I grew into youth, Sarah, an' thought every one full of honesty an' truth, an' the world all kindness, an' nothin' about me but goodness, an' generosity, an' affection, I was, of coorse, a villain. When I loved the risin' sun—when I looked upon the stars of heaven with a wonderin' and happy heart—when the dawn of mornin' and the last light of the summer evening filled me with joy, and made me love every one and everything about me—the trees, the runnin' rivers, the green fields, and all that God—ha, what am I sayin'?—I was a villain. When I loved an' married your mother, an' when she—but no matther—when all these things happened, I was, I say, a villain; but now that things is changed for the betther, I am an honest man!"

"Father, there is good in you yet," she said, as her eyes sparkled in the very depth of her excitement, with a hopeful animation that had its source in a noble and exalted benevolence, "you're not lost."

"Don't I say," he replied, with a cold and bitter sneer, "that I am an honest man."

"Ah," she replied, "that's gone too, then—look where I will, everything's dark—no hope—no hope of *any* kind; but no matther now; since I can't do betther, I'll make them think o' me: aye, an' feel me too. Come, then, what have you to say to me?"

"Let us have a walk, then," replied her father. "There is a weeny glimpse of sunshine, for a wondher. You look heated—your face is flushed too, very much, an' the walk will cool you a little."

"I know my face is flushed," she replied; "for I feel it burnin', an' so is my head; I have a pain in it, and a pain in the small o' my back too."

"Well, come," he continued, "and a walk will be of service to you."

They then went out in the direction of the Rabbit Bank, the Prophet, during their walk, availing himself of her evident excitement to draw from her the history of its origin. Such a task, indeed, was easily accomplished, for this singular creature, in whom love of truth, as well as a detestation of all falsehood and subterfuge, seemed to have been a moral instinct, at once disclosed to him the state of her affections, and, indeed, all that the reader already knows of her love for Dalton, and her rivalry with Mave Sullivan. These circumstances were such precisely as he could have wished for, and our readers need scarcely be told that he failed not to aggravate her jealousy of Mave, nor to suggest to her the necessity on her part, if she possessed either pride or spirit, to prevent her union with Dalton by every means in her power.

"I'll do it," she replied, "I'll do it; to be

sure I feel it's not right, an' if I had one single hope in this world, I'd scorn it; but I'm now desperate; I tried to be good, but I'm only a cobweb before the wind—everything is against me, an' I think I'm like some one that never had a guardian angel to take care of them."

The Prophet then gave her a detailed account of their plan for carrying away Mave Sullivan, and of his own subsequent intentions in life.

"We have more than one iron in the fire," he proceeded, "an' as soon as everything comes off right, and to our wishes, we'll not lose a single hour in going to America."

"I didn't think," said Sarah, "that Dalton ever murdered Sullivan till I heard him confess it; but I can well understand it now. He was hasty, father, and did it in a passion, but it's himself that has a good heart. Father, don't blame me for what I say, but I'd rather be that pious, affectionate ould man, wid his murdher on his head, than you in the state you're in. An' that's thrue, I must turn back and go to them—I'm too long away; still, something ails me—I'm all sickish, my head and back especially."

"Go home to your own place," he replied; "maybe it's the *sickness* you're takin."

"Oh, no," she replied, "I felt this way once or twice before, an' I know it'll go off me—good-bye."

"Good-bye, Sarah, an' remember, honor bright and saicresy."

"Saicresy, father, I grant you, but never honor bright for me again. It's the world that makes me do it—the wicked, dark, cruel world, that has me as I am, widout a livin' heart to love me—that's what makes me do it."

They then separated, he pursuing his way to Dick o' the Grange's, and she to the miserable cabin of the Daltons. They had not gone far, however, when she returned, and calling after him, said—

"I have thought it over again, and won't promise altogether till I see you again."

"Are you goin' back o' your word so soon!" he asked, with a kind of sarcastic sneer. "I thought you never broke your word, Sarah."

She paused, and after looking about her as if in perplexity, she turned on her heel, and proceeded in silence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Pedlar Runs a Close Risk of the Stocks.

NELLY's suspicions, apparently well founded as they had been, were removed from the Prophet, not so much by the disclosure to her and Sarah, of his having been so long cognizant of Sullivan's murder by Dalton, as by that unhappy man's own confession of the crime. Still, in spite of all that had yet happened, she could not divest herself of an impression that something dark and guilty was associated with the Tobacco-box; an impression which was strengthened by her own recollections of certain incidents that occurred upon a particular night, much about the time of Sullivan's disappearance. Her memory, however, being better as to facts than to time, was such as prevented her from determining whether the incidents alluded to had occurred previous to Sullivan's murder, or afterwards. There remained, however, just enough of suspicion to torment her own mind, without enabling her to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion as to Donnel's positive guilt, arising from the mysterious incidents in question. A kind of awakened conscience, too, resulting not from any principle of true repentance, but from superstitious alarm and a conviction that the Prophet had communicated to Sarah a certain secret connected with her, which she dreaded so much to have known, had for some time past rendered her whole life a singular compound of weak terror, ill-temper, gloom, and a kind of conditional repentance, which depended altogether upon the fact of her secret being known. In this mood it was that she left the cabin as we have described.

"I'm not fit to die," she said to herself, after she had gone—"an' that's the *second* offer for my life she has made. Any way, it's the best of my play to have them; an' above all, to keep away from *her*. That's the second attempt; and I know to a certainty, that if she makes a *third* one, it'll do for me. Oh, no doubt of that—the third time's always the charm!—an' into my heart that unlucky knife 'ill go, if she ever tries it a third time! They tell me," she proceeded, soliloquizing, as she was in the habit of doing, "that the inquest is to be held in a day or two, an' that the crowner was only unweil a trifle, and hadn't the sickness afther all. No matther—not all the wather in the sky 'ud clear my mind that there's not villany joined with that Tobaccy-box, though where it could go, or what could come of it (barrin' the devil himself or the fairies tuck it,) I don't know."

So far as concerned the coroner, the rumor of his having caught the prevailing typhus was not founded on fact. A short indisposition, arising from a cold caught by a severe wetting, but by no means of a serious or alarming nature, was his only malady; and when the day to which the inquest had been

postponed had arrived, he was sufficiently recovered to conduct that important investigation. A very large crowd was assembled upon the occasion, and a deep interest prevailed throughout that part of the country. The circumstances, however, did not, as it happened, admit of any particular difficulty. Jerry Sullivan and his friends attended as was their duty, in order to give evidence touching the identity of the body. This, however, was a matter of peculiar difficulty. On disinterring the remains, it was found that the clothes worn at the time of the murder had not been buried with them—in other words, that the body had been stripped of all but the under garment, previous to its interment. The evidence, nevertheless, of the Black Prophet and of Red Rody was conclusive. The truth, however, of most if not of all the details, but not of the fact itself, was denied by old Dalton, who had sufficiently recovered from his illness, to be present at the investigation. The circumstances deposed to by the two witnesses were sufficiently strong and home to establish the fact against him, although he impugned the details as we have stated, but admitted that after a hard battle with weighty sticks, he did kill Sullivan with an unlucky blow, and left him dead in a corner of the field for a short time near the Grey Stone. He said that he did not bury the body, but that he carried it soon afterwards from the field in which the unhappy crime had been committed, to the roadside, where he laid it for a time, in order to procure assistance. He said he then changed his mind, and having become afraid to communicate the unhappy accident to any of the neighbors, he fled in great terror across the adjoining mountains, where he wandered nearly frantic until the approach of day-break the next morning. He then felt himself seized with an uncontrollable anxiety to return to the scene of conflict, which he did, and found, not much to his surprise indeed, that the body had been removed, for he supposed at the time that Sullivan's friends must have brought it home. This he declared was the truth, neither more nor less, and he concluded by solemnly stating, that he knew no more than the child unborn what had become of the body, or how it disappeared. He also acknowledged that he was very much intoxicated at the time of the quarrel, and that were it not for the shock he received by perceiving that the man was dead, he thought he would not have had anything beyond a confused and indistinct recollection of the circumstance at all. He admitted also that he had threatened Sullivan in the market, and followed him closely for the purpose of beating him, but maintained that the fatal blow was not given with an intention of taking his life.

The fact, on the contrary, that the body had been privately buried and stripped before interment, was corroborated by the circumstance of Sullivan's body-coat having been found the next morning in a torn and bloody state, together with his great coat and hat; but indeed, the impression upon the minds of many was, that Dalton's version of the circumstances was got up for the purpose of giving to what was looked upon as a deliberate assassination, the character of simple homicide or manslaughter, so as that he might escape the capital felony, and come off triumphantly by a short imprisonment. The feeling against him too was strengthened and exasperated by the impetuous resentment with which he addressed himself to the Prophet and Rody Duncan, while giving their evidence, for it was not unreasonable to suppose that the man, who at his years, and in such awful circumstances, could threaten the lives of the witnesses against him, as he did, would not hesitate to commit, in a fit of that ungovernable passion that had made him remarkable through life, the very crime with which he stood charged through a similar act of blind and ferocious vengeance. Others, on the contrary held different opinions; and thought that the old man's account of the matter was both simple and natural, and bore the stamp of sincerity and truth upon the very face of it. Jerry Sullivan only swore that, to the best of his opinion, the skeleton found was much about the size of what his brother's would be; but as the proof of his private interment by Dalton had been clearly established by the evidence of the Prophet and Rody, constituting, as it did, an unbroken chain of circumstances which nothing could resist, the jury had no hesitation in returning the following verdict:—

"We find a verdict of wilful murder against Cornelius Dalton, Senior, for that he, on or about the night of the fourteenth of December, in the year of grace, 1798, did follow and waylay Bartholomew Sullivan, and deprive him of his life by blows and violence, having threatened him to the same effect in the early part of the aforesaid day."

During the progress of the investigation, our friend the pedlar and Charley Hanlon were anxious and deeply attentive spectators. The former never kept his eyes off the Prophet, but surveyed him with a face in which it was difficult to say whether the expression was one of calm conviction or astonishment. When the investigation had come to a close, he drew Hanlon aside and said—

"That swearin', Charley, was too clear, and if I was on the jury myself I would find the same verdict. May the Lord support the poor old man in the mane time! for in spite of all that happened one can't help pity'n' him, or at any rate his unfortunate family. However see what comes by not havin' a curb over one's passions when the blood's up."

"God's a just God," replied Hanlon—"the murderer deserves his punishment, an' I hope will meet it."

"There is little doubt of it," said the pedlar, "the hand of God is in it all."

"That's more than I see, or can at the present time, then," replied Hanlon. "Why should my aunt stay away so long?—but I dare say the truth is, she is either sick or dead, an' if that's the case, what's all you have said or done worth? You see it's but a chance still."

"Trust in God," replied the pedlar, "that's all either of us can do or say now. There's the coffin. I'm tould they're goin' to bury him, and to have the greatest funeral that ever was in the counthry; but, God knows, there's funerals enough in the neighborhood widout their making a show of themselves wid this."

"There's no truth in that report either," said Hanlon. "I was speakin' to Jerry Sullivan this mornin', an' I have it from him that they intend to bury him as quietly as they can. He's much changed from what he was—Jerry is—an' doesn't wish to have the old man hanged at all, if he can prevent it."

"Hanged or not, Charley, I must go on with my petition to Dick o' the Grange. Of course I have no chance, but maybe the Lord put something good into Travers's heart, when he bid me bring it to him; at any rate it can do no harm."

"Nor any earthly good," replied the other. "The farm is this minute the property of Darby Skinadre, an' to my knowledge Master Dick has a good hundred pounds in his pocket for befriendin' the meal-monger."

"Still an' all, Charley, I'll go to the father, if it was only bekaise the agent wishes it; I promised I would, an' who knows at any rate but he may do something for the poor Daltons himself, when he finds that the villain that robbed and ruined them won't."

"So far you may be right," said Hanlon, "an' as you say, if it does no good it can do no harm; but for my part, I can scarcely think of anything but my poor aunt. What, in God's name, except sickness or death, can keep her away, I don't know."

"Put your trust in God, man—that's my advice to you."

"And a good one it is," replied the other, "if we could only follow it up as we ought. Every one here wondhers at the change that's come over me—I that was so light and airy, and so fond of every diversion that was to be had, am now as grave as a parson; but indeed no wondher, for ever since that awful night at the Grey Stone—since both nights indeed—I'm not the same man, an' feel as if there was a weight come over me that nothing will remove, unless we trace the murdher, an' I hardly know what to say about it, now that my aunt isn't forthcomin'."

"Trust in God, I tell you, for as you live, truth will come to light yet."

The conversation took various changes as they proceeded, until they reached the Grange, where the first person they met was Jemmy Branigan, who addressed his old enemy, the pedlar, in that peculiarly dry and ironical tone which he was often in the habit of using when he wished to disguise a friendly act in an ungracious garb—a method of granting favors, by the way, to which he was proverbially addicted. In fact, a surly answer from Jemmy was as frequently indicative of his intention to serve you with his master as it was otherwise; but so adroitly did he disguise his sentiments, that no earthly penetration could develop them until proved by the result. Jemmy, besides, liked the pedlar at heart for his open, honest scurrility—a quality which he latterly found extremely beneficial to himself, inasmuch as now that, increasing infirmity had incapacitated his master from delivering much of the alternate abuse that took place between them, he experienced great relief every moment from a fresh breathing with his rather eccentric opponent.

"Jemmy," said Hanlon, "is the master in the office?"

"Is he in the office?—Who wants him?" and as he put the query he accompanied it by a look of ineffable contempt at the pedlar.

"Your friend, the pedlar, wants him; and so now," added Hanlon, "I leave you both to fight it out between you."

"You're comin' wid your petition, an' a purty object you are, goin' to look afther a farm for a man that'll be hanged (may God forbid—this day, amin!" he exclaimed in an under-tone which the other could not hear): "an' what can you expect but to get kicked out or put in the stocks for attemptin' to take a farm over another man's head."

"What other man's head?—nobody has it yet."

"Ay, has there—a very daicent respectable man has it, by name one Darby Skina-

dre. (May he never warm his hungry nose in the same farm, the miserable *twoot* that he is this day," he added in another soliloquy, which escaped the pedlar): "a very honest man is Darby Skinadre, so you may save yourself the trouble, I say."

"At any rate there's no harm in tryin'—worse than fail we can't, an' if we succeed it'll be good to come in for anything from the ould scoundrel, before the devil ge's him."

Jemmy gave him a look.

"Why, what have you to say against the ould boy? Sure it's not casting reflections on your own masther you'd be."

"Oh, not at all," replied the pedlar, "especially when I'm expectin' a favor from one of his sarvints. Throth he'll soon by all accounts have his hook in the ould Clip o' the Grange—an' afther that some of his friends will soon folly him. I wouldn't be mainin' one Jemmy Branigan. Oh, dear no—but it's a sure case that's the Black Boy's intention to take the whole family by instalments, an' wid respect to the sarvints to place them in their ould situations. Faith you'll have a warm berth of it, Jemmy, an' well you desarve it."

"Why then you circulating vagabone," replied Jemmy; "if you wern'a close friend to him, you'd not know his intentions so well. Don't let out on yourself, man alive, unless you have the face to be proud of your acquaintance, which in throth is more than anyone, barrin' the *same set*, could be of you."

"Well, well," retorted the pedlar, "sure blood alive, as we're all of the same connection, let us not quarrel now, but sarve another if we can. Go an' tell the old blackguard I want to see him about business."

"Will I tell him you're itchy about the houghs?—eh? However, the thruth is, that they,"—and he pointed to the stocks—"might be justice, but no novelty to you. The iron gathers is an ornament you often wore, an' will again, plase goodness."

"Throth, and your ornament is one you'll never wear a second time—the hemp collar will grace your neck yet; but never mind, you're leadin' the life to desarve it. See now if I can spake a word wid your masther for a poor family."

"Why, then, to avoid your tongue, I may as well tell you that himself, Masther Richard, and Darby Skinadre's in the office; an' if you can use the same blackguard tongue as well in a good cause as you can in a bad one, it would be well for the poor crayturs. Go in now, an'," he added in another soliloquy, "may the Lord prosper his virtuous endayvors, the vagabone; although all hope o' that's past, I doubt; for hasn't Skinadre the promise, and Masther Richard the bribe? However, who can tell?—so God prosper the vagabone, I say again."

The pedlar, on entering, found old Henderson sitting in an arm-chair, with one of his legs, as usual, bandaged and stretched out before him on another chair. He seemed much worn and debilitated, and altogether had the appearance of a man whose life was not worth a single week's purchase. Skinadre was about taking leave of his patron, the son, who had been speaking to him as the pedlar entered.

"Don't be uneasy, Darby," he said. "We can't give you a lease for about a week or fortnight; but the agent is now here, an' we must first take out new leases ourselves. As soon as we do you shall have yours."

"If you only knew, your honor, the scrapin' I had in these hard times, to get together that hundlure——"

"Hush—there," said the other, clapping his hand, with an air of ridicule and contempt upon the miser's mouth; "that will do now; be off, and depend upon——mum, you understand me! Ha, ha, ha!—that's not a bad move, father," he added; "however, I think we must give him the farm."

The pedlar had been standing in the middle of the floor, when young Dick, turning round suddenly, asked him with a frown, occasioned by the fact of his having overheard this short dialogue, what he wanted.

"God save you honors, gintlemen," said the pedlar, in a loud straightforward voice. "I'm glad to see your honor looking so well," he added, turning to the father; "it's fresh an' young your gettin', sir!—glory be to God!"

"Who is this fellow, Dick? Do you think I look better, my man?"

"Says Jemmy Branigan to me afore I came in," proceeded the pedlar,—"he's a thrue friend o' mine, your honor, Jemmy is, an' 'ud go to the well o' the world's end to sarve me—says he, you'll be delighted, Harry, to see the masther look so fresh an' well."

"And the cursed old hypocrite is just after telling me, Dick, to prepare for a long journey; adding, for my consolation, that it won't be a troublesome one, as it will be all down hill."

"Why," replied the son, "he has given you that information for the ten thousandth time, to my own knowledge. What does this man want? What's your business, my good fellow?"

"Beggin' your pardon, sir," replied the pedlar, "will you allow me to ask you one question; were you ever in the forty-seventh

foot? Oh, bedad, it must be him to a sartinty," he added, as if to himself.

"No," replied Dick; "why so?"

"Take care, your honor," said the pedlar, smiling roguishly;—"take care now, your honor, if it wasn't you——"

"What are you speaking about—what do you mean?" asked the young man.

The pedlar went over to him, and said, in a low voice, looking cautiously at the father, as if he didn't wish that he should hear him—

"It was surely your honor took away Lord Handicap's daughter when you wor an ensign—the handsome ensign, as they called you in the forty-seventh? Eh? faix I knew you the minute I looked at you."

"Ha, ha, ha! Do you know what, father? He says I'm the handsome ensign of the forty-seventh, that took away Lord Handicap's daughter."

"The greatest beauty in all England," added the pedlar; "an' I knew him at wanst, your honor."

"Well, Dick, that's a compliment, at any rate," replied the father.

"Were *you* ever in the forty-seventh?" asked the son, smiling.

"Ah, ah!" returned the pedlar, with a knowing wink, "behave yourself, captain; I'm not so soft as all that comes to; but sure as I have a favor to ax from his honor, your father, I'm glad to have your assistance. Faix, by all accounts you pleaded your own cause well, at any rate; and I hope you'll give me a lift now wid his honor here."

Dick the younger laughed heartily, but really had not ready virtue sufficient about, to disclaim the pedlar's compliment.

"Come, then," he added; "let us hear what your favor is."

"Oh, thin, thank you, an' God bless you, captain. It's this: only to know if you'd be good enough to grant a new lease of Cargah Farm to young Condy Dalton; for the ould man, by all accounts, is not long for this world."

Both turned their eyes upon him with a look of singular astonishment.

"Who are you at all, my good fellow?" asked the father; "or what devil drove you here on such an impudent message?" A lease to the son of that ould murderer and his crew of beggars! That's good, Dick! Well done, soger! will you back him in that, captain? Ha, ha, ha! D—n me, if I ever heard the like of it!"

"I hope you will *back* me, captain," said the pedlar.

"Upon what grounds, comrade? Ha, ha, ha! Go on! Let us hear you!"

"Why, your honor, bekaise he's best entitled to it. Think of what it was when he got it, an' think of what it is now, and then ax yourselves—'Who raised it in value an' made it worth twiste what it was worth?' Wasn't it the Daltons? Didn't they lay out near eight hundre pounds upon it? An, didn't you, at every renewal, screw them up—beggin' your pardon, gintlemen—until they found that the more they improved it the poorer they were gettin'? An' now that it lies there worth double its value, an' they that made it so (to put money into your pocket) beggars—within a few hundred yards of it—wouldn't it be rather hard to let them die an' starve in destitution, an' them wishin' to get it back at a raisonable rint?"

"In this country, brother soldier," replied Dick ironically, "we generally starve first and die afterwards."

"You may well say so, your honor, an' God knows, there's not upon the face of the arth a counthry where starvation is so much practised, or so well understood. Faith, unfortunately, it's tae national diversion wid us. However, is what I'm sayin' raisonable, gintlemen?"

"Exceedingly so," said Dick; "go on."

"Well, then, I wish to know, will you give them a new lease of their farm?"

"You do! do you?"

"Troth I do, your honor."

"Well, then," replied the son, "I beg to inform you that we will not."

"Why so, your honor?"

"Simply, you knave," exclaimed the father, in a passion, "because we don't wish it. Kick him out, Dick!"

"My good friend and brother soldier," said Dick, "the fact is, that we are about to introduce a new system altogether upon our property. We are determined to manage it upon a perfectly new principle. It has been too much sub-let under us, and we have resolved to rectify this evil. That is our answer. You get no lease. Provide for yourself and your friends, the Daltons, as best you can, but on this property you get no lease. That is your answer."

"Begone, now, you scoundrel," said the father, "and not a word more out of your head."

"Gintlemen!—gintlemen!"—exclaimed the pedlar, "have you no consciences? Is there no justice in the world? The misery, and sorrow, and sufferin's of this misfortunate family, will be upon you, I doubt, if you don't do them justice."

"Touch the bell, Dick! Here some one! Jemmy Branigan! Harry Lowry! Jack Clinton! Where are you all, you scoundrels? Here, put this rascal in the stocks immediately! in with him!"

Jemmy, who, from an adjoining room, had been listening to every word that passed, now entered.

"Here, you, sir: clap this vagabond in the stocks for his insolence. He has come here purposely to insult myself and my son. To the stocks with him at once."

"No!" replied Jemmy; "the devil resave the stock will go on him this day. Didn't I hear every word that passed? An' what did he say but the thruth, an' what every one knows to be the thruth?"

"Put him in the stocks, I desire you, this instant!"

"Throth if you wor to look at your mug in the glass, you'd feel that you'll soon be in a worse stocks yourself than ever you put any poor craythur into," replied the redoubtable Jemmy. "Do you be off about your business, in the mane time, you good-natured vagabone, or this ould fire-brand will get some one wid less conscience than I have, that'll clap you in them."

"Never mind, father," observed the son; "let the fellow go about his business—he's not worth your resentment."

The pedlar took the hint and withdrew, accompanied by Jemmy, on whose face there was a grin of triumph that he could not conceal.

"I tould you," he added, as they went down the steps, "that the same stocks was afore you; an' in the mane time, God pardon me for the injustice I did in keepin' you out o' them."

"Go on," replied the other; "devil a harsh word ever I'll say to you again."

"Throth will you," said Jemmy; "an' both of us will be as fresh as a daisy in the mornin', plaise goodness. I have scarcely any one to abuse me, or to abuse, either, now that the ould masther is so feeble."

Jemmy extended his hand as he spoke, and gave the pedlar a squeeze, the cordiality of which was strongly at variance with the abuse he had given him.

"God bless you!" said the pedlar, returning the pressure; "your bark is worse than your bite. I'm off now, to mention the reception they gave me and the answers I got, to a man that will, maybe, bring themselves to their marrow-bones afore long."

"Ay, but don't abuse them, for all that," replied Jemmy, "for I won't bear it."

"Throth," returned the other, "you're a quare Jemmy—an' so God bless you!"

Having uttered these words, in an amicable and grateful spirit, our friend the pedlar bent his steps to the head inn of the next town—being that of the assizes, where Mr. Travers, the agent, kept his office.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Sarah III.—Mave Again Heroic.

Young Henderson, whose passion for Mave Sullivan was neither virtuous nor honorable, would not have lent himself, notwithstanding, to the unprincipled projects of the Prophet, had not that worthy personage gradually and dishonestly drawn him into a false position. In other words, he led the vain and credulous young man to believe that Mave had been seized with a secret affection for him, and was willing, provided everything was properly managed, to consent to an elopement. For this purpose, it was necessary that the plan should be executed without violence, as the Prophet well knew, because, on sounding young Dick upon that subject, in an early stage of the business, he had ascertained that the proposal of anything bordering upon outrage or force, would instantly cause him to withdraw from the project altogether. For this reason, then, he found it necessary, if possible to embark Sarah as an accomplice, otherwise, he could not effect his design without violence, and he felt that her co-operation was required to sustain the falsehood of his assertions to Henderson with regard to Mave's consent to place herself under his protection. This was to be brought about so as to hoodwink Henderson, in the following manner: The Prophet proposed that Sarah should, by his own or her ingenuity, contrive to domicile herself in Jerry Sullivan's house for a few days previous to the execution of their design; not only for the purpose of using her influence, such as it was, to sway the young creature's mind and principles from the path of rectitude and virtue, by dwelling upon the luxury and grandeur of her future life with Henderson, whose intentions were to be represented as honorable, but, if necessary, to leave a free ingress to the house, so as that under any circumstances, and even with a *little* violence, Mave should be placed in Henderson's hands. Should the Prophet, by his management, effect this, he was to receive a certain sum of money from his employer the moment he or his party had her in their possession—for such were the terms of the agreement — otherwise Donnel Dhu reserved to himself the alternative of disclosing the matter to her friends, and acquainting them with her situation. This, at all events, was readily consented to by Henderson, whose natural vanity and extraordinary opinion of his own merits in the eyes of the sex, prevented him from apprehending any want of success with Mave, provided he had an opportunity of

bringing the influence of his person, and his wonderful powers of persuasion, to bear upon such a simple country girl as he considered her to be. So far, then, he had taken certain steps to secure himself, whilst he left Henderson to run the risk of such contingencies as might in all probability arise from the transaction.

This, however, was but an under-plot of the Prophet, whose object was indeed far beyond that of becoming the paltry instrument of a rusty intrigue. It was a custom with Dick o' the Grange, for a few years previous to the date of our story, to sleep during the assizes, in the head inn of the town, attended by Jemmy Branigan. This was rendered in some degree necessary, by the condition of his bad leg, and his extraordinary devotion to convivial indulgence—a propensity to which he gave full stretch during the social license of the grand jury dinners. Now, the general opinion was, that Henderson always kept large sums of money in the house—an opinion which we believe to have been correct, and which seemed to have been confirmed by the fact, that on no occasion were both father and son ever known to sleep out of the house at the same time, to which we may also add another—viz., that the whole family were well provided with fire arms, which were freshly primed and loaded every night.

The Prophet, therefore, had so contrived it, that young Dick's design upon Mave Sullivan, or in other words, the Prophet's own design upon the money coffers of the Grange, should render his absence from home necessary whilst his father was swilling at the assizes, by which arrangement, added to others that will soon appear, the house must, to a certain degree, be left unprotected, or altogether under the care of dissolute servants, whose habits, caught from those of the establishment, were remarkable for dissipation and neglect.

The Prophet, indeed, was naturally a plotter. It is not likely, however, that he would ever have thought of projecting the robbery of the Grange, had he not found himself, as he imagined, foiled in his designs upon Mave Sullivan, by the instinctive honor and love of truth which shone so brilliantly in the neglected character of his extraordinary daughter. Having first entrapped her into a promise of secrecy—a promise which he knew death itself would scarcely induce her to violate, he disclosed to her the whole plan in the most plausible and mitigated language. Effort after effort was made to work upon her principles, but in vain. Once or twice, it is true, she entertained the matter for a time—but a momentary deliberation soon raised her naturally noble and generous spirit above the turpitude of so vile a project.

It was, then, in this state of things that the failure of the one, and the lesser plan, through the incorruptible honor of his daughter, drove him upon the larger and more tempting one of the burglary. In this latter, he took unto himself as his principal accomplice, Red Rody Duncan, whose anxiety to procure the driver's situation arose from the necessity that existed, to have a friend in the *house*, who might aid them in effecting a quiet entrance, and by unloading or wetting the fire-arms, neutralize the resistance which they might otherwise expect.

Sarah's excitement and distraction, however, resulting from her last interview with young Dalton, giving as it did, a fatal blow to her passion and her hopes, vehement and extraordinary as they were, threw her across her father's path at the precise moment when her great but unregulated spirit, inflamed by jealousy and reckless from despair, rendered her most accessible to the wily and aggravating arguments with which he tempted and overcame her. Thus did he, so far as human means could devise, or foresight calculate, provide for the completion of two plots instead of one.

It is true, Mave Sullivan was not left altogether without being forewarned. Nobody, however, had made her acquainted with the peculiar nature of the danger that was before her. Nelly M'Gowan, as she was called, had strongly cautioned her against both Donnel and Sarah, but then Nelly herself was completely in the dark as to the character of the injury against which she warned her, so that her friendly precautions were founded more upon the general and unscrupulous profligacy of Donnel's principles, and his daughter's violence, than upon any particular knowledge she possessed of her intentions towards her. Mave's own serene and innocent disposition was such in fact as to render her not easily impressed by suspicion; and our readers may have perceived, by the interview which took place between her and Sarah, that from the latter, she apprehended no injury.

It was on the following day after that interview, about two o'clock, that while she was spreading some clothes upon the garden hedge, during a sickly gleam of sunshine, our friend the pedlar made his appearance, and entered her father's house. Mave having laid her washing before the sun, went in and found him busily engaged in showing his wares, which consisted principally of cutlery and trinkets. The pedlar, as she entered, threw a hasty glance at her, and

perceived that she shook down her luxuriant hair, which had been disarranged by a branch of thorn that was caught in it while stretching over the hedge. She at once recognized him, and blushed deeply; but he seemed altogether to have forgotten her.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, "well, that I may be blest, but it's many a long day since I seen such a head o' hair as that! Holy St. Countryman, but it's a beauty. Musha, a *Gra Gal*, maybe you'll dispose of it, for, in troth, if ever a face livin' could afford to part with its best ornament, your's is that one."

Mave smiled and blushed at the compliment, and the pedlar eyed her apparently with a mixed feeling of admiration and compassion.

"No," she replied, "I haven't any desire to part with it."

"You had the sickness, maybe?"

"Thanks be to the mercy of God," she fervently exclaimed, "no one in this family has had it yet."

"Well, achora," he continued, "if you take my advice you'll dispose of it, in regard that if the sickness—which may God prevent—should come, it will be well for you to have it off you. If you sell it, I'll give you either money or value for it; for indeed, an' truth it flogs all I've seen this many a day."

"They say," observed her mother, "that it's not lucky to sell one's hair, and whether it's true or not I don't know; but I'm tould for a sartinty, that there's not a girl that ever sould it but was sure to catch the sickness."

"*I* know that there's truth in that" said Jerry himself. "There's Sally Hacket, and Mary Geoghegan, and Katy Dowdall, all sould it, and not one of them escaped the sickness. And, moreover, didn't I hear Misther Cooper, the bleedin' doctor, say, myself, in the market, on Sathurday, that the people couldn't do a worse thing than cut their hair close, as it lets the sickness in by the head, and makes it tin times as hard upon them when it comes."

"Well, well, there's no arguin' wid you," said the pedlar, "all I say is, that you ought to part wid it, acushla—by all means you ought."

"Never mind him, Mave darlin'," said her mother, whose motive in saying so was altogether dictated by affectionate apprehensions for her health.

"No," replied her daughter, "it is not my intention, mother, to part with what God has given me. I have no notion of it."

At this stage of the dialogue, her eldest brother, who had been getting a horse shod at the next forge, entered the house, and threw himself carelessly on a chair. His appearance occasioned a slight pause in the conversation.

"Well, Denny," said the father, "what's the news?"

"Bad news with the Daltons," replied the boy.

"With the Daltons!" exclaimed Mave, trembling, and getting paler, if possible, than she was; "for God's mercy, Dennis, what has happened amongst them?"

"I met Mrs. Dalton a while ago," he replied, "and she tould me that they had no one now to take care of them. Sarah M'Gowan, the Black Prophet's daughter, has catched the sickness, and is lyin' in a shed there beyant, that a poor thravellin' family was in about a week ago. Mrs. Dalton says her own family isn't worse wid the sickness, but betther, she thinks; but she was cryin', the daicent craythur, and she says they'll die wid neglect and starvation, for she must be *out*, and there's no one to attend to them, and they have nothing but the black wather, God help them!"

While he spoke, Mave's eyes were fastened upon him, as if the sentence of her own life or death was about to issue from his lips Gradually, however, she breathed more freely; a pale red tinged her cheek for a moment, after which, a greater paleness settled upon it again.

The pedlar shook his head.

"Ah," he exclaimed, "they are hard times, sure enough; may the Lord bring us all safe through them! Well, I see I'm not likely to make my fortune among you," he added, smiling, "so I must tramp on, but any way, I must thank you for house-room and you civility."

"I'd offer something to ait," said Mrs. Sullivan, with evident pain, "but the truth is——"

"Not a morsel," replied the other, "if the house was overflowin'. God bless you all—God bless you."

Mave, almost immediately after her brother had concluded, passed to another room, and returned just as the old pedlar had gone out. She instantly followed him with a hasty step; while he, on hearing her foot, turned round.

"You told me that you admired my hair," she said, on coming up to him. "Now, supposin' I'm willin' to sell it to you, what ought I to get for it?"

"Don't be alarmed by what they say inside," replied the pedlar; "any regular doctor would tell that, in these times, it's safer to part wid it—that I may be happy but I'm tellin' you thruth. What is it worth? What are you axin?"

"I don't know; but for God's sake cut it off, and give me the most you can afford for it. Oh! believe me, it's not on account of the mere value of it, but the money may save lives."

"Why, achora, what do you intend doin' wid the money, if it's a fair question to ax?"

"It's not a fair question for a stranger—it's enough for me to tell you that I'll do nothing with it without my father and mother's knowledge. Here, Denny," she said, addressing her brother, who was on his way to the stable, "slip a stool through the windy, an' stay wid me in the barn—I want to send you of a message in a few minutes."

It is only necessary to say that the compensation was a more liberal one than Mave had at all expected, and the pedlar disencumbered her of as rich and abundant a mass of hair as ever ornamented a female head. This he did, however, in such a way as to render the absence of it as little perceptible as might be; the side locks he did not disturb, and Mave, when she put on a clean night cap, looked as if she had not undergone any such operation.

As the pedlar was going away, he called her aside, so as that her brother might not hear.

"Did you ever see me afore?" he asked.

"I did," she replied, blushing.

"Well, achora," he proceeded, "if ever you happen to be hard set, either for yourself or your friends, send for me, in Widow Hanlon's house at the Grange, an' maybe I may befriend either you or them; that is, as far as I can—which, dear knows, is not far; but, still an' all, send. I'm known as the Cannie Sugah, or Merry Pedlar, an' that'll do. God mark you, ahagur!"

Her brother's intelligence respecting the situation of the Daltons, as well as of Sarah M'Gowan, saved Mave a long explanation to her parents for the act of having parted with her hair.

"We are able to live—barely able to live," she exclaimed; "an' thanks be to God we have our health; but the Daltons—oh! they'll never get through what they're sufferin'; an' that girl—oh! mother, sich a girl as that is—how little does the world know of the heart that beautiful craythur has. May the mercy of God rest upon her! This money is for the poor Daltons an' her; we can do without it—an', mother dear, my hair will grow again. Oh! father dear, think of it—lyin' in a could shed by the road-side, an' no one to help or assist her—to hand her a drink—to ease her on her hard bed—bed!—no on the cold earth I suppose! Oh! think if I was in that desolate state. May God support me, but she's the first I'll see; an' while I have life an' strength, she musn't want attendance; an' thank God her shed's on my way to the Daltons!"

She then hastily sent her brother into Ballynafail for such comforts as she deemed necessary for both parties; and in the mean time, putting a bonnet over her clean night-cap, she proceeded to the shed in which Sarah M'Gowan lay.

On looking at it ere she entered, she could not help shuddering. It was such a place as the poorest pauper in the poorest cabin would not willingly place an animal in for shelter. It simply consisted of a few sticks laid up against the side of a ditch; over these sticks were thrown a few scraws—that is, the sward of the earth cut thin; in the inside was the remnant of some loose straw, the greater part having been taken away either for bedding or firing.

When Mave entered, she started at the singular appearance of Sarah. From the first moment her person had been known to her until the present, she had never seen her look half so beautiful. She literally lay stretched upon a little straw, with no other pillow than a sod of earth under that rich and glowing cheek, while her raven hair had fallen down, and added to the milk-white purity of her shining neck and bosom.

"Father of Mercy!" exclaimed Mave, mentally, "how will she live—how can she live here? An' what will become of her? Is she to die in this miserable way in a Christian land?"

Sarah lay groaning with pain, and starting from time to time with the pangs of its feverish inflictions. Mave spoke not when she entered the shed, being ignorant whether Sarah was asleep or awake; but a very few moments soon satisfied her that the unhappy and deserted girl was under the influence of delirium.

"I won't break my promise, father, but I'll break my heart; an' I can't even give her warnin'. Ah! but it's threacherous—an' I hate that. No, no—I'll have no hand in it—manage it your own way—it's threacherous. She has crossed my happiness, you say—ay, an' there you're right—so she has—only for her I might—amn't I as handsome, you say, an' as well shaped—haven't I as white a skin?—as beautiful hair, an' as good eyes?—people say bettther—an' if I have, wouldn't he come to love me in time?—only for her—or if there wasn't *that* bar put between us. You're right, you're right. She's the cause of all my sufferin' an' sorrow. She is—I agree—I agree—down with her—out o' my way with her—I hate the thoughts of her—an' I'll join it—for mark me, father, wicked

I may be, but more miserable I can't—so I'll join you in it. What need I care now?"

Mave felt her heart sink, and her whole being disturbed with a heavy sense of terror, as Sarah uttered the incoherent rhapsody which we have just repeated. The vague, but strongly expressed warnings which she had previously heard from Nelly, and the earnest admonitions which that person had given her to beware of evil designs on the part of Donnel Dhu and his daughter, now rushed upon her mind; and she stood looking upon the desolate girl with feelings that it is difficult to describe. She also remembered that Sarah herself had told her in their very last interview, that she had other thoughts, and worse thoughts than the fair battle of rivalry between them would justify; and it was only now, too, that the unconscious allusion to the Prophet struck her with full force.

Her sweet and gentle magnanimity, however, rose over every other consideration but the frightfully desolate state of her unhappy rival. Even in this case, also, her own fears of contagion yielded to the benevolent sense of duty by which she was actuated.

"Come what will," she said to her own heart; "we ought to return good for evil; an' there's no use in knowing what is right, unless we strive to put it in practice. At any rate, poor girl—poor, generous Sarah, I'm afeard that you're never likely to do harm to me, or any one else, in this world. May God, in his mercy, pity and relieve you—and restore you wanst more to health!"

Mave, unconsciously, repeated the last words aloud; and Sarah, who had been lying with her back to the unprotected opening of the shed, having had a slight mitigation, and but a slight one, of the paroxysm under which she had uttered the previous incoherencies, now turned round, and fixing her eyes upon Mave, kept sharply, but steadily, gazing at her for some time. It was quite evident, however, that consciousness had not returned, for after she had surveyed Mave for a minute or two, she proceeded—

"The devil was there a while ago, but I wasn't afeard of him, because I knew that God was stronger than him; and then there came an angel—another angel, not you—and put him away; but it wasn't my guardian angel for I never had a guardian angel—oh, never, never—no, nor any one to take care o' me, or make me love them."

She uttered the last words in a tone of such deep and distressing sorrow, that Mave's eyes filled with tears, and she replied—

"Dear Sarah, let me be your guardian angel; I will do what I can for you; do you not know me?"

"No, I don't; arn't you one o' the angels that come about me?—the place is full o' them."

"Unhappy girl—or maybe happy girl," exclaimed Mave, with a fresh gush of tears, "who knows but the Almighty has your cold and deserted—bed I can't call it—surrounded with beings that may comfort you, an' take care that no evil thing will harm you. Oh no, dear Sarah, I am far from that—I'm a wake, sinful mortal."

"Bekaise they're about me continually an'—let me see—who are you? I know you. One o' them said a while ago, 'May God relieve you and restore you wanst more to health;' I heard the voice."

"Dear Sarah, don't you know me?" reiterated Mave; "look at me—don't you know Mave Sullivan—your friend, Mave Sullivan, that knows your value and loves you."

"Who?" she asked, starting a little; "who—what name is that?—who is it?—say it again."

"Don't you know Mave Sullivan, that loves you, an' feels for your miserable situation, my dear Sarah."

"I never had a guardian angel, nor any one to take care o' me—nor a mother, many a time—often—often the whole world—jist to look at her face—an' to know—feel—love me. Oh, a dhrink, a dhrink—is there no one to get me a dhrink! I'm burnin', I'm burnin'—is there no one to get me a dhrink! Mave Sullivan, Mave Sullivan, have pity on me! I heard some one name her—I heard her voice—I'll die without a dhrink."

Mave looked about the desolate shed, and to her delight spied a tin porringer, which Sarah's unhappy predecessors had left behind them; seizing this, she flew to a little stream that ran by the place, and filling the vessel, returned and placed it to Sarah's lips. She drank it eagerly, and looking piteously and painfully up into Mave's face, she laid back her head, and appeared to breathe more freely. Mave hoped that the drink of cold water would have cooled her fever and assuaged her thirst, so as to have brought her to a rational state—such a state as would have enabled the poor girl to give some account of the extraordinary situation in which she found herself, and of the circumstances which occasioned her to take shelter in such a place. In this, however, she was disappointed. Sarah having drank the cold water, once more shut her eyes, and fell into that broken and oppressive slumber which characterizes the terrible malady which had stricken her down. For some time she waited with this benign expectation, but seeing there was no likelihood of her

restoration to consciousness, she again filled the tin vessel, and placing it upon a stone by her bedside, composed the poor girl's dress about her, and turned her steps toward a scene in which she expected to find equal misery.

It is not our intention, however, to dwell upon it. It is sufficient to say, that she found the Daltons—who, by the way, had a pretty long visit from the pedlar—as her brother had said, beginning to recover, and so far this was consolatory; but there was not within the walls of the house, earthly comfort, or food or nourishment of any kind. Poor Mary was literally gasping for want of sustenance, and a few hours more might have been fatal to them all. There was no fire—no gruel, milk or anything that could in the slightest possible degree afford them relief. Her brother Denny, however, who had been desired by her to fetch his purchases directly to their cabin, soon returned, and almost at a moment that might be called the crisis, not of their malady, for that had passed, but of their fate itself, his voice was heard, shouting from a distance that he had discharged his commission; for we may observe that no possible inducement could tempt him to enter that or any other house where fever was at work. Mave lost little time in administering to their wants and their weaknesses. With busy and affectionate hands she did all that could be done for them at that particular juncture. She prepared food for Mary, made whey and gruel, and left as much of her little purse as she thought could be spared from the wants of Sarah M'Gowan.

In the course of two or three days afterwards, however, Sarah's situation was very much changed for the better; but until that change was effected, Mave devoted as much time to the poor girl as she could possibly spare. Nor was the force of her example without its beneficial effects in the neighborhood, especially as regarded Sarah herself. The courage she displayed, despite her constitutional timidity, communicated similar courage to others, in consequence of which Sarah was scarcely ever without some one in her bleak shed to watch and take care of her. Her father, however, on hearing of her situation, availed himself of what some of the neighbors considered a mitigation of her symptoms, and with as much care and caution as possible, she was conveyed home on a kind of litter, and nurse-tended by an old woman from the next village. Nelly having disappeared from the neighborhood.

The attendance of this old woman, by the way, surprised the Prophet exceedingly. *He* had not engaged her to attend on Sarah, nor could he ascertain who had. Upon this subject she was perfectly inscrutable. All he could know or get out of her was, that she *had* been engaged; and he could perceive also, that she was able to procure her many general comforts, not usually to be had about the sick bed of a person in her condition of life.

Mave, during all her attendance upon Sarah, was never able to ascertain whether, in the pauses of delirium, she had been able to recognize her. At one period, while giving her a drink of whey, she looked up into her eyes with something like a glance of consciousness, mingled with wonder, and appeared about to speak, but in a moment it was gone, and she relapsed into her former state.

This, however, was not the only circumstance that astonished Mave. The course of a single week also made a very singular change in the condition of the Daltons. Their miserable cabin began to exhibit an abundance of wholesome food, such as fresh meat, soup, tea, sugar, white bread, and even to wine, to strengthen the invalids. These things were to Mave equally a relief and a wonder; nor were the neighbors less puzzled at such an unaccountable improvement in the circumstances of this pitiable and suffering family. As in the case of Sarah, however, all these comforts, and the source from whence they proceeded, were shrouded in mystery. It is true, Mrs. Dalton smiled in a melancholy way when any inquiries were made about the matter, and shaking her head, declared, that although *she* knew, it was out of her power to break the seal of secrecy, or violate the promise she had made to their unknown benefactor.

Sarah's fever was dreadfully severe, and for some time after her removal from the shed, there was little hope of her recovery. Our friend, the pedlar, paid her a visit in the very height of her malady, and without permission, given or asked, took the liberty, in her father's absence, of completely removing her raven hair, with the exception, as in Mave's case, of those locks which adorn the face and forehead, and, to his shame and dishonesty be it told, without the slightest offer of remuneration.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Double Treachery.

The state of the country at this period of our narrative was, indeed, singularly gloomy and miserable. Some improvement, how-

ever, had taken place in the statistics of disease; but the destitution was still so sharp and terrible, that there was very little diminution of the tumults which still prevailed. Indeed the rioting, in some districts, had risen to a frightful extent. The cry of the people was, for either bread or work; and to still, if possible, this woeful clamor, local committees, by large subscriptions, aided, in some cases, by loans from government, contrived to find them employment on useful public works. Previous to this, nothing could surpass the prostration and abject subserviency with which the miserable crowds solicited food or labor. Only give them labor at any rate—say sixpence a day—and they did not wish to beg or violate the laws. No, no; only give them peaceable employment, and they would rest not only perfectly contented, but deeply grateful. In the meantime, the employment they sought for was provided, not at sixpence, but at one-and-sixpence a day; so that for a time they appeared to feel satisfied, and matters went on peaceably enough. This, however, was too good to last. There are ever, among such masses of people, unprincipled knaves, known as "politicians"—idle vagabonds, who hate all honest employment themselves, and ask no better than to mislead and fleece the ignorant unreflecting people, however or wherever they can. These fellows read and expound the papers on Sundays and holidays; rail not only against every government, no matter what its principles are, but, in general, attack all constituted authority, without feeling one single spark of true national principle, or independent love of liberty. It is such corrupt scoundrels that always assail the executive of the country, and at the same time supply the official staff of spies and informers with their blackest perjurers and traitors. In truth, they are always the first to corrupt, and the first to betray. You may hear these men denouncing government this week, and see them strutting about the Castle, its pampered instruments, and insolent with its patronage, the next. If there be a strike, conspiracy, or cabal of any kind, these "patriots" are at the bottom of it; and wherever ribbonism and other secret societies do *not* exist, *there* they are certain to set them agoing.

For only a short time were these who had procured industrial employment permitted to rest satisfied with the efforts which had been made on their behalf. The "patriots" soon commenced operations.

"Eighteen pence a day was nothing; the government had plenty of money, and if the people wished to hear a truth, it could be told them by those who knew—listen hether"—as the Munster men say—"the country gentlemen and the committees are putting half the money into their own pockets"—this being precisely what the knaves would do themselves if they were in their places—"and for that reason we'll strike for higher wages."

In this manner were the people led first into folly, and ultimately into rioting and crime; for it is not, in point of fact, those who are suffering most severely that take a prominent part in these senseless tumults, or who are the first to trample upon law and order. The evil example is set to those who do suffer by these factious vagabonds; and, under such circumstances, and betrayed by such delusions, the poor people join the crowd, and find themselves engaged in the outrage, before they have time to reflect upon their conduct.

At the time of which we write, however, the government did not consider it any part of its duty to take a deep interest in the domestic or social improvement of the people. The laws of the country, at that period, had but one aspect—that of terror; for it was evident that the legislature of the day had forgotten that neither an individual nor a people can both love and fear the same object at the same time. The laws checked insubordination and punished crime; and having done this, the great end and object of all law was considered to have been attained. We hope, however, the day has come when education, progress, improvement and reward, will shed their mild and peaceful lustre upon our statute-books, and banish from them those Draconian enactments, that engender only fear and hatred, breathe of cruelty, and have their origin in a tyrannical love of blood.

We have said that the aspect of the country was depressing and gloomy; but we may add here, that these words convey but a vague and feeble idea of the state to which the people at large were reduced. The general destitution, the famine, sickness and death, which had poured such misery and desolation over the land, left, as might be expected, their terrible traces behind them. Indeed the sufferings which a year of famine and disease—and they usually either accompany or succeed each other—inflicts upon the multitudes of poor, are such as no human pen could at all describe, so as to portray a picture sufficiently faithful to the dreary and death-like spirit which should breathe in it. Upon the occasion we write of, nothing met you, go where you might, but suffering, and sorrow, and death, to which we may add, tumult, and crime, and bloodshed. Scarcely a family but had lost one or

more. Every face you met was an index of calamity, and bore upon it the unquestionable impressions of struggle and hardship. Cheerfulness and mirth had gone, and were forgotten. All the customary amusements of the people had died away. Almost every house had a lonely and deserted look; for it was known that one or more beloved beings had gone out of it to the grave. A dark, heartless spirit was abroad. The whole land, in fact, mourned, and nothing on which the eye could rest, bore a green or a thriving look, or any symptom of activity, but the church-yards, and here the digging and delving were incessant—at the early twilight, during the gloomy noon, the dreary dusk, and the still more funeral looking light of the midnight taper.

The first days of the assizes were now near, and among all those who awaited them, there was none whose fate excited so profound an interest as that of old Condy Dalton. His family had now recovered from their terrible sufferings, and were able to visit him in his prison—a privilege which was awarded to them as a mark of respect for their many virtues, and of sympathy for their extraordinary calamities and trials. They found him resigned to his fate, but stunned with wonder at the testimony on which he was likely to be convicted. The pedlar, who appeared to take so singular an interest in the fortunes of his family, sought and obtained a short interview with him, in which he requested him to state, as accurately as he could remember, the circumstances on which the prosecution was founded, precisely as they occurred. This he did, closing his account by the usual burthen of all his conversation ever since he went to gaol:

"I know I must suffer; but I think nothing of myself, only for the shame it will bring upon my family."

Sarah's unexpected illness disconcerted at least one of the projects of Donnel Dhu. There were now only two days until the assizes, and she was as yet incapable of leaving her bed, although in a state of convalescence. This mortified the Prophet very much, but his subtlety and invention never abandoned him. It struck him that the most effectual plan now would be—as Sarah's part in aiding to take away Mave was out of the question—to merge the violence to which he felt they must resort, into that of the famine riots; and under the character of one of these tumults, to succeed, if possible, in removing Mave from her father's house, ere her family could understand the true cause of her removal. Those who were to be engaged in this were, besides, principally strangers, to whom neither Mave nor her family were personally known; and as a female cousin of hers—an orphan—had come to reside with them until better times should arrive, it would be necessary to have some one among the party who knew Mave sufficiently to make no mistake as to her person. For this purpose he judiciously fixed upon Thomas Dalton, as the most appropriate individual to execute this act of violence against the very family who were likely to be the means of bringing his father to a shameful death. This young man had not yet recovered the use of his reason, so as to be considered sane. He still roved about as before, sometimes joining the mobs, and leading them on to the outrage, and sometimes sauntering in a solitary mood, without seeming altogether conscious of what he did or said. To secure his co-operation was a matter of little or no difficulty, and the less so as he heard, with infinite satisfaction, that Dalton was perpetually threatening every description of vengeance against the Sullivans, about to be tried, and very likely to suffer for the murder.

It was now the day but one previous to the commencement of the assizes, and our readers will be kind enough to accompany us to the Grange, or rather to the garden of the Grange, at the gate of which our acquaintance Red Rody is knocking. He has knocked two or three times, and sent, on each occasion, Hanlon, old Dick, young Dick, together with all the component parts of the establishment, to a certain territory, where, so far as its legitimate historians assure us, the coldness of the climate has never been known to give any particular offence.

"I know he's inside, for didn't I see him goin' in—well, may all the devils—hem—oh, good morrow, Charley—troth you'd make a good messenger for death. I'm knocking here till I have lost the use of my arm wid downright fatigue."

"Never mind, Rody, you'll recover it before you're twice married—come in."

They then entered.

"Well, Rody, what's the news?"

"What the news, is it? Why then is anything in the shape of news—of *good* news I mean—to be had in such a country as this? Troth it's a shame for any one that has health an' limbs to remain in it. An' now that you're answered, what's the news yourself, Charley? I hope that the Driver-ship's safe at last. I thought I was to sleep at home in my comfortable berth last night."

"Not now till afther the 'sizes, Rody."

"The master's goin' to them? bekaise I heard he wasn't able."

"He's goin', he says, happen what may; he thinks it's his last visit to them, and I agree wid him—he'll soon have a greater 'sizes and a different judge to meet."

"Ay, Charley, think of that now; an' tell me, he sleeps in Ballynafail, as usual; eh, now?"

"He does of course."

"An' Jemmy Branigan goes along wid him?"

"Are you foolish, Rody? Do you think he could live widout him?"

"Well, I b'lieve not. Throth, whenever the ould fellow goes in the next world, there'll be no keepin' Jemmy from him. Howandiver, to dhrop that. Isn't these poor times, Charley, an' isn't this a poor counthry to live in—or it would be nearer the truth to say starve in?"

"No, but it would be the truth itself," replied the other. "What is there over the whole counthry but starvation and misery?"

"Any dhrames about America since, Charley? eh, now?"

"Maybe ay, and maybe no, Rody. Is it true that Tom Dalton threatens all kinds of vengeance on the Sullivans?"

"Ay, is it, an' the whole counthry says that he's as ready to knock one o' them on the head as ever the father before him was. They don't think the betther of the ould man for it; but what do you mane by 'maybe ay, an' maybe no,' Charley?"

"What do *you* mane by axin' me?"

Each looked keenly for some time at the other as he spoke, and after this there was a pause. At length, Hanlon, placing his hand upon Rody's shoulder, replied:

"Rody, it won't do. I know the design—and I tell you now that one word from my lips could have you brought up at the assizes—tried—and I won't say the rest. *You're betrayed!*"

The ruffian's lip fell—his voice faltered, and he became pale.

"Ay!" proceeded the other, "you may well look astonished—but listen, you talk about goin' to America—do you *wish* to go?"

"Of coorse I do," replied Rody, "of coorse—not a doubt of it."

"Well," proceeded Hanlon again, "listen still! your plan's discovered, you're betrayed; but I can't tell you who betrayed you, I'm not at liberty. Now listen, I say, come this way. Couldn't you an' I ourselves do the thing—couldn't we make the haul, and couldn't we cut off to America without any danger to signify, that is, if you can be *faithful?*"

"Faithful!" he exclaimed. "By all the books that was ever opened an' shut, I'm thruth and honesty itself, so I am—howandiver, you said I was betrayed?"

"But I can't tell you the man that told me. Whether you're able to guess at him or not, I don't know; but the thruth is, Rody, I've taken a likin' to you—an' if you'll just stand the trial I'm goin' to put you to, I'll be a friend to you—the best you ever had too."

"Well, Charley," said the other, plucking up courage a little, for the fellow was a thorough coward, "what is the thrial?"

"The man," continued Hanlon, "that betrayed you gave me *one* account of what you're about; but whether he tould me thruth or not I don't know till I hear *another*, an' that's yours. Now, you see clearly, Rody, that *I'm up to all as it is*, so you need not be a bit backward in tellin' the whole thruth. I say you're in danger, an' it's only trustin' to me—mark that—by trustin' faithfully to me that you'll get out of it; an', plaise the fates, I hope that, before three mouths is over, we'll be both safe an' comfortable in America. Do you undherstand that? I *had* my dhrames, Rody; but if I had, there must be nobody but yourself and me to know them."

"It wasn't I that first thought of it, but Donnel Dhu," replied Rody; "I never dreamt that he'd turn thraitor though."

"Don't be sayin' to-morrow or next day that I said he did," replied Hanlon. "Do you mind me now? A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse."

Rody, though cowardly and treacherous, was extremely cunning, and upon turning the matter over in his mind, he began to dread, or rather to feel that Hanlon had so far over-reached him. Still it might be possible, he thought, that the prophet *had* betrayed him, and he resolved to put a query to his companion that would test his veracity; after which he would leave himself at liberty to play a double game, if matters should so fall out as to render it necessary.

"Did the man that tould you everything," he asked, "tell you the *night* that was *appointed* for this business?"

Hanlon felt this was a puzzler, and that he might possibly commit himself by replying in the affirmative.

"No," he replied, "he didn't tell *me* that."

"Ah, ha!" thought his companion, "I see whereabouts you are."

He disclosed, however, the whole plot, with the single exception of the night appointed for the robbery, which, in point of date, he placed in his narrative exactly a week *after* the real time.

"Now," he said to himself, "so far I'm on the safe side; still, if he has humbugged me, I've paid him in his own coin. Maybe the whole haul, as he calls it, may be secured before *they* begin to prepare for it."

Hanlon, however, had other designs. After musing a little, they sauntered along the garden walks, during which he proposed a plan of their own for the robbery of Henderson; and so admirably was it concocted, and so tempting to the villainous cupidity of Duncan, that he expressed himself delighted from the commencement of its fancied execution until their ultimate settlement in America.

"It was a treacherous thing, I grant, to betray you, Rody," said Hanlon; "an' if I was in your place, I'd give him tit for tat. An', by the way, talkin' of the Prophet—not that I say it was *he* betrayed you—for indeed now it wasn't—bad cess to me if it was—I think you wanst said you knew more about him than I thought."

"Ah, ha," again thought Rody, "I think I see what you're afther at last; but no matther, I'll keep my eye on you. Hut, ay did I," he replied; "but I forget now what's this it was. However, I'll try if I can remember it; if I do, I'll tell you."

"You an' he will hang that murdherin' villain, Dalton."

"I'm afeard o' that," replied the other; "an' for my part, I'd as soon be out of the thing altogether; however, it can't be helped now."

"Isn't it sthrange, Rody, how murdher comes out at last?" observed Hanlon; "now there's that ould man, an' see, after twenty years or more, how it comes against him. However, it's not a very pleasant subject, so let it dhrop. Here's Masther Richard comin' through the private gate," he added; "but if you slip down to my aunt's to-night, we'll have a glass of something that'll do us no harm at any rate, and we can talk more about the other business."

"Very well," replied Rody, "I'll be down, so goodbye; an' whisper, Charley," he added, putting on a broad grin; "don't be too sure that I tould you a single word o' thruth about the rob—hem—ha, ha! take care of yourself—good people is scarce you know—ha, ha, ha!"

He then left Hanlon in a state of considerable doubt as to the discovery he had made touching the apprehended burglary; and his uncertainty was the greater, inasmuch as he had frequently heard the highest possible encomiums lavished upon Duncan's extraordinary powers of invention and humbug.

Young Henderson, on hearing these circumstances, did not seriously question their truth; neither did they in the slightest degree shake his confidence in the intentions of the Prophet with respect to Mave Sullivan. Indeed, he argued very reasonably and correctly, that the man who was capable of the one act, would have little hesitation to commit the other. This train of reflection, however, he kept to himself, for it is necessary to state here, that Hanlon was not at all in the secret of the plot against Mave. Henderson had, on an earlier occasion sounded him upon it, but perceived at once that his scruples could not be overcome, and that of course it would be dangerous to repose confidence in him.

The next evening was that immediately preceding the assizes, and it was known that Dalton's trial was either the second or third on the list, and must consequently come on, on the following day. The pedlar and Hanlon sat in a depressed and melancholy mood at the fire; an old crone belonging to the village, who had been engaged to take care of the house during the absence of Hanlon's aunt, sat at the other side, occasionally putting an empty *dudeen* into her mouth, drawing it hopelessly, and immediately knocking the bowl of it in a fretful manner, against the nail of her left thumb.

"What's the matther, Ailey?" asked the pedlar; "are you out o' tobaccy?"

"Throth it's time for you to ax—ay am I; since I ate my dinner, sorra puff I had."

"Here then," he replied, suiting the action to the word, and throwing a few halfpence into her lap; "go to Peggy Finigan's an' buy yourself a couple of ounces, an' smoke rings round you; and listen to me, go down before you come back to Barny Keeran's an' see whether he has my shoes done or not, an' tell him from me, that if they're not ready for me to-morrow mornin', I'll get him *exkummunicated*."

When the crone had gone out, the pedlar proceeded:

"Don't be cast down yet, I tell you; there's still time enough, an' they may be here still."

"Be here still! why, good God! isn't the thrial to come on to-morrow, they say?"

"So itself; you may take my word for it, that even if he's found guilty, they won't hang him, or any man of his years."

"Don't be too sure o' that," replied Hanlon; "but indeed what could I expect afther dependin' upon a foolish dhrame?"

"Never mind; I'm still of the opinion that everything may come about yet. The Prophet's wife was with Father Hanratty, tellin' him something, an' he is to call here early in the mornin'; he bid me tell you so."

"When did you see him?

"To day, at the cross roads, as he was goin' to a sick call."

"But where's the use o' that, when *they're*

not here? My own opinion is, that she's either sick, or if God hasn't said it, maybe dead. How can we tell if ever she has seen or found the man you sent her for? Sure, if she didn't, all's lost."

"Throth, I allow," replied the pedlar, "that things is in a distressin' state with us; however, while there's life there's hope, as the Doctor says. There must be something extraordinary wrong to keep them away so long, I grant—or herself, at any rate; still, I say again, trust in God. You have secured Duncan, you say; but can you depend on the ruffian?"

"If it was on his honesty, I could not, one second, but I do upon his villainy and love of money. I have promised him enough, and it all depends on whether he'll believe me or not."

"Well, well," observed the other, "I wish things had a brighter look up. If we fail, I won't know what to say. We must only thry an' do the best we can, ourselves."

"Have you seen the agint since you gave him the petition?" asked Hanlon.

"I did, but he had no discoorse with the Hendherson's; and he bid me call on him again."

"I dunna what does he intend to do?"

"Hut, nothing. What 'id he do? I'll go bail, he'll never trouble his head about it more; at any rate I tould him a thing."

"Very likely he won't," replied Hanlon; "but what I'm thinkin' of now, is the poor Daltons. May God in his mercy pity an' support them this night!"

The pedlar clasped his hands tightly as he looked up, and said "Amen!"

"Ay," said he, "it's now, Charley, whin I think of *them*, that I get frightened about our disappointment, and the way that everything has failed with us. God pity them, I say, too!"

The situation of this much tried family, was, indeed, on the night in question, pitiable in the extreme. It is true, they had now recovered, or nearly so, the full enjoyment of their health, and were—owing, as we have already said, to the bounty of some unknown friend—in circumstances of considerable comfort. Dalton's confession of the murder had taken away from them every principle upon which they could rely, with one only exception. Until the moment of that confession, they had never absolutely been in possession of the secret cause of his remorse—although, it must be admitted, that, on some occasions, the strength of his language and the melancholy depth of his sorrow, filled them with something like suspicion. Still such they knew to be the natural affection and tenderness of his heart, his benevolence and generosity, in spite of his occasional bursts of passion, that they could not reconcile to themselves the notion that he had ever murdered a fellow creature. Every one knows how slow the heart of wife or child is to entertain such a terrible suspicion against a husband or a parent, and that the discovery of their guilt comes upon the spirit with a weight of distress and agony that is great in proportion to the confidence felt in them.

The affectionate family in question had just concluded their simple act of evening worship, and were seated around a dull fire, looking forward in deep dejection to the awful event of the following day. The silence that prevailed was only broken by an occasional sob from the girls, or a deep sigh from young Con, who, with his mother, had not long been returned from Ballynafail, where they had gone to make preparations for the old man's defence. His chair stood by the fire, in its usual place, and as they looked upon it from time to time, they could not prevent their grief from bursting out afresh. The mother, on this occasion, found the usual grounds for comfort taken away from both herself and them—we mean, the husband's *innocence*. She consequently had but one principle to rely on—that of simple dependence upon God, and obedience to His sovereign will, however bitter the task might be, and so she told them.

"It's a great thrial to us, children," she observed; "an' it's only natural we should feel it. I do not bid you to stop cryin', my poor girls, because it would be very strange if you didn't cry. Still, let us not forget that it's our duty to bow down humbly before whatever misfortune—an' this is indeed a woeful one—that it pleases God in His wisdom (or, may be, in His mercy), to lay in our way. That's all we can do now, God help us—an' a hard thrial it is—for when we think of what he was *to us*—of his kindness—his affection!——"

Her own voice became infirm, and, instead of proceeding, she paused a moment, and then giving one long, convulsive sob, that rushed up from her very heart, she wept out long and bitterly. The grief now became a wail; and were it not for the presence of Con, who, however, could scarcely maintain a firm voice himself, the sorrow-worn mother and her unhappy daughters would have scarcely known when to cease.

"Mother dear!" he exclaimed—"what use is in this? You began with givin' us a good advice, an' you ended with settin' us a bad example! Oh, mother, darlin', forgive me the word—never, never since we remember anything, did you ever set us a bad example."

"Con dear, I bore up as long as I could," she replied, wiping her eye; "but you know, after all, nature's nature, an' will have its way. You know, too, that this is the first tear I shed since he left us."

"I know," replied her son, laying her care-worn cheek over upon his bosom, "that you are the best mother that ever breathed, an' that I would lay down my life to save your heart from bein' crushed, as it is, an' as it has been."

She felt a few warm tears fall upon her face as he spoke; and the only reply she made was, to press him affectionately to her heart.

"God's merciful, if we're obedient," she added, in a few moments; "don't you remember, that when Abraham was commanded to kill his only son, he was ready to obey God, and do it; and don't you remember that it wasn't until his very hand was raised, with the knife in it, that God interfered. Whisht," she continued, "I hear a step—who is it? Oh, poor Tom!"

The poor young man entered as she spoke; and after looking about him for some time, placed himself in the arm chair.

"Tom, darlin'," said his sister Peggy, "don't sit in that—that's our poor father's chair; an' until *he* sits in it again, none of us ever will."

"Nobody has sich a right to sit in it as I have," he replied, "I'm a murdherer."

His words, his wild figure, and the manner in which he uttered them, filled them with alarm and horror.

"Tom, dear," said his brother, approaching him, "why do you speak that way?—you're not a murdherer!"

"*I am!*" he replied; "but I haven't done wid the Sullivans yet, for what they're goin' to do—ha, ha, ha!—oh, no. It's all planned; an' they'll suffer, never doubt it."

"Tom," said Mary, who began to fear that he might, in some wild paroxysm, have taken the life of the unfortunate miser, or of some one else; "if you murdhered any one, who was it?"

"Who was it?" he replied; "if you go up to Curraghbeg churchyard, you'll find her there; the child's wid her—but I didn't murdher the child, did I?"

On finding that he alluded only to the unfortunate Peggy Murtagh, they recovered from the shock into which his words had thrown them. Tom, however, appeared exceedingly exhausted and feeble, as was evident from his inability to keep himself awake. His head gradually sank upon his breast, and in a few minutes he fell into a slumber.

"I'll put him to bed," said Con; "help me to raise him."

They lifted him up, and a melancholy sight it was to see that face, which had once been such a noble specimen of manly beauty, now shrunk away into an expression of gaunt and haggard wildness, that was painful to contemplate. His sisters could not restrain their tears, on looking at the wreck that was before them; and his mother, with a voice of deep anguish, exclaimed—

"My brave, my beautiful boy, what, oh, what has become of you? Oh, Tom, Tom," she added—"maybe it's well for you that you don't know the breakin' hearts that's about you this night—or the bitter fate that's over him that loved you so well."

As they turned him about, to take off his cravat, he suddenly raised his head, and looking about him, asked—

"Where's my father gone?—I see you all about me but him—where's my fath——"

Ere the words were pronounced, however, he was once more asleep, and free for a time from the wild and moody malady which oppressed him.

Such was the night, and such were the circumstances and feelings that ushered in the fearful day of Condy Dalton's trial.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A Picture of the Present—Sarah Breaks her Word.

The gray of a cold frosty morning had begun to dawn, and the angry red of the eastern sky gradually to change into that dim but darkening aspect which marks a coming tempest of snow, when the parish priest, the Rev. Father Hanratty, accompanied by Nelly M'Gowan, passed along the Ballynafail road, on their way to the Grange, for the purpose of having a communication with Charley Hanlon. It would, indeed, be impossible to describe a morning more strongly marked than the one in question, by that cold and shivering impression of utter misery which it is calculated to leave on any mind, especially when associated with the sufferings of our people. The breeze was keen and so cutting, that one felt as if that part of the person exposed to it had undergone the process of excoriation, and when a stronger blast than usual swept over the naked and desolate-looking fields, its influence actually benumbed the joints, and penetrated the whole system with a sensation that made one imagine the very marrow within the bones was frozen.

They had not proceeded far beyond the miserable shed where Sarah, in the rapid prostration of typhus, had been forced to

take shelter, when, in passing a wretched cabin by the road-side, which, from its open door and ruinous windows, had all the appearance of being uninhabited, they heard the moans of some unhappy individual within, accompanied, as it were, with something like the low feeble wail of an infant.

"Ah," said the worthy priest, "this, I fear, is another of those awful cases of desertion and death that are too common in this terrible and scourging visitation. We must not pass here without seeing what is the matther, and rendering such assistance as we can."

"Wid the help o' God, my foot won't cross the threshel," replied Nelly—"I know it's the sickness—God keep it from us!—an' I won't put myself in the way o' it."

"Don't profain the name of the Almighty, you wretched woman," replied the priest, alighting from his horse; "it is always His will and wish, that in such trials as these you should do whatever you can for your suffering fellow-creatures."

"But if I should catch it," the other replied, "what 'ud become o' me? mightn't I be as bad as they are in there; an' maybe in the same place, too; an' God knows I'm not fit to die."

"Stay where you are," said the priest, "until I enter the house, and if your assistance should be necessary, I shall command you to come in."

"Well, if you ordher me," replied the superstitious creature, "that changes the case. I'll be then undher obadience to my clargy."

"If you had better observed the precepts of your religion, and the injunctions of your clergy, wretched woman, you would not be the vile creature you are to-day," he replied, as he hooked his horse's bridle upon a staple in the door-post, and entered the cabin.

"Oh, merciful father, support me!" he exclaimed, "what a sight is here! Come in at once," he added, addressing himself to Nelly; "and if you have a woman's heart within you, aid me in trying what can be done."

Awed by his words, but with timidity and reluctance, she approached the scene of appalling misery which there lay before them. But how shall we describe it? The cabin in which they stood had been evidently for some time deserted, a proof that its former humble inmates had been all swept off by typhus; for in these peculiar and not uncommon cases, no other family would occupy the house thus left desolate, so that the cause of its desertion was easily understood. The floor was strewed in some places with little stopples of rotten thatch, evidently blown in by the wind of the previous night; the cheerless fire-place was covered with cloth of soot, and the floor was all spattered over with the black shining moisture called soot-drops, which want of heat and habitation caused to fall from the roof. The cold, strong blast, too, from time to time, rushed in with wild moans of desolation, that rose and fell in almost supernatural tones, and swept the dead ashes and soot from the fire-place, and the rotten thatch from the floor, in little eddies that spun about until they had got into some nook or corner where the fiercer strength of the blast could not reach them. Stretched out in this wretched and abandoned hut, lay before the good priest and his companion, a group of misery, consisting of both the dying and the dead—to wit, a mother and her three children. Over in the corner, on the right hand side of the fire-place, the unhappy and perishing creature lay, divided, or rather torn asunder, as it were, by the rival claims of affection. Lying close to her cold and shivering breast was an infant of about six months old, striving feebly, from time to time, to draw from that natural source of affection the sustenance which had been dried up by chilling misery and want. Beside her, on the left, lay a boy—a pale, emaciated boy—about eight years old, silent and motionless, with the exception that, ever and anon, he turned round his heavy blue eyes as if to ask some comfort or aid, or even some notice from his unfortunate mother, who, as if conscious of these affectionate supplications, pressed his wan cheek tenderly with her fingers, to intimate to him, that as far as she *could*, she responded to, and acknowledged these last entreaties of the heart; whilst, again, she felt her affections called upon by the apparently dying struggles of the infant that was, in reality, fast perishing at the now-exhausted fountain of its life. Between these two claimants was the breaking heart of the woeful mother divided, but the alternations of her love seemed now almost wrought up to the last terrible agonies of mere animal instinct, when the sufferings are strong in proportion to that debility of reason which supervenes in such deaths as arise from famine, or under those feelings of indescribable torture which tore her affection, as it were, to pieces, and paralyzed her higher powers of moral suffering. Beyond the infant again, and next the wall, lay a girl, it might be about eleven, stretched, as if in sleep, and apparently in a state of composure that struck one forcibly, when contrasted, from its utter stillness, with the yet living agonies by which she was surrounded. It was evident, from the decency with which the girl's thin scanty covering was arranged,

and the emaciated arms placed by her side, that the poor parent had endeavored, as well as she could, *to lay her out;* and, oh, great God! what a task for a mother, and under what circumstances must it have been performed! There, however, did the corpse of this fair and unhappy child lie; her light and silken locks blown upon her still and death-like features by the ruffian blast, and the complacency which had evidently characterized her countenance when in life, now stamped by death, with the sharp and wan expression of misery and the grave. Thus surrounded lay the dying mother, and it was not until the priest had taken in, at more than one view, the whole terrors of this awful scene, that he had time to let his eyes rest upon her countenance and person. When he did, however, the history, though a fearful one, was, in her case, as indeed in too many, legible at a glance, and may be comprised in one word—*starvation.*

Father Hanratty was a firm minded man, with a somewhat rough manner, but a heart natural and warm. After looking upon her face for a few moments, he clasped his hands closely together, and turning up his eyes to Heaven, he exclaimed:

"Great God, guide and support me in this trying scene!"

And, indeed, it is not to be wondered at that he uttered such an exclamation. There lay in the woman's eyes—between her knit and painful eye-brows, over her shrunk upper forehead, upon her sharp cheek-bones, and along the ridge of her thin, wasted nose—there lay upon her skeleton arms, pointed elbows, and long-jointed fingers, a frightful expression, at once uniform and varied, that spoke of gaunt and yellow famine in all its most hideous horrors. Her eyeballs protruded even to sharpness, and as she glared about her with a half conscious and half-instinctive look, there seemed a fierce demand in her eye that would have been painful, were it not that it was occasionally tamed down into something mournful and imploring, by a recollection of the helpless beings that were about her. Stripped, as she then was, of all that civilized society presents to a human being on the bed of death—without friends, aid of any kind, comfort, sympathy, or the consolations of religion—she might be truly said to have sunk to the mere condition of animal life—whose uncontrollable impulses had thus left their startling and savage impress upon her countenance, unless, as we have said, when the faint dawn of consciousness threw a softer and more human light into her wild features.

"In the name and in the spirit of God's mercy," asked the priest, "if you have the use of your tongue or voice, tell me what the matter is with you or your children? Is it sickness or starvation?"

The sound of a human voice appeared to arrest her attention, and rouse her a little. She paused, as it were, from her sufferings, and looked first at the priest, and then at his companion—but she spoke not. He then repeated the question, and after a little delay he saw that her lips moved.

"She is striving to speak," said he, "but cannot. I will stoop to her."

He repeated the question a third time, and, stooping, so as to bring his ear near her mouth, he could catch, expressed very feebly and indistinctly, the word—*hunger.* She then made an effort, and bent down her mouth to the infant which now lay still at her breast. She felt for its little heart, she felt its little lips—but they were now chill and motionless; its little hands ceased to gather any longer around her breast; it was cold—it was breathless—it was dead! Her countenance now underwent a singular and touching change—a kind of solemn joy—a sorrowful serenity was diffused over it. She seemed to remember their position, and was in the act, after having raised her eyes to heaven, of putting round her hand to feel for the boy who lay on the other side, when she was seized with a short and rather feeble spasm, and laying down her head in its original position between her children, she was at last freed from life and all the sufferings which its gloomy lot had inflicted upon her and those whom she loved.

The priest, seeing that she was dead, offered up a short but earnest prayer for the repose of her soul, after which he turned his attention to the boy.

"The question now is," he observed to his companion, "can we save this poor, but interesting child?"

"I hardly think it possible," she replied; "doesn't your reverence see that death's workin' at him—and an' aisey job he'll have of the poor thing now."

"Hunger and cold have here done awful work," said Father Hanratty, "as they have and will in many other conditions similar to this. I shall mount my horse, and if you lift the poor child up, I will wrap him as well as I can in my great coat,"—which, by the way, he stripped off him as he spoke. He then folded it round the boy, and putting him into Nelly's arms, was about to leave the cabin, when the child, looking round him for a moment, and then upon his mother, made a faint struggle to get back.

"What is it, asthore?" asked the woman; "what is it you want?"

"Lave me wid my mother," he said; "let me go to her; my poor father's dead, an' left us—oh! let *me* stay with *her*."

The poor boy's voice was so low and feeble, that it was with difficulty she heard the words, which she repeated to the priest.

"Dear child," said the latter, "we are bringing you to where you will get food and drink, and a warm bed to go to, and you will get better, I hope."

And as he took the helpless and innocent sufferer into his arms, after having fixed himself in the saddle, the tears of strong compassion ran down his cheeks.

"He is as light as a feather, poor thing," exclaimed the kind-hearted man; "but I trust in heaven we may save him yet."

And they immediately hurried onward to the next house, which happened to be that of our friend Jerry Sullivan, to the care of whose humane and affectionate family they consigned him.

We cannot dwell here upon that which every reader can anticipate; it is enough to say that the boy with care recovered, and that his unfortunate mother with her two children received an humble grave in the nearest churchyard, beyond the reach of the storms and miseries of life forever.

On reaching the Grange, or rather the house now occupied by widow Hanlon, the priest having sent for Charley, into whose confidence he had for some time been admitted, had a private conference, of considerable length, with him and the pedlar; after which, Nelly was called in, as it would seem, to make some disclosure connected with the subject they were discussing. A deep gloom, however, rested upon both Hanlon and the pedlar; and it was sufficiently evident that whatever the import of Nelly M'Gowan's communication may have been, it was not of so cheering a nature as to compensate for the absence of widow Hanlon, and the party for which she had been sent. Father Hanratty having left them, they took an early breakfast, and proceeded to Ballynafail—which we choose to designate as the assize town—in order to watch, with disappointed and heavy hearts, the trial of Condy Dalton, in whose fate they felt a deeper interest than the reader might suppose.

All the parties attended, the Prophet among the rest; and it might have been observed, that his countenance was marked by an expression of peculiar determination. His brow was, if possible, darker than usual; his eye was quicker and more circumspect, but his complexion, notwithstanding this, was not merely pale, but absolutely white as ashes. The morning came, however, and the assizes were opened with the usual formalities. The judge's charge to the grand jury, in consequence of the famine outrages which had taken place to such an extent, was unusually long; nor was the "King against Dalton," for the murder of Sullivan, left without due advice and comment. In this way a considerable portion of the day passed. At length a trial for horse-stealing came on, but closed too late to allow them to think of commencing any other case during that day; and, as a natural consequence, that of Condy Dalton was postponed until the next morning.

It is an impressive thing; and fills the mind with a reverend sense of the wisdom manifested by an over-ruling Providence, to reflect upon the wondrous manner in which the influence of slight incidents is made to frustrate the subtlest designs of human ingenuity, and vindicate the justice of the Almighty in the eyes of his creatures, sometimes for the reward of the just, and as often for the punishment of the guilty. Had the trial of Dalton, for instance, gone on, as had been anticipated, during the first day, it is impossible to say how many of the characters in our humble drama might have grievously suffered or escaped in consequence. At all events it is not likely that the following dialogue would have ever taken place, or been made instrumental in working out purposes, and defeating plans, with which the reader, if he is not already, will very soon be made acquainted.

Donnel Dhu had returned from the assizes, and was sitting, as usual, poring over the fire, when he asked the old woman who nursed Sarah, if there had been any persons inquiring for him since nightfall.

"Three or four," she replied; "but I said you hadn't come home yet; an' divil a one o' them but was all on the same tune, an' bid me to tell you *that it was a safe night*."

"Well, I hope it is, Biddy," he replied, "but not so safe," he added to himself, "as I could wish it to be. How is Sarah?"

"She's better," replied the woman, "an' was up to-day for an hour or two; but still she's poorly, and I think her brain isn't right yet."

"Very likely it isn't," said the Prophet. "But, Biddy, when were you at Shanco?"

"Not this week past."

"Well, then, if you like to slip over for an hour or so now, you may, an' I'll take care of Sarah till you come back; only don't be longer."

"Long life to you, Donnel; throth an' I want to go, if it was only to set the little matthers right for them poor orphans, my grandchildre."

"Well, then, go," he replied; "but don't

"WELL, AT ANY RATE," REPLIED DUNCAN, "I'LL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH *this* ROBBERY—DEVIL A THING; BUT I'LL MAKE A BARGAIN WID YOU—IF YOU MANAGE THE ORANGE BUSINESS, I'LL LEND A HAND IN MAVE SULLIVAN'S AFFAIR."—*Black Phophet*, chap. xxix. p 612.

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be more than an hour away, mind. I'll take care of Sarah for you till you come back."

At this moment a tap came to the door, and Donnel, on hearing it, went out, and in a minute or two returned again, saying—

"Hurry, Biddy; make haste, if you wish to go at all; but remember not to be more than an hour away."

The old creature accordingly threw her cloak about her, and made the best of her way to see her grandchildren, both of whose parents had been swept away by the first deadly ravages of the typhus fever.

She had not been long gone, when another tap was given, and Donnel, on opening the door, said—

"You may come in now; she's off to Shanco. I didn't think it safe that she should see us together on this night, at all events. Sit down. This girl's illness has nearly spoiled all; however, we must only do the best we can. Thank God the night's dark, that's one comfort."

"If we could a' had Dalton found guilty," replied Rody, "all would be well over this night, an' we might be on our way out o' this to America; but what 'ud you do wid Sarah if we had? Sure she wouldn't be able to travel, nor she won't, I doubt, as it is."

"Sarah," replied the Prophet, who suspected the object of the question, "is well fit to take care of herself. We must only go without her, if she's not able to come the day after to-morrow. Where are the boys *for the Grange?*"

"Undher shelter of the Grey Stone, waitin' to start."

"Well, then, as it it," said Donnel, "they know their business, at any rate. The Grange folk don't expect them this week to come, you think?"

Rody looked at the Prophet very keenly, as he thought of the conversation that took place between himself and Charley Hanlon, and which, upon an explanation with Donnel, he had detailed. The fellow, however, as we said, was both cowardly and suspicious, and took it into his head that his friend might feel disposed to play him a trick, by sending him to conduct the burglary, of which Hanlon had spoken with such startling confidence—a piece of cowardice which, indeed, was completely gratuitous and unfounded on his part; the truth being, that it was the Prophet's interest, above all things, to keep Rody out of danger, both for that worthy individual's sake and his own. Rody, we say, looked at him; and of a certainty it must be admitted, that the physiognomy of our friend, the Seer, during that whole day, was one from which no very high opinion of his integrity or good faith could be drawn.

"It's a very sthrange thing," replied Rody, in a tone of thought and reflection, "how Charley Hanlon came to know of this matther at all."

"He never heard a word of it," replied Donnel, "barrin' from yourself."

"From me!" replied Rody, indignantly, "what do you mane by that?"

"Why, when you went to sound him," said Donnel, "you let too much out; and Charley was too cute not to see what you wor at."

"Ah! *feathalagh* an' nonsense," replied Rody, who, by the way, entertained a very high opinion of his own sagacity; "no mortal could suspect that there was a plot to rob the house from what I said; but hould," he added, slapping his knee, as if he had made a discovery, "*ma chorp an' dioul*, but I have it all."

"What is it?" said the Prophet, calmly.

"You tould the matther to Sarah, an' *she*, by coorse, tould it to Charley Hanlon, that she tells everything to."

"No such thing," replied the other. "Sarah knows nothing about the robbery that's to go on to-night at the Grange, but she did about the plan upon Mave Sullivan, and promised to help us in it, as I tould you before."

"Well, at any rate," replied Duncan, "I'll have nothing to do with *this* robbery—devil a thing; but I'll make a bargain wid you—if you manage the Grange business, I'll lend a hand in Mave Sullivan's affair."

The Prophet looked at him, fastening his dark piercing eyes upon his face—

"I see," he proceeded, "you're suspicious or you're cowardly, or maybe both; but to make you feel that I'm neither the one nor the other, and that you have no raison to be so either, I say I'll take you at your word. Do *you* manage Mave Sullivan's business, an' I'll see what can be done with the other. An' listen to me now, it's our business, in case of a discovery of the robbery, to have Masther Dick's neck as far in the noose for Mave's affair as ours may be for the other thing; an' for the same raison you needn't care how far you drive him. He doesn't wish to have violence; but do you take care that there *will* be violence, an' then maybe we may manage him if there's a discovery in the other affair."

"Donnel, you're a great headpiece—the divil's not so deep as you are; but as the most of them all is strangers, an' they say there's two girls in Sullivan's instead o' one, how will the strange boys know the right one?"

"If it goes to that," said the Prophet, "you'll know her by the clipped head. The

minute they seize upon the girl with the *clipped head*, let them make sure of *her*. Poor foolish Tom Dalton, who knows nothing about *our* scheme, thinks the visit is merely to frighten the Sullivans; but when you get the girl, let her be brought to the cross-roads of Tuhavert, where Masther Dick will have a chaise waitin' for her, an' wanst she's with him your care's over. In the meantime, while he's waitin' there, I an' the others will see what can be done at the Grange."

"But tell me, Donnel; you don't intend, surely, to leave poor Sarah behind us?"

"Eh? Sarah?" returned the Prophet.

"Ay; bekaise you said so awhile agone."

"I know I said so awhile ago; but regardin' Sarah, Rody, she's the only livin' thing on this earth that I care about. I have hardened my heart, thank God, against all the world but herself; an' although I have never much showed it to her, an' although I have neglected her, an' sometimes thought I hated her for her mother's sake—well, no matther — she's the only thing I love or care about for all that. Oh! no—go wid-out Sarah—come weal come woe—we must *not*."

"Bekaise," continued Rody, "when we're all safe, an' out o' the raich o' danger, I have a thing to say to you about Sarah."

"Very well, Rody," said the Prophet, with a grim but bitter smile, "it'll be time enough *then*. Now, go and manage these fellows, an' see you do things as they ought to be done."

"She's fond o' Charley Hanlon, to my own knowledge."

"Who is?"

"Sarah, an' between you an' me, it's not a Brinoge like him that's fit for her. She's a hasty and an uncertain kind of a girl—a good dale wild or so—an' it isn't, as I said, the likes o' that chap that 'id answer her, but a steady, experienced, sober——"

"Honest man, Rody. Well, I'm not in a laughin' humor, now; be off, an' see that you do yourself an' us all credit."

When he was gone, the Prophet drew a long breath—one, however, from its depth, evidently indicative of anything but ease of mind. He then rose, and was preparing to go out, when Sarah, who had only laid herself on the bed, without undressing, got up, and approaching him, said, in a voice tremulous with weakness:

"Father, I have heard every word you and Rody said."

"Well," replied her father, looking at her, "I supposed as much. I made no secret of anything; however, keep to your bed—you're not able to rise yet!"

"Father, I have changed my mind; you have neither my heart nor wish in anything you're bent on this night."

"Changed your mind!" replied the Prophet, bitterly. "Oh! you're a real woman, I suppose, like your mother; you'll drive some unfortunate man to hate the world an' all that's in it yet?"

"Father, I care as little about the world as you do; but still never will I lay myself out to do anything that's wrong."

"You promised to assist us then in Mave Sullivan's business, for all that," he replied. "You can break your word, too. Ah! real woman again."

"Sooner than keep *that* promise, father, *now*, I would willingly let the last dhrop o' blood out o' my heart—my unhappy heart. Father, you're provin' yourself to be what I can't name. Listen to me—you're on the brink o' destruction. Stop in time, an' fly, for there's a fate over you. I dreint since I lay down—not more than a couple of hours ago—that I saw the Tobacco Box you were lookin' for, in the hands of——"

"Don't bother or vex me with your d——d nonsense about dhrames," he replied, in a loud and excited voice. "The curse o' Heaven on all dhrames, an' every stuff o' the kind. Go to bed."

He slapped the door violently after him as he spoke, and left her to her own meditations.

CHAPTER XXX.

Self-sacrifice—Villany Exposed.

THE passes now as it did on the night recorded in the preceding chapter. About the hour of two o'clock, on the same night, a chaise was standing at the cross roads of Tuhavert, in which a gentleman, a little but not much the worse of liquor, sat in a mood redolent of anything but patience. Many ejaculations did he utter, and some oaths, in consequence of the delay of certain parties whom he expected to meet there. At length the noise of many feet was heard, and in the course of a few minutes a body of men advanced in the darkness, one of whom approached the chaise, and asked—

"Is that Masther Dick?"

"Master *Dick*, sirrah: no, it's not."

"Then there must be some mistake," replied the fellow, who was a stranger; "and as it's a runaway match, by gorra, it would never do to give the girl to the wrong person. It was Masther Dick that the Prophet desired us to inquire for."

"There *is* a mistake, my friend; there is

—my name, my good fellow, happens to be Master *Richard*, or rather *Mister* Richard. In all other respects, everything is right. I expect a lady; and I am the gentleman, but not Master Dick, though—Richard is the correct reading."

"Then, sir," replied the fellow, "here she is;" and whilst speaking, a horseman, bearing a female before him, came forward, and in a few minutes she was transferred without any apparent resistance, to the inside of the vehicle which awaited her. This vehicle we shall now follow.

The night, as we said, was dark, but it was also cold and stormy. The driver, who had received his instructions, proceeded in the direction of the Grange; and we only say so generally, because so many cross roads branched off from that which they took, that it was impossible to say when or where Master or Mister Richard may have intended to stop. In the meantime, that enterprising and gallant young gentleman commenced a dialogue, somewhat as follows:—

"My dear Miss Sullivan, I must be satisfied that these fellows have conducted this business with all due respect to your feelings. I hope they have not done anything to insult you."

"I am very weak," replied the lady; "you needn't expect me to spake much, for I'm not able. I only wish I was in Heaven, or anywhere out of this world."

"You speak as if you had been agitated or frightened; but compose yourself, you are now under my protection at last, and you shall want for nothing that can contribute to your ease and comfort. Upon my honor—upon my sacred honor, I say—I would not have caused you even this annoyance, were it not that you yourself expressed a willingness—very natural, indeed, considering our affection—to meet me here to-night."

"Who tould you that I was willin' to meet you?"

"Who? why who but our mutual friend, the Black Prophet; and by the way, he is to meet us at the Grey Stone, by and by."

"He tould you false, then," replied his companion, feebly.

"Why," asked Henderson, "are you not here with your own consent?"

"I am—oh, indeed, I am,—it's altogether my own act that brings me here—my own act—an' I thank God, that I had strength for it."

"Admirable girl!—that is just what I have been led to expect from you, and you shall not regret it; I have, as I said, everything provided that can make you happy."

"Happy!—I can't bear this, sir; I'm desavin' you. I'm not what you think me."

"You are ill, I fear, my dear Miss Sullivan; the bustle and disturbance have agitated you too much, and you are ill."

"You are speaking truth. I am very ill but I'll soon be better—I'll soon be better. She feared nothing from me," added she, in a low soliloquy; "an' could I let her out-do me in generosity and kindness. Is this fire? Is there fire in the coach?" she asked, in a loud voice; "or is it lighthnin'? Oh, my head, my head; but it will soon be over."

"Compose yourself, I entreat of you, my dearest girl. What! good Heavens, how is this? You have not been ill for any time? Your hand—pardon me; you need not withdraw it so hastily—is quite burning and fleshless. What is wrong?"

"Everything, sir, is wrong, unless that I am here, an' that is as it ought to be. Ha, ha!"

"Good, my dearest girl—that consoles me again. Upon my honor, the old Prophet shall not lose by this; on the contrary, I shall keep my word like a prince, and at the Grey Stone shall he pocket, ere half an hour, the reward of his allegiance to his liege lord. I have, for a long time, had my eye on you, Miss Sullivan, an' when the Prophet assured me that you had discarded Dalton for my sake, I could scarcely credit him, until you confirmed the delightful fact, by transmitting me a tress of your beautiful hair.

His companion made no reply to this, and the chaise went on for some minutes without any further discourse. Henderson, at length, ventured to put over his hand towards the corner in which his companion sat; but it no sooner came in contact with her person, than he felt her shrinking, as it were, from his very touch. With his usual complacent confidence, however, in his own powers of attraction and strongly impressed, besides, with a belief in his knowledge of the sex, he at once imputed all this to caprice on the behalf of Mave, or rather to that assumption of extreme delicacy, which is often resorted to, and overacted, when the truthful and modest principle from which it should originate has ceased to exist.

"Well, my dear girl," he proceeded, "I grant that all this is natural enough—quite so—I know the step you have taken shows great strength of character; for indeed it requires a very high degree of moral courage and virtue in you, to set society and the whole world at perfect defiance, for my sake; but, my dearest girl, don't be cast down—you are not alone in this heroic sacrifice; not at all, believe me. You are not the first who has made it for me; neither, I trust, shall you be the last. This I say, of course, to encourage you, because I see that the step

you have taken has affected you very much, as is natural it should."

A low moan, apparently of great pain, was the only reply Henderson received to this eloquent effort at consolation. The carriage again rolled onward in silence, and nothing could be heard but the sweep of the storm without—for it blew violently—and deep breathings, or occasional moanings, from his companion within. They drove, it might be, for a quarter of an hour, in this way, when Henderson felt his companion start, and the next moment her hand was placed upon his arm.

"Ha! ha! my dearest," thought he, "I knew, notwithstanding all your beautiful startings and fencings, that matters would come to this. There is nothing, after all, like leaving you to yourselves a little, and you are sure to come round. My dear Miss Sullivan," he added, aloud, "be composed—say but what it is you wish, and if a man can accomplish it, it must be complied with, or procured for you."

"Then," said she, "if you are a human being, let me know when we come to the Grey Stone."

"Undoubtedly, I shall. The grim old Prophet promised to meet us there—and, for a reason I have, I know he will keep his word. We shall be there in less than a quarter of an hour. But, my precious creature, now that you understand how we are placed with relation to each other, I think you might not, and ought not, object to allowing me to support you after the fatigue and agitation of the night—hem! Do repose your head upon my bosom, like a pretty, trembling, agitated dear, as you are."

"Hould away!" exclaimed his companion; "don't dare to lay a hand upon me. If your life is worth anything—an' it's not worth much—keep your distance. You'll find your mistake soon. I didn't put myself in your power without the manes of defendin' myself an' punishin' you, if you should desarve it."

"Beautiful caprice! But, my dearest girl, I can understand it all—it is well done; and I know, besides, that a little hysteries will be necessary in their proper place; but for that you must wait till we get to our destination; and then you will be most charmingly affected with a fit—a delightful, sweet, soft, sobbing fit—which will render it necessary for me to soothe and console you; to wipe your lovely eyes; and then, you know, to kiss your delicious lips. All this, my darling girl, will happen as a natural consequence, and in due time every thing will be well."

There was no reply given to this; but the moaning was deeper, and apparently more indicative of pain and distress than before. A third silence ensued, during which they arrived at the Grey Stone, of whose proximity the driver had received orders to give them intimation.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Henderson, "what's the matter? Why do you stop, my good fellow?"

"We are at the Grey Stone, your honor," replied the man.

"Oh, very well; pull up a moment," he added. "My dear Miss Sullivan, we are at the Grey Stone now," said he, addressing her.

She moaned again, and started.

"Whist," said she; "I don't hear his voice."

At this moment a man approached the driver, and desired him to let him know that a person wished to speak with him.

The female in the carriage no sooner heard the voice, even although the words were uttered in whispers, than she called out—

"Father, come to me—help me home—I'm dyin'! You've been desaved, Mr. Henderson," she added. "It wasn't Mave Sullivan, but the Prophet's own daughter, you took away. Blessed be God, I've saved her that disgrace. Father, help me home. I won't be long a throuble to you now."

"What's this!" exclaimed Henderson. "Are you not Miss Sullivan?"

"Am I in a dhrame?" said the Prophet, approaching the door of the chaise. "Surely—now—what is it? It's my daughter's voice! Is that Sarah that I left in her bed of typhus faver this night? Or, am I in a dhrame still, I say? Sarah, is it you? Spake."

"It is me, father; help me home. It will be your last throuble with me, I think—at laste, I hope so—oh, I hope so!"

"Who talks about typhus fever?" asked Henderson, starting out of the chaise with alarm. "What means this? Explain yourself."

"I can no more explain it," replied the Prophet, "than you can. I left my daughter lyin' in bed of typhus faver, not more than three or four hours ago; an' if I'm to believe my ears, I find her in the carriage with you now!"

"I'm here," she replied; "help me out."

"Oh, I see it all now," observed Henderson, in a fit of passion, aggravated by the bitterness of his disappointment—"I see your trick; an' so, you old scoundrel, you thought to impose your termagant daughter upon me instead of Miss Sullivan, and she reeking with typhus fever, too, by your own account. For this piece of villany I shall

settle with you, however, never fear. Typhus fever! Good God!—and I so dreadfully afraid of it all along, that I couldn't bear to look near a house in which it was, nor approach any person even recovering out of it. Driver, you may leave the girl at home. As for me, I shall not enter your chaise again, contaminated, as it probably is, with that dreadful complaint, that is carrying off half the country. Call to the Grange in the morning, an' you shall be paid. Good-night, you prophetical old impostor. I shall mark you for this piece of villany; you may rest assured of that. A pretty trudge I shall have to the Grange, such a vile and tempestuous night; but you shall suffer for it, I say again."

Donnel Dhu was not merely disappointed at finding Sarah in such a situation; he was literally stupefied with amazement, and could scarcely believe the circumstances to be real. It had been agreed between him and Henderson, that should the latter succeed in fetching Mave Sullivan as far as the Grey Stone, he (the Prophet) should be considered to have fulfilled the conditions of the compact entered into between them, and the wages of his iniquity were to have been paid to him on that spot. It is unnecessary to say, therefore, that his disapointment and indignation were fully equal to those of Henderson himself.

"Where am I to go now?" asked the driver.

"To hell!" replied the Prophet, "an' you may bring your fare with you."

"You must take the reins yourself, then," replied the man, "for I don't know the way."

"Drive across the river, here then," continued the other, "and up the little road to the cottage on the right; yes, to the right—till we get that — that — I can't find words to name her—in the house."

A few minutes brought them to the door, and poor Sarah found herself once more in her own cabin, but in such a state as neutralized most of her father's resentment. When the driver had gone, Donuel came in again, and was about to wreak upon her one of those fits of impetuous fury, in which, it was true, he seldom indulged, but which, when wrought to a high state of passion, were indeed frightful.

"Now," he began, "in the name of all that's"—he paused, however, for on looking closely at her, there appeared something in her aspect so utterly subversive of resentment, that he felt himself disarmed at once. Her face was as pale as his own, but the expression of it was so chaste, so mournful, and yet so beautiful, that his tongue refused its office.

"Sarah," said he, "what is the matter with you? — account for all this — I don't understand it."

She rose with great difficulty, and, tottering over towards him, laid her head upon his bosom, and looking up with a smile of melancholy tenderness into his face, burst into tears.

"Father," said she, it is not worth your while to be angry with Sarah now. I heard words from your lips this night that would make me forgive you a thousand crimes. I heard you say *that you loved me* — loved me better than anything else in this world. I'm glad I know it, for that will be all the consolation I will have on my bed of death —an' there it is, father," she said, pointing to that which she always occupied; help me over to it now, for I feel that I will never rise from it more."

Her father spoke not, but assisted her to the bed from which the old nurse, who had fallen asleep in it, now rose. He then went into the open air for a few minutes, but soon returned, and going over to the bedside where she lay, he looked upon her long and earnestly.

"Father," said she, "I only did my duty this night. I knew, indeed, I would never recover it — but then she risked her life for me, an' why shouldn't I do as much for her?"

The Prophet still looked upon her, but spoke not a word; his lips were closely compressed, his hands tightly clasped, and his piercing eyes almost immovable. Minute after minute thus passed, until nearly half an hour had elapsed, and Sarah dreadfully exhausted by what she had undergone, found her eyes beginning to close in an unsettled and feverish slumber. At length he said, in a tone of voice which breathed of tenderness itself—

"*Sleep, dear Sarah—dear Sarah, sleep.*"

She apparently was asleep, but not so as to be altogether unconscious of his words, for, in spite of illness and fatigue, a sweet and serene smile stole gently over her pale face, rested on it for a little, and again, gradually, and with a mournful placidity died away. Her father sighed deeply, and turning to the bedside, said—

"It is useless to ask her anything this night, Biddy. Can you tell me what became of her, or how she got out?"

"Oh, the sorra word," replied the old woman; "I'm sure such a start was never taken out o' mortal as I got when I came here, and found her gone. I searched all the neighborhood, but no use—divil a sowl seen her—so afther trottin' here an' there, an' up and down, I came in not able to mark the

ground, and laid myself down on the bed, where I fell asleep till you came back; but where, in the name of all that's wonderful, was she?"

Donnel sat down in silence, and the crone saw that he was in no mood for answering questions, or entering into conversation; she accordingly clapped herself on her hunkers, and commenced sucking her dudeen, without at all seeming to expect a reply.

We, however, shall avail ourselves of the historian's privilege, in order to acquaint our readers, very briefly, with that, of which we presume, so far as Sarah is concerned, they can scarcely plead ignorance. Having heard the conversation between Rody Duncan and her father, which satisfied her that the plot for taking away Mave Sullivan was to be executed that very night, Sarah, with her usual energy and disregard for herself, resolved to make an effort to save her generous rival, for we must here acquaint our readers, that during the progress of her convalescence, she had been able to bring to her recollection the presence of Mave Sullivan in the shed on more than one occasion. She did not, however, depend upon her own memory or impressions for this, but made inquiries from her nurse, who, in common with the whole neighborhood, had heard of Mave's humanity and attention towards her, to which it was well known, she owed her life. The generous girl, therefore, filled with remorse at having, for one moment, contemplated any act of injury towards Mave, now determined to save her from the impending danger, or lose her life in the attempt. How she won her way in such an enfeebled state of health, and on such a night, cannot now be known; it is sufficient here to say, that she arrived only a few minutes before the attack was made upon Sullivan's house, and just in time to have Mave and her cousin each concealed under a bed. Knowing, however, that a strict search would have rendered light of some kind necessary, and enable the ruffians to discover Mave besides, she, at once, threw herself in their way, under a feigned attempt to escape, and the next moment three or four voices exclaimed, exultingly, "we have her—the *cropped head*—here she is—all's right—come away, you darlin', you'll be a happy girl before this day week!"

"I hope so," she replied; "oh, I hope so—bring me away!"

The Prophet's own adventure was not less disastrous. Rody Duncan's sudden withdrawal from the robbery surprised him very much. On seriously and closely re-considering the circumstances, it looked suspicious, and ere a single hour had passed, Donnel felt an impression that, on that business at least, Rody had betrayed him. Acting upon this conviction—for it amounted to that—he soon satisfied himself that the house was secured against the possibility of any successful attack upon it. This he discovered in the village of Grange, when, on inquiring, he found that most of the young men were gone to sit up all night in the "big house,' So much being known, any additional information to Donnel was unnecessary. He accordingly relinquished the enterprise; and remembering the engagement with young Henderson at the Grey Stone, met him there, to receive the wages of his iniquity; but with what success, the reader is already acquainted.

This double failure of his projects, threw the mind of the Prophet into a train of deep and painful reflection. He began to reflect that his views of life and society might not, after all, be either the safest or the best. He looked back over his own past life, and forward to the future, and he felt as if the shadow of some approaching evil was over him. He then thought of his daughter, and pictured to himself what she might have been, had he discharged, as he ought to have done, the duties of a Christian parent towards her. This, and other recollections, pressed upon him, and his heart was once or twice upon the point of falling back into the fresh impulses of its early humanity, when the trial of to-morrow threw him once more into a gloom, that settled him down into a resentful but unsatisfactory determination to discharge the duty he had imposed upon himself.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A Double Trial—Retributive Justice.

With beating and anxious hearts did the family of the Daltons rise upon the gloomy morning of the old man's trial. Deep concern prevented them from eating, or even feeling inclined to eat; but when about to sit down to their early and sorrowful repast, Mrs. Dalton, looking around her, asked—

"Where is poor Tom from us this morning?"

"He went out last night," replied one of his sisters, "but didn't come back since."

"That poor boy," said his mother, "won't be long with us; he's gone every way—health and strength, and reason. He has no appetite—and a child has more strength. After this day he must be kept in the house, if possible, or looked to when he goes out: but indeed I fear that in a day or two he will not be able to go anywhere. Poor

affectionate boy! he never recovered the death of that unhappy girl, nor ever will; an' it would be well for himself that he was removed from this world, in which, indeed, he's now not fit to live."

Little time was lost in the despatch of their brief meal, and they set out, with the exception of Mary, to be present at the trail of their aged father.

The court was crowded to excess, as was but natural, for the case had excited a very deep interest throughout almost the whole country.

At length the judge was seated, and in a few minutes Cornelius Dalton was put to the bar, charged with the wilful murder of Bartholomew Sullivan, by striking him on the head with a walking-stick, in the corner of a field, near a place called the Grey Stone, &c., &c., situate and being in the barony of, &c., &c.

When the reverend looking old man stood up at the bar, we need scarcely say that all eyes were immediately turned on him with singular interest. It was clear, however, that there was an admission of guilt in his very face, for, instead of appearing with the erect and independent attitude of conscious innocence, he looked towards the judge and around the court with an expression of such remorse and sorrow, and his mild blue eye had in it a feeling so full of humility, resignation and contrition, that it was impossible to look on his aged figure and almost white hairs with indifference, or, we should rather say, without sympathy. Indeed, his case appeared to be one of those in which the stern and unrelenting decree of human law comes to demand its rights, long after the unhappy victim has washed away his crime by repentance, and made his peace with God, a position in connection with conventional offences that is too often overlooked in the administration of justice and the distribution of punishment.

It was not without considerable difficulty that they succeeded in prevailing on him to plead not guilty; which he did at length, but in a tone of voice that conveyed anything but a conviction of his innocence to the court, the jury, and those about him.

The first witness called was Jeremiah Sullivan, who deposed that he was present in one of the Christmas *Margamores* [Big Market] in the year 1798, when an altercation took place between his late brother Bartle and the prisoner at the bar, respecting the price of some barley, which the prisoner had bought from his brother. The prisoner had bought it, he said, for the sum of thirty-five pounds fifteen shillings, whilst his brother affirmed that it was only thirty-five pounds thirteen shillings—upon which they came to blows; his brother, when struck by the prisoner, having returned the blow, and knocked the prisoner down. They were then separated by their friends, who interposed, and, as the cause of the dispute was so trifling, it was proposed that it should be spent in drink, each contributing one-half. To this both assented, and the parties having commenced drinking, did not confine themselves to the amount disputed, but drank on until they became somewhat tipsy, and were, with difficulty, kept from quarrelling again. The last words he heard from them that night were, as far as he can remember—"Dalton," said his brother, "you have no more brains than the pillar of a gate." Upon which the other attempted to strike him, and, on being prevented, he shook his stick at him, and swore that "before he slept he'd know whether *he* had brains or not." Their friends then took them different ways, he was separated from them, and knows nothing further about what happened. He never saw his brother alive afterwards. He then deposed to the finding of his coat and hat, each in a crushed and torn state. The foot-marks in the corner of the field were proved to have been those of his brother and the prisoner, as the shoes of each exactly fitted them when tried. He was then asked how it could be possible, as his brother had altogether disappeared, to know whether his shoes fitted the foot-prints or not, to which he replied, that one of his shoes was found on the spot the next morning, and that a second pair, which he had at home, were also tried, and fitted precisely.

The next witness was Rody Duncan, who deposed that on the night in question, he was passing on a car, after having sold a load of oats in the market. On coming to the corner of the field, he saw a man drag or carry something heavy like a sack, which, on seeing him, Rody, he (the man,) left hastily inside the ditch, and stooped, as if to avoid being known. He asked the person what he was about, who replied that, "he hoped he was no gauger;" by which he understood that he was concerned in private distillation, and that it might have been malt; an opinion in which he was confirmed, on hearing the man's voice, which he knew to be that of the prisoner, who had been engaged in the poteen work for some years. One thing struck him, which he remembered afterwards, that the prisoner had a hat in his hand; and when it was observed in the cross-examination that the hat might have been his own, he replied that he did not think it could, as he had his own on his head at the time. He then asked was that

Condy Dalton, and the reply was, "it is, *unfortunately*;" upon which he wished him good-night, and drove homewards. He remembers the night well, as he lived at that time down at the Long Ridge, and caught a severe illness on his way home, by reason of a heavy shower that wet him to the skin. He wasn't able to leave the house for three months afterwards. It was an unlucky night any way.

Next came the Prophet. It was near daybreak on the morning of the same night, and he was on his way through Glendhu. He was then desired to state what it was that brought him through Glendhu at such an hour. He would tell the truth, as it was safe to do so *now*—he had been making United Irishmen that night, and, at all events, he was on his keeping, for the truth was, he had been reported to government, and there was a warrant out for him. He was then desired to proceed in his evidence, and he did so. On his way through Glendhu he came to a very lonely spot, where he had been obliged to hide, at that time, more than once or twice, himself. Here, to his surprise, he found the body of a man lying dead, and he knew it at once to be that of the late Bartholomew Sullivan; beside it was a grave dug, about two feet deep. He was astonished and shocked, and knew not what to say; but he felt that murder had been committed, and he became dreadfully afraid. In his confusion and alarm he looked about to try if he could see any person near, when he caught a glimpse of the prisoner, Condy Dalton, crouched among a clump of black-thorn bushes, with a spade in his hands. It instantly came into his head that he, the prisoner, on finding himself discovered, might murder him also; and, in order to prevent the other from supposing that he had seen him, he shouted out and asked is there any body near? and hearing no answer, he was glad to get off safe. In less than an hour he was on his way out of the country, for on coming within sight of his own house, he saw it surrounded with soldiers, and he lost no time in going to England, where, in about a month afterwards, he heard that the prisoner had been hanged for the murder, which was an untrue account of the affair, as he, the prisoner, had only been imprisoned for a time, which he supposed led to the report.

When asked why he did not communicate an account of what he had seen to some one in the neighborhood before he went, he replied, that "at that hour the whole country was in bed, and when a man is flying for his life, he is not very anxious to hould conversations with any body."

On the cross-examination he said, that "the reason why he let the matter rest until now was, that he did not wish to be the means of bringin' a fellow-creature to an untimely death, especially such a man as the prisoner, nor to be the means of drawing down disgrace upon his decent and respectable family. His conscience, however, always kept him uneasy, and to tell the truth, he had neither peace nor rest for many a long year, in consequence of concealing his knowledge of the murder, and he now came forward to free his own mind from what he had suffered by it. He wished both parties well, and he hoped no one would blame him for what he was doing, for, indeed, of late, he could not rest in his bed at night. Many a time the murdhered man appeared to him, and threatened him, he thought for not disclosing what he knew.

At this moment, there was a slight bustle at that side of the court where the counsel for the defense sat, which, after a little time, subsided, and the evidence was about to close, when the latter gentleman, after having closely cross-examined him to very little purpose, said:

"So you tell us, that in consequence of your very tender conscience, you have not, of late, been able to rest in your bed at night?"

"I do."

"And you say the murdered man appeared to you and threatened you?"

"I do."

"Which of them?"

"Peter Magennis—what am I sayin'? I mean Bartle Sullivan."

"Gentlemen of the jury, you will please take down the name of *Peter Magennis*—will your lordship also take a note of that? Well," he proceeded, "will you tell us what kind of a man this Bartle or Bartholomew Sullivan was?"

"He was a very remarkable man in appearance; very stout, with a long face, a slight scar on his chin, and a cast in his eye."

"Do you remember which of them?"

"Indeed I don't, an' it wouldn't be raisonable that I should, afther sich a distance of time."

"And, you saw that man murdered?"

"I seen him dead, afther having been murdhered."

"Very right—I stand corrected. Well, you saw him buried?"

"I didn't see him buried, but I saw him dead, as I said, an' the grave ready for him."

"Do you think now if he were to rise again from that grave, that you would know him?"

"Well, I'm sure I can't say. By all ac-

counts the grave makes great changes, but if it didn't change *him* very much entirely, it wouldn't be hard to know him again—for, as I said, he was a remarkable man."

"Well, then, we shall give you an opportunity of refreshing your memory—here," he said, addressing himself to some person behind him; "come forward—get up on the table, and stand face to face with that man."

The stranger advanced—pushed over to the corner of the table, and, mounting it, stood, as he had been directed, confronting the Black Prophet.

"Whether you seen me dead," said the stranger, "or whether you seen me buried, is best known to yourself; all I can say is, that here I am—by name Bartle Sullivan, alive an' well, thanks be to the Almighty for it!"

"What is this?" asked the judge, addressing Dalton's counsel; "who is this man?"

"My lord," replied that gentleman, "this is the individual for the murder of whom, upon the evidence of these two villains, the prisoner at the bar stands charged. It is a conspiracy as singular as it is diabolical; but one which, I trust, we shall clear up, by and by."

"I must confess, I do not see my way through it at present," returned the judge; "did not the prisoner at the bar acknowledge his guilt?—had you not some difficulty in getting him to plead *not* guilty? Are you sure, Mr. O'Hagan, that this stranger is not a counterfeit?"

The reply of counsel could not now be heard—hundreds in the court house, on hearing his name, and seeing him alive and well before them, at once recognized his person, and testified their recognition by the usual manifestations of wonder, satisfaction and delight. The murmur, in fact, gradually gained strength, and deepened until it fairly burst forth in one loud and astounding cheer, and it was not, as usual, until the judge had threatened to commit the first person who should again disturb the court, that it subsided. There were two persons present, however, to whom we must direct the special attention of our readers—we mean Condy Dalton and the Prophet, on both of whom Sullivan's unexpected appearance produced very opposite effects. When old Dalton first noticed the strange man getting upon the table, the appearance of Sullivan, associated, as it had been, by the language of his counsel, with some vague notion of his resurrection from the grave, filled his mind with such a morbid and uncertain feeling of everything about him that he began to imagine himself in a dream, and that his reason must soon awaken to the terrible reality of his situation. A dimness of perception, in fact, came ever all his faculties, and for some minutes he could not understand the nature of the proceedings around him. The reaction was too sudden for a mind that had been broken down so long, and harrassed so painfully, by impressions of remorse and guilt. The consequence was, that he had forgot, for a time, the nature of his situation—all appeared unintelligible confusion about him,—he could see a multitude of faces, and the people, all agitated by some great cause of commotion, and that was, then, all he could understand about it.

"What is this," said he to himself;—"am I on my trial?—or is it some dhrame that I'm dhramin' at home in my own poor place among my heart-broken family?"

A little time, however, soon undeceived him, and awoke his honest heart to a true perception of his happiness.

"My lord," said the strange man, in reply to the judge's last observation, "I am no counterfeit—an' I thank my good an' gracious God that I have been able to come in time to save this worthy and honest man's life. Condy Dalton," said he, "I can explain all; but in the mane time let me shake hands wid you, and ax your pardon for the bad tratement and provocation I gave you on that unlucky day—well may I say so, so far as you are concerned—for, as I hear, an' as I see, indeed, it has caused you and your family bitter trouble and sorrow."

"Bartle Sullivan! Merciful Father, is this all right? is it real? No dhrame, then! an' I have my ould friend by the hand—let me *see*—let me *feel* you!—it is—it's truth—but, there now—I don't care who sees me—I must offer one short prayer of thanksgivin' to my marciful God, who has released me from the snares of my enemies, an' taken this great weight off o' my heart!" As he spoke, he clapsed his hands, looked up with an expression of deep and heartfelt gratitude to heaven, then knelt down in a corner of the dock, and returned thanks to God.

The Prophet, on beholding the man, stood more in surprise than astonishment, and seemed evidently filled more with mortification rather than wonder. He looked around the court with great calmness, and then fastening his eyes upon Sullivan, studied, or appeared to study, his features for a considerable time. A shadow so dark, or, we should rather say, so fearfully black, settled upon his countenance, that it gave him an almost supernatural aspect; it looked, in fact, as if the gloom of his fate had fallen upon him in the midst of his plans and iniquities. He seemed, for a moment, to feel this himself; for while the confusion and

murmurs were spreading through the court, he muttered to himself—

"I am doomed; I did this, as if something drove me to it; however, if I could only be sure that the cursed box was really lost, I might laugh at the world still."

He then looked around him with singular composure, and ultimately at the judge, as if to ascertain whether he might depart or not. At this moment, a pale, sickly-looking female, aided, or rather supported, by the Pedlar and Hanlon, was in the act of approaching the place where Dalton's attorney stood, as if to make some communication to him, when a scream was heard, followed by the exclamation—

"Blessed Heaven! it's himself!—it's himself!"

Order and silence were immediately called by the crier, but the Prophet's eyes had been already attracted to the woman, who was no other than Hanlon's aunt, and for some time he looked at her with an apparent sensation of absolute terror. Gradually, however, his usual indomitable hardness of manner returned to him; he still kept his gaze fixed upon her, as if to make certain that there could be no mistake, after which his countenance assumed an expression of rage and malignity that no language could describe; his teeth became absolutely locked, as if he could have ground her between them, and his eyes literally blazed with fury, that resembled that of a rabid beast of prey. The shock was evidently more than the woman could bear, who, still supported by the Pedlar and Hanlon, withdrew in a state almost bordering on insensibility.

A very brief space now determined the trial. Sullivan's brother and several of the jurors themselves clearly established his identity, and as a matter of course, Condy Dalton was instantly discharged. His appearance in the street was hailed by the cheers and acclamations of the people, who are in general delighted with the acquittal of a fellow-creature, unless under circumstances of very atrocious criminality.

"I suppose I may go down," said the Prophet,—"you have done with me?"

"Not exactly," replied Dalton's counsel.

"Let these two men be taken into custody," said the judge, "and let an indictment for perjury be prepared against them, and sent to the grand jury forthwith."

"My lord," proceeded the counsel, "we are, we think, in a capacity to establish a much graver charge against M'Gowan—a charge of murder, my lord, discovered, under circumstances little short of providential."

In short, not to trouble the reader with the dry details of the courts, after some discussion, it was arranged that two bills should be prepared and sent up—one for perjury, and the other for the murder of a carman, named Peter Magennis, almost at the very spot where it had, until then, been supposed that poor Dalton had murdered Bartholomew Sullivan. The consequence was, that Donnel, or Donald M'Gowan, the Black Prophet, found himself in the very dock where Dalton had stood the preceding day. His case, whether as regarded the perjury or the murder, was entitled to no clemency, beyond that which the letter of the law strictly allowed. The judge assigned him counsel, with whom he was permitted to communicate; and he himself, probably supposing that his chance of escape was then greater than if more time were allowed to procure and arrange evidence against him, said he was ready and willing, without further notice, to be brought to trial.

We beg to observe here, that we do not strictly confine ourselves to the statements made during the trial, inasmuch as we deem it necessary to mention circumstances to the reader, which the rules of legitimate evidence would render inadmissable in a court of justice. We are not reporting the case, and consequently hold ourselves warranted in adding whatever may be necessary to making it perfectly clear, or in withholding circumstances that did not bear upon our narrative. With this proviso, we now proceed to detail the *denouement*.

The first evidence against him, was that of our female friend, whom we have called the Widow Hanlon, but who, in fact, was no other than the Prophet's wife, and sister to the man Magennis, whom he had murdered. The Prophet's real name, she stated, was M'Ivor, but why he changed it, she knew not. He had been a man, in the early part of his life, of rather a kind and placid disposition, unless when highly provoked, and then his resentments were terrible. He was all his life, however, the slave of a dark and ever-wakeful jealousy, that destroyed his peace, and rendered his life painful both to himself and others. It happened that her brother, the murdered man, had prosecuted M'Ivor for taking forcible possession of a house, for which he, M'Ivor, received twelve months' imprisonment. It happened also about that time, that is, a little before the murder, that he had become jealous of her and a neighbor, who had paid his addresses to her before marriage. M'Ivor, at this period, acted in the capacity of a plain Land Surveyor among the farmers and cottiers of the barony, and had much reputation for his exactness and accuracy. While in prison, he vowed deadly vengeance against her

brother, Magennis, and swore, that if ever she spoke to him, acknowledged him, or received him into her house during his life, she should never live another day under his roof.

In this state matters were, when her brother, having heard that her husband was in a distant part of the barony, surveying, or subdividing a farm, came to ask her to her sister's wedding, and while in the house, the Prophet, most unexpectedly, was discovered, within a few perches of the door, on his return. Terror, on her part, from a dread of his violence, and also an apprehension lest he and her brother should meet, and, perhaps, seriously injure each other, even to bloodshed, caused her to hurry the latter into another room, with instructions to get out of the window as quietly as possible, and to go home. Unfortunately he did so, but had scarcely escaped, when a poor mendicant woman, coming in to ask alms, exclaimed—"Take care, good people, that you have not been robbed—I saw a man comin' out of the windy, and runnin' over toward Jemmy Campel's house"—Campel being the name of the young man of whom her husband was jealous.

M'Ivor, now furious, ran towards Campel's, and meeting that person's servant-maid at the door, asked "if her master was at home."

She replied, "Yes, he just came in this minute."

"What direction did he come from?"

"From the direction of your own house," she answered.

It should be stated, however, that his wife, at once recollecting his jealousy, told him immediately that the person who had left the house *was* her brother; but he rushed on, and paid no attention whatsoever to her words.

From this period forward he never lived with her, but she has heard recently—no longer ago than last night—that he had associated himself with a woman named Eleanor M'Guirk, about thirty miles farther west from their original neighborhood, near a place called Glendhu, and it was at that place her brother was murdered.

Neither her anxieties nor her troubles, however, ended here. When her husband left her, he took a daughter, their only child, then almost an infant, away with him, and contrived to circulate a report that he and she had gone to America. After her return home, she followed her nephew to this neighborhood, and that accounted for her presence there. So well, indeed, did he manage this matter, that she received a very contrite and affectionate letter, that had been sent, she thought, from Boston, desiring her to follow himself and the child there. The deceit was successful. Gratified at the prospect of joining them, she made the due preparations, and set sail. It is unnecessary to say, that on arriving at Boston she could get no tidings whatsoever of either the one or the other; but as she had some relations in the place, she found them out, and resided there until within a few months ago, when she set sail for Ireland, where she arrived only a short time previous to the period of the trial. She has often heard M'Ivor say that he would settle accounts with her brother some fine night, but he usually added, "I will take my time *and kill two birds with one stone when I go about it*," by which she thought he meant robbing him, as well as murdering him, as her brother was known mostly to have a good deal of money about him.

We now add here, although the fact was not brought out until a later stage of the trial, that she proved the identity of the body found in Glendhu, as being that of her brother, very clearly. His right leg had been broken, and having been mismanaged, was a little crooked, which occasioned him to have a slight halt in his walk. The top joint also of the second toe, on the same foot had been snapped off by the tramp of a horse, while her brother was a schoolboy—two circumstances which were corroborated by the Coroner, and one or two of those who had examined the body at the previous inquest, and which they could *then* attribute only to injuries received during his rude interment, but which were *now* perfectly intelligible and significant.

The next witness called was Bartholemew Sullivan, who deposed—

That about a month before his disappearance from the country, he was one night coming home from a wake, and within half a mile of the Grey Stone he met a person, evidently a carman, accompanying a horse and cart, who bade him the time of night as he passed. He noticed that the man had a slight halt as he walked, but could not remember his face, although the night was by no means dark. On passing onwards, towards home, he met another person walking after the carman, who, on seeing him (Sullivan) hastily threw some weapon or other into the ditch. The hour was about three o'clock in the night (morning,) and on looking close at the man, for he seemed to follow the other in a stealthy way, he could only observe that he had a very pale face, and heavy black eyebrows; indeed he has little doubt but that the prisoner is the man, although he will not actually swear it after such a length of time.

This was the evidence given by Bartholomew Sullivan.

The third witness produced was Theodosius M'Mahon, or, as he was better known, Toddy Mack, the Pedlar, who deposed to the fact of having, previously to his departure for Boston, given to Peter Magennis a present of a steel tobacco-box as a keep-sake, and as the man did not use tobacco, he said, on putting it into his pocket—

"This will do nicely to hould my money in, on my way home from Dublin."

Upon which Toddy Mack observed, laughingly—

"That if he put either silver or brass in it, half the country would know it by the jingle."

"I'll take care of that, never fear," replied Magennis, "for I'll put nothing in this, but the soft, comfortable notes."

He was asked if the box had any particular mark by which it might be known?

"Yes, he had himself punched upon the lid of it the initials of the person to whom he gave it—P. M., for Peter Magennis."

"Would you know the box if you saw it?"

"Certainly!"

"Is that it?" asked the prosecuting attorney, placing the box in his hands.

"That is the same box I gave him, upon my oath. It's a good deal rusted now, but there's the holes as I punched them; and by the same token, there is the letter P., the very place yet where the two holes broke into one, as I was punchin' it."

"Pray, how did the box come to turn up?" asked the judge:—"In whose possession has it been ever since?"

"My lord, we have just come to that. Crier, call Eleanor M'Guirk."

The woman hitherto known as Nelly M'Gowan, and supposed to be the Prophet's wife now made her appearance.

"Will you state to the gentlemen of the jury what you know about this box?"

Our readers are partially aware of her evidence with respect to it. We shall, however, briefly recapitulate her account of the circumstance.

"The first time she ever saw it," she said, "was the night the carman was murdered, or that he disappeared, at any rate. She resided by herself, in a little house at the mouth of the Glendhu—the same she and the Prophet had lived in ever since. They had not long been acquainted at that time—but still longer than was right or proper. She had been very little in the country then, and any time he did come was principally at night, when he stopped with her, and went away again, generally before day in the morning. He passed himself on her as an unmarried man, and said his name was M'Gowan. On that evening he came about dusk, but went out again, and she did not see him till far in the night, when he returned, and appeared to be fatigued and agitated—his clothes, too, were soiled and crumpled, especially the collar of his shirt, which was nearly torn off, as in a struggle of some kind. She asked him what was the matter with him, and said he looked as if he had been fighting." He replied—

"No, Nelly; *but I've killed two birds with one stone this night.*"

She asked him what he meant by those words, but he would give her no further information.

"I'll give no explanation," said he, "but this;" and turning his back to her, he opened a tobacco-box, which, by stretching her neck, she saw distinctly, and, taking out a roll of bank notes, he separated one from the rest, and handing it to her, exclaimed—"there's all the explanation *you* can want; a close mouth, Nelly, is the sign of a wise head, an' by keepin' a close mouth, you'll get more explanations of *this* kind. Do you understand that?" said he.

"I do," she replied.

"Very well, then," he observed "let that be the law and gospel between us."

When he fell asleep, she got up, and looking at the box, saw that it was stuffed with bank notes, had a broken hinge—the hinge was *freshly* broken—and something like two letters on the lid of it.

"She then did not see it," she continued, "until some weeks ago, when his daughter and herself having had a quarrel, in which the girl cut her—she (his daughter) on stretching up for some cobwebs on the wall to stanch the bleeding, accidentally pulled the box out of a crevice, in which it had been hid. About this time," she added, "the prisoner became very restless at night, indeed, she might say by day and night, and after a good deal of gloomy ill temper, he made inquiries for it, and on hearing that it had again appeared, even threatened her life if it were not produced."

She closed her evidence by stating that she had secreted it, but could tell nothing of its ultimate and mysterious disappearance.

Hanlon's part in tracing the murder is already known, we presume, to the reader. He dreamt, but his dream was not permitted to go to the jury, that his father came to him, and said, that if he repaired to the Grey Stone, at Glendhu, on a night which he named, at the hour of twelve o'clock, he would get such a clue to his murder as would enable him to bring his murderer to justice.

"Are you the son, then, of the man who

is said to have been murdered?" asked the judge.

"He was his son," he replied, "and came first to that part of the country in consequence of having been engaged in a Party fight in his native place. It seems a warrant had been issued against him and others, and he thought it more prudent to take his mother's name, which was Hanlon, in order to avoid discovery, the case being a very common one under circumstances of that kind."

Rody Duncan's explanation, with respect to the Tobacco-Box, was not called for on the trial, but we shall give it here in order to satisfy the reader. He saw Nelly M'Gowan, as we may still call her, thrusting something under the thatch of the cabin, and feeling a kind of curiosity to ascertain what it could be, he seized the first opportunity of examining, and finding a tobacco-box, he put it in his pocket, and thought himself extremely fortunate in securing it, for reasons which the reader will immediately understand. The truth is, that Rody, together with about half a dozen virtuous youths in the neighborhood, were in the habit of being out pretty frequently at night—for what purposes we will not now wait to inquire. Their usual place of *rendezvous* was the Grey Stone, in consequence of the shelter and concealment which its immense projections afforded them. On the night of the first meeting between Sarah and Hanlon, Rody had heard the whole conversation by accident, whilst waiting for his companions, and very judiciously furnished the groans, as he did also upon the second night, on both occasions for his own amusement. His motives for ingratiating himself through means of the box, with Sarah and Hanlon, are already known to the reader, and require no further explanation from us.

In fact, such a train of circumstantial evidence was produced, as completely established the Prophet's guilt, in the opinion of all who had heard the trial, and the result was a verdict of guilty by the jury, and a sentence of death by the judge.

"Your case," said the judge, as he was about to pronounce sentence, "is another proof of the certainty with which Providence never, so to speak, loses sight of the man who deliberately sheds his fellow creature's blood. It is an additional and striking instance too, of the retributive spirit with which it converts all the most cautious disguises of guilt, no matter how ingeniously assumed, into the very manifestations by which its enormity is discovered and punished."

After recommending him to a higher tribunal, and impressing upon him the necessity of repentance, and seeking peace with God, he sentenced him to be hanged by the neck on the fourth day after the close of the assizes, recommending his soul, as usual, to the mercy of his Creator.

The Prophet was evidently a man of great moral intrepidity and firmness. He kept his black, unquailing eye fixed upon the judge while he spoke, but betrayed not a single symptom of a timid or vacillating spirit. When the sentence was pronounced, he looked with an expression of something like contempt upon those who had broken out, as usual, into those murmurs of compassion and satisfaction, which are sometimes uttered under circumstances similar to his.

"Now," said he to the gaoler, "that every thing is over, and the worst come to the worst, the sooner I get to my cell the better. I have despised the world too long to care a single curse what it says or thinks of me, or about me. All I'm sorry for is, that I didn't take more out of it, and that I let it slip through my hands so asily as I did. My curse upon it and its villany! Bring me in."

The gratification of the country for a wide circle round, was now absolutely exuberant. There was not only the acquittal of the good-hearted and generous old man, to fill the public with a feeling of delight, but also the unexpected resurrection, as it were, of honest Bartholomew Sullivan, which came to animate all parties with a double enjoyment. Indeed, the congratulations which both parties received, were sincere and fervent. Old Condy Dalton had no sooner left the dock than he was surrounded by friends and relatives, each and all anxious to manifest their sense of his good fortune, in the usual way of "treating" him and his family. Their gratitude, however, towards the Almighty for the unexpected interposition in their favor, was too exalted and pious to allow them to profane it by convivial indulgences. With as little delay, therefore, as might be, they sought their humble cabin, where a scene awaited them that was calculated to dash with sorrow the sentiments of justifiable exultation which they felt.

Our readers may remember that owing to Sarah's illness, the Prophet, as an after thought, had determined to give to the abduction of Mave Sullivan the color of a famine outrage; and for this purpose he had resolved also to engage Thomas Dalton to act as a kind of leader—a circumstance which he hoped would change the character of the proceedings altogether to one of wild and licentious revenge on the part of Dalton. Poor Dalton lent himself to this, as far as its

aspect of a mere outbreak had attractions for the melancholy love of turbulence, by which he had been of late unhappily animated. He accordingly left home with the intention of taking a part in their proceedings; but he never joined them. Where he had gone to, or how he had passed the night, nobody knew. Be this as it may, he made his appearance at home about noon on the day of his father's trial, in evidently a dying state, and in this condition his family found him on their return. Tis true they had the consolation of perceiving that he was calmer and more collected than he had been since the death of Peggy Murtagh. His reason, indeed, might be said to have been altogether restored.

They found him sitting in his father's arm chair, his head supported—oh, how tenderly supported! — by his affectionate sister, Mary.

Mrs. Dalton herself had come before, to break the joyful tidings to this excellent girl, who, on seeing her, burst into tears, exclaiming in Irish—

"Mother, dear, I'm afraid you're bringing a heavy heart to a house of sorrow!"

"A light heart, dear Mary—a light and a grateful heart. Your father, acushla machree—your father, my dear, unhappy Tom, is not a murderer."

The girl had one arm around her brother's neck, but she instinctively raised the other, as if in ecstatic delight, but in a moment she dropped it again, and said sorrowfully—

"Ay; but, mother dear, didn't he say himself he was guilty?"

"He thought so, dear; but it was only a rash blow; and oh, how many a deadly accident has come from harsh blows! The man was not killed at all, dear Mary, but is alive and well, and was in the court-house this day. Oh! what do we not owe to a good God for His mercy towards us all? Tom, dear, I am glad to see you at home; you must not go out again."

"Oh, mother dear," said his sister, kissing him, and bursting into tears, "Tom's dying!"

"What's this?" exclaimed his mother—"death's in my boy's face!"

He raised his head gently, and, looking at her, replied, with a faint smile—

"No, mother, I will not go out any more; I will be good at last—it's time for me."

At this moment old Dalton and the rest of the family entered the house, but were not surprised at finding Mary and her mother in tears; for they supposed, naturally enough, that the tears were tears of joy for the old man's acquittal. Mrs. Dalton raised her hand to enjoin silence; and then, pointing to her son, said—

"We must keep quiet for a little."

They all looked upon the young man, and saw, that death, immediate death, was stamped upon his features, gleamed wildly out of his eyes, and spoke in his feeble and hollow voice.

"Father," said he, "let me kiss you, or come and kiss me. Thank God for what has happened this day. Father," he added, looking up into the old man's face, with an expression of unutterable sorrow and affection —"father, I know I was wild; but I will be wild no more. I was wicked, too; but I will be wicked no more. There is an end now to all my follies and all my crimes; an' I hope —I hope that God will have mercy upon me, an' forgive me."

The tears rained fast upon his pale face from the old man's eyes, as he exclaimed—

"He will have mercy upon you, my darlin' son; look to *Him*. I know, darlin', that whatever crimes or follies you committed, you are sorry for them, an' God will forgive you."

"I am," he replied; "kiss me all of you; my sight is gettin' wake, an' my tongue isn't —isn't so strong as it was."

One after one they all kissed him, and as each knew that this tender and sorrowful embrace must be the last that should ever pass between them, it is impossible adequately to describe the scene which then took place.

"I have a request to make," he added, feebly; "an' it is, that I may sleep with Peggy and our baby. Maybe I'm not worthy of that; but still I'd like it, an' my heart's upon it; an' I think she would like it, too."

"It can be done, an' we'll do it," replied his mother; "we'll do it my darlin' boy—my son, my son, we'll do it."

"Don't you all forgive me—forgive me everything?"

They could only, for some time, reply by their tears; but at length they did reply, and he seemed satisfied.

"Now," said he, "there was an ould Irish air that Peggy used to sing for me—I thought I heard her often singin' it of late—did I?"

"I suppose so, darlin'," replied his mother; "I suppose you did."

"Mary, here," he proceeded, "sings it; I would like to hear it *before I go;* it's the air of *Gra Gal Machree.*"

"Before you go, *alanna!*" exclaimed his father, pressing him tenderly to his breast. "Oh! but they're bitther words to us, my darlin' an' my lovin' boy. But the air, Mary, darlin', strive an' sing it for him as well as you can."

It was a trying task for the affectionate girl, who, however, so far overcame her grief,

as to be able to sing it with the very pathos of nature itself.

"Ay," said he, as she proceeded, "that's it—that's what Peggy used to sing for me, bekaise she knew *I* liked it."

Tender and full of sorrow were the notes as they came from the innocent lips of that affectionate sister. Her task, however, was soon over; for scarcely had she concluded the air, when her poor brother's ears and heart were closed to the melody and affection it breathed, forever.

"I know," said she, with tears, "that there's one thing will give comfort to you all respecting poor Tom. Peter Rafferty, who helped him home, seein' the dyin' state he was in, went over to the Car. and brought one of Father Hanratty's curates to him, so that he didn't depart without resaving the rites of the Church, thank God!"

This took the sting of bitterness out of their grief, and infused into it a spirit that soothed their hearts, and sustained them by that consolation which the influence of religion and its ordinances, in the hour of death and sorrow, never fail to give to an Irish family.

Old Dalton's sleep was sound that night; and when he awoke the next morning the first voice he heard was that of our friend Toddy Mack, which, despite of the loss they had sustained, and its consequent sorrow, diffused among them a spirit of cheerfulness and contentment.

"You have no raison," said he, "to fly in the face of God—I don't mane *you*, Mrs. Dalton—but these youngsters. If what I heard is thrue that that poor boy never was himself since the girl died, it was a mercy for God to take him; and afther all *He* is a betther judge of what's fit for us than we ourselves. Bounce, now, Mr. Dalton; you have little time to lose. I want you to come wid me to the agent, Mr. Travers. He wishes, I think, to see yourself, for he says he has heard a good account o' you, an' I promised to bring you. If we're there about two o'clock we'll hit the time purty close."

"What can he want with him, do you think?" asked Mrs. Dalton.

"Dear knows—fifty things—maybe to stand for one of his childhre—or—but, ah! forgive me—I could be merry anywhere else; but here—here—forgive me, Mrs. Dalton."

In a short time Dalton and he mounted a car which Toddy had brought with him, and started for the office of Mr. Travers.

While they are on their way, we shall return to our friend, young Dick, who was left to trudge home from the Grey Stone on the night set apart for the abduction of Mave Sullivan. Hanlon, or Magennis, as we ought now to call him, having by his shrewdness, and Rody Duncan's loose manner of talking, succeeded in preventing the burglarious attack upon his master's house, was a good deal surprised at young Dick's quick return, for he had not expected him at all that night. The appearance of the young gentleman was calculated to excite impressions of rather a serio-comic character.

"Hanlon," said he, "is all right?—every man at his post?"

"All right, sir; but I did not expect you back so soon. Whatever you've been engaged on to-night is a saicret you've kep' me out of."

"D—e, I was afraid of you, Hanlon—you were too honest for what I was about to-night. You wouldn't have stood it—I probed you on it once before, and you winced."

"Well, sir, I assure you I don't wish to know what it is."

"Why, as the whole thing has failed there can be no great secret in it now. The old Prophet hoaxed me cursedly to-night. It was arranged between us that he should carry off Sullivan's handsome daughter for me—and what does the mercenary old scoundrel do but put his own in her place, with a view of imposing her on me."

"Faith, an' of the two she is thought to be the finest an' handsomest girl; but, my God! how could he do what you say, an' his daughter sick o' the typhus?"

"There's some d—d puzzle about it, I grant—*he* seemed puzzled—his daughter seemed sick, sure enough—and I am sick. Hanlon, I fear I've caught the typhus from her—I can think of nothing else."

"Go to bed, sir; I tould you as you went out that you had *taken* rather too much. You've been disappointed, an' you're vexed—that's what ails you; but go to bed, an' you'll sleep it off."

"Yes, I must. In a day or two it's arranged that I and Travers are to settle about the leases, and I must meet that worthy gentleman with a clear head."

"Is Darby Skinadre, sir, to have Dalton's farm?"

"Why, I've pocketed a hundred of his money for it, an' I think he ought. However, all this part of the property is out of lease, and you know we can neither do nor say anything till we get the new leases."

"Oh, yes, you can, sir," replied Hanlon, laughing; "it's clear you can *do* at any rate."

"How is that? What do you grin at, confound you?"

"You can take the money, sir; that's what I mane by *doin'* him. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Very good, Charley; but I'm sick; and I very much fear that I've caught this confounded typhus."

The next day being that on which the trial took place, he rose not from his bed; and when the time appointed for meeting Travers came he was not at all in anything of an improved condition. His gig was got ready, however, and, accompanied by Hanlon, he drove to the agent's office.

Travers was a quick, expert man of business, who lost but little time and few words in his dealings with the world. He was clear, rapid, and decisive, and having once formed an opinion, there was scarcely any possibility in changing it. This, indeed, was the worst and most impracticable point about him, for as it often happened that his opinions were based upon imperfect or erroneous data, it consequently followed that his inflexibility was but another name for obstinacy, and not unfrequently for injustice.

As Henderson entered the office, he met our friend the pedlar and old Dalton going out.

"Dalton," said Travers, "do you and your friend stay in the next room; I wish to see you again before you go. How do you do, Henderson?"

"I am not well," replied Henderson, "not at all well; but it won't signify."

"How is your father?"

"Much as usual: I wonder he didn't call on you."

"No, he did not, I suppose he's otherwise engaged—the assizes always occupy him. However, now to business, Mr. Henderson;" and he looked inquiringly at Dick, as much as to say, I am ready to hear you.

"We had better see, I think," proceeded Dick, "and make arrangements about these new leases."

"I shall expect to be bribed for each of them, Mr. Richard."

"Bribed!" exclaimed the other, "ha, ha, ha! that's good."

"Why, do you think there's anything morally wrong or dishonorable in a bribe?" asked the other, with a very serious face.

"Come, come, Mr. Travers," said Dick, "a joke's a joke; only don't put so grave a face on you when you ask such a question. However, as you say yourself, now to business—about these leases."

"I trust," continued Travers, "that I am both an honest man and a gentleman, yet I expect a bribe for every lease."

"Well, then," replied Henderson, "it is not generally supposed that either an honest man or a gentleman——"

"Would take a bribe?—eh?"

"Well, d—n it, no; not exactly that either; but come, let us understand each other. If you will be wilful on it, why a wilful man, they say, must have his way. Bribery, however—rank bribery—is a—"

"Crime to which neither an honest man nor a gentleman would stoop. You see I anticipate what you are about to say; you despise bribery, Mr. Henderson?"

"Sir," replied the other, rather warmly, "I trust that I am a gentleman and an honest man, too."

"But still, a wilful man, Mr. Henderson, must have his way, you know. Well, of course, you are a gentleman and an honest man."

He then rose, and touching the bell, said to the servant who answered it:

"Send in the man named Darby Skinadre."

If that miserable wretch was thin and shrivelled-looking when first introduced to our readers, he appeared at the present period little else than the shadow of what he had been. He not only lost heavily by the usurious credit he had given, in consequence of the wide-spread poverty and crying distress of the wretched people, who were mostly insolvent, but he suffered severely by the outrages which had taken place, and doubly so in consequence of the anxiety which so many felt to wreak their vengeance on him, under that guise, for his heartlessness and blood-sucking extortions upon them.

"Your name," proceeded the agent, "is Darby Skinadre?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you have given this gentleman the sum of a hundred pounds, as a bribe, for promising you a lease of Cornelius Dalton's farm?"

"I gave him a hundred pounds, but not at all as a bribe, sir; I'm an honest man, I trust—an' the Lord forbid I'd have anything to do wid a bribe; an' if you an' he knew—if you only knew, both o' you—the hard strivin,' an' scrapin,' an' sweepin' I had to get it together——"

"That will do, sir; be silent. You received this money, Mr. Henderson?"

"Tut, Travers, my good friend; this is playing too high a card about such a matter. Don't you know, devilish well, that these things are common, aye, and among gentlemen and honest men too, as you say?"

"Well, that is a discussion upon which I shall not enter. Now, as you say, to business."

"Well, then," continued Henderson, smiling, "if *you* have no objection, *I* am willing that you should take Skinadre's affair and mine as a *precedent* between you and me.

Let us not be fools, Mr. Travers; it is every one for himself in this world."

"What is it you expect, in the first place?" asked the agent.

"Why, new leases," replied the other, "upon reasonable terms, of course."

"Well, then," said Travers, "I beg to inform you that you shall not have them, with only one exception. You shall have a lease of sixty-nine acres attached to the Grange, being the quantity of land you actually farm."

"Pray, why not of all the property?" asked Dick.

"My good friend," replied the agent, nearly in his own words to the Pedlar; "the fact is, that we are about to introduce a new system altogether upon our property. We are determined to manage it upon a perfectly new principle. It has been too much sublet under us, and we have resolved, Mr. Henderson, to rectify this evil. That is my answer. With the exception of the Grange farm, you get no leases. We shall turn over a new leaf, and see that a better order of things be established upon the property. As for you, Skinadre, settle this matter of your hundred pounds with Mr. Henderson as best you may. That was a private transaction between yourselves; between yourselves, then, does the settlement of it lie."

He once more touched the bell, and desired Cornelius Dalton and the Pedlar to be sent in.

"Mr. Henderson," he proceeded, "I will bid you good morning; you certainly look ill. Skinadre, you may go. I have sent for Mr. Dalton, Mr. Henderson, to let him know that he shall be reinstated in his farm, and every reasonable allowance made him for the oppression and injustice which he and his respectable family have suffered at—I will not say whose hands."

"Travers," replied Henderson, "your conduct is harsh—and—however, I cannot now think of leases—I am every moment getting worse—I am very ill—good-morning."

He then went.

"An' am I to lose my hundre pounds, your honor, of my hard earned money, that I squeezed ——"

"Out of the blood and marrow and life of the struggling people, you heartless extortioner! Begone, sirra; a foot of land upon the property for which I am agent you shall never occupy. You and your tribe, whether you batten upon the distress of struggling industry in the deceitful Maelstrooms of the metropolis, or in the dirty, dingy shops of a private country village, are each a scorpion curse to the people. Your very existence is a libel upon the laws by which the rights of civil society are protected."

"Troth, your honor does me injustice; I never see a case of distress that my heart doesn't bleed——"

"With a leech-like propensity to pounce upon it. Begone!"

The man slunk out.

"Dalton," he proceeded, when the old man, accompanied by the Pedlar, came in, "I sent for you to say that I am willing you should have your farm again."

"Sir," replied the other, "I am thankful and grateful to you for that kindness, but it's now too late; I am not able to go back upon it; I have neither money nor stock of any kind. I am deeply and gratefully obliged to you; but I have not a sixpence worth in the world to put on it. An honest heart, sir, an' a clear fame, is all that God has left me, blessed be His name."

"Don't believe a word of it," replied the Pedlar. "Only let your honor give him a good lease, at a raisonable rint, makin' allowance for his improvements——"

"Never mind conditions, my good friend," said the agent, "but proceed; for, if I don't mistake, you will yourself give him a lift."

"May be, we'll find him stock and capital a thrifle, any way," replied the Pedlar with a knowing wink. "I haven't carried the pack all my life for nothing, I hope."

"I understand," said the agent to Dalton, "that one of your sons is dead. I leave town to-day, but I shall be here this day fortnight;—call then, and we shall have every thing arranged. Your case was a very hard one, and a very common one; but it was one with which *we* had nothing to do, and in which, until now, we could not interfere. I have looked clearly into it, and regret to find that such cases do exist upon Irish property to a painful extent, although I am glad to find that public opinion, and a more enlightened experience, are every day considerably diminishing the evil."

He then rang for some one else, and our friends withdrew, impressed with a grateful sense of his integrity and justice.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Conclusion.

The interest excited by the trial, involving as it did so much that concerned the Sullivans, especially the hopes and affections of their daughter Mave, naturally induced them—though not on this latter account—young and old, to attend the assizes, not excepting Mave herself; for her father, much against her inclination, had made a point to bring

her with them. On finding, however, how matters turned out, a perfect and hearty reconciliation took place between the two families, in the course of which Mave and the Prophet's wife once more renewed their acquaintance. Some necessary and brief explanation took place, in the course of which allusion was made to Sarah and her state of health.

"I hope," said Mave, "you will lose no time in goin' to see her. I know her affectionate heart; an' that when she hears an' feels that she has a mother alive an' well, an' that loves her as she ought to be loved, it will put new life into her."

"She is a fine lookin' girl," replied her mother, "an' while I was spakin' to her, I felt my heart warm to her sure enough; but she's a wild crature, they say."

"Hasty a little," said Mave; "but then such a heart as she has. You ought to go see her at wanst."

"I would, dear, an' my heart is longin' to see her; but I think it's betther that I should not till afther *his* trial to-morrow. I'm to be a witness against the unfortunate man."

"Against her father!—against your own husband!" exclaimed Mave, looking aghast at this information.

"Yes, dear · for it was my brother he murdhered an' he must take the consequences, if he was my husband and her father ten times over. My brother's blood mustn't pass for nothin'. Besides, the hand o' God is in it, an' I must do my duty."

The heart of the gentle and heroic Mave, which could encounter contagion and death, from a principle of unconscious magnanimity and affection, that deserved a garland, now shrunk back with pain at the sentiments so coolly expressed by Sarah's mother. She thought for a moment of young Dalton, and that if *she* were called upon to prosecute him, —but she hastily put the fearful hypothesis aside, and was about to bid her acquaintance good-bye, when the latter said:

"To-morrow, or rather the day afther, I'd wish to see her for then I'll know what will happen to *him*, an' how to act with her; an' if you'd come with me, I'd be glad of it, an' you'd oblige me."

Mave's gentle and affectionate spirit was disquieted within her by what she had already heard; but a moment's reflection convinced her that her presence on the occasion might be serviceable to Sarah, whose excitable temperament and delicate state of health required gentle and judicious treatment.

"I'm afeard," said Mrs. M'Ivor, "that by the time the trial's over to-morrow, it'll be too late; but let us say the day afther, if it's the same to you."

"Well, then," replied Mave, "you can call to our place, as it's on your way, an' we'll both go together."

"If she knew her," said Mave to her friends, on her way home, "as I do; if she only knew the heart she has—the lovin', the fearless, the great heart;—oh, if she did, no earthly thing would prevent her from goin' to her without the loss of a minute's time. Poor Sarah!—brave and generous girl—what wouldn't I do to bring her back to health! But ah, mother, I'm afeard;" and as the noble girl spoke, the tears gushed to her eyes—"'It's my last act for you,' she whispered to me, on that night when the house was surrounded by villains—'I know what you risked for me in the shed; I know it, dear Mave, an' I'm now shrivin' to pay back my debt to you.' Oh, mother!" she exclaimed, "where—where could one look for the like of her! an' yet how little does the world know about her goodness, or her greatness, I may say. Well," proceeded Mave, "she paid that debt; but I'm afeard, mother, it'll turn out that it was with her own life she paid it."

At the hour appointed, Mrs. M'Ivor and Mave set out on their visit to Sarah, each now aware of the dreadful and inevitable doom that awaited her father, and of the part which one of them, at least, had taken in bringing it about.

About half an hour before their arrival, Sarah, whose anxiety touching the fate of old Dalton could endure no more, lay awaiting the return of her nurse—a simple, good-hearted, matter-of-fact creature, who had no notion of ever concealing the truth under any circumstances. The poor girl had sent her to get an account of the trial the best way she could, and, as we said, she now lay awaiting her return. At length she came in.

"Well, Biddy, what's the news—or have you got any?"

The old woman gently and affectionately put her hand over on Sarah's forehead, as if the act was a religious ceremony, and accompanied an invocation, as, indeed, she intended it to do.

"May God in His mercy soon relieve you from your thrials, my poor girl, an' bring you to Himself! but it's the black news I have for you this day."

Sarah started.

"What news," she asked, hastily—"what *black* news?"

"Hush, now, an' I'll tell you;—in the first place, your mother is alive, an' has come to the counthry."

Sarah immediately sat up in the bed, without assistance, and fastening her black, brilliant eyes upon the woman, exclaimed—

"My mother—my mother—my own mother!—an' do you dare to tell me that this is black news? Lave the house, I bid you. I'll get up—I'm not sick—I'm well. Great God! yes, I'm well—very well; but how dare you name black news an' my mother—my blessed mother—in the same breath, or on the same day?"

"Will you hear me out, then?" continued the nurse.

"No," replied Sarah, attempting to get up—"I want to hear no more; now I wish to live—now I am sure of one, an' that one my mother—my own mother—to love me—to guide me—to taich me all that I ought to know; but, above all, to love me. An' my father—my poor unhappy father—an' he *is* unhappy—he loves me, too. Oh, Biddy, I can forgive you now for what you said—I will be happy still—an' my mother will be happy—an' my father,—my poor father—will be happy yet; he'll reform—repent maybe; an' he'll wanst more get back his early heart—his heart when it was good, an' not hardened, as he says it was, by the world. Biddy, did you ever see any one cry with joy before—ha—ha—did you now?"

"God strengthen you, my poor child," exclaimed the nurse, bursting into tears; "for what will become of you? Your father, Sarah dear, is to be hanged for murdher, an' it was your mother's evidence that hanged him. She swore against him on the trial an' his sentence is passed. Bartle Sullivan wasn't murdhered at all, but another man was, an' it was your father that done it. On next Friday he's to be hanged, an' your mother, they say, swore his life away! If that's not *black* news, I don't know what is."

Sarah's face had been flushed to such a degree by the first portion of the woman's intelligence, that its expression was brilliant and animated beyond belief. On hearing its conclusion, however, the change from joy to horror was instantaneous, shocking, and pitiable, beyond all power of language to express. She was struck perfectly motionless and ghastly; and as she kept her large lucid eyes fixed upon the woman's face, the powers of life, that had been hitherto in such a tumult of delight within her, seemed slowly, and with a deadly and scarcely perceptible motion, to ebb out of her system. The revulsion was too dreadful; and with the appearance of one who was anxious to shrink or hide from something that was painful, she laid her head down on the humble pillow of her bed.

"Now, asthore," said the woman, struck by the woeful change—"don't take it too much to heart; you're young, an' please God, you'll get over it all yet."

"No," she replied, in a voice so utterly changed and deprived of its strength, that the woman could with difficulty hear or understand her. "There's but one good bein' in the world," she said to herself, "an' that is Mave Sullivan: I have no mother, no father—all I can love now is Mave Sullivan—that's all."

"Every one that knows her does," said the nurse.

"Who?" said Sarah, inquiringly.

"Why, Mave Sullivan," replied the other; "won't you spakin' about her?"

"Was I?" said she, "maybe so—what was I sayin'?"

She then put her hand to her forehead, as if she felt pain and confusion; after which she waved the nurse towards her, but on the woman stooping down, she seemed to forget that she had beckoned to her at all.

At this moment Mave and her mother entered, and after looking towards the bed on which she lay, they inquired in a whisper, from her attendant how she was.

The woman pointed hopelessly to her own head, and then looked significantly at Sarah, as if to intimate that her brain was then unsettled.

"There's something wrong here," she added, in an under tone, and touching her head, "especially since I tould her what had happened."

"Is she acquainted with everything?" asked her mother.

"She is," replied the other; "she knows that her father is to die on Friday an' that you swore agin' him."

"But what on earth," said Mave, "could make you be so mad as to let her know anything of that kind?"

"Why, she sent me to get word," replied the simple creature, "and you wouldn't have me tell her a lie, an' the poor girl on her death-bed, I'm afeard."

Her mother went over and stood opposite where she lay, that is, near the foot of her bed, and putting one hand under her chin, looked at her long and steadily. Mave went to her side and taking her hand gently up, kissed it, and wept quietly, but bitterly.

It was, indeed, impossible to look upon her without a feeling of deep and extraordinary interest. Her singularly youthful aspect—her surprising beauty, to which disease and suffering had given a character of purity and tenderness almost etherial—the natural symmetry and elegance of her very arms and hands—the wonderful whiteness of her skin, which contrasted so strikingly with the raven black of her glossy hair, and the soul of thought and feeling which

lay obviously expressed by the long silken eye-lashes of her closed eyes—all, when taken in at a glance, were calculated to impress a beholder with love, and sympathy, and tenderness, such as no human heart could resist.

Mave, on glancing at her mother, saw a few tears stealing, as it were, down her cheeks.

"I wish to God, my dear daughter," exclaimed the latter, in a low voice, "that I had never seen your face, lovely as it is, an' it surely would be betther for yourself that you had never been born."

She then passed to the bed-side, and taking Mave's place, who withdrew, she stooped down, and placing her lips upon Sarah's white broad forehead, exclaimed—"May God bless you, my dear daughter, is the heart-felt prayer of your unhappy mother!"

Sarah suddenly opened her eyes, and started.—"What is wrong? There is something wrong. Didn't I hear some one callin' me daughter? Here's a strange woman — Charley Hanlon's aunt — Biddy, come here!"

"Well, acushla, here I am—keep yourself quiet, achora—what is it?"

"Didn't you tell me that my mother swore my father's life away?"

"It's what they say," replied the matter-of-fact nurse.

"Then it's a lie that's come from hell itself," she replied—"Oh, if I was only up and strong as I was, let me see the man or woman that durst say so. *My* mother! to become unnatural and treacherous, an' I *have* a mother—ha, ha—oh, how often have I thought of this—thought of what a girl I would be if I was to have a mother—how good I would be too—how kind to her—how I would love her, an' how she would love me, an' then my heart would sink when I'd think of home—ay, an' when Nelly would speake cruelly an' harshly to me I'd feel as if I could kill her, or any one."

Her eye here caught Mave Sullivan's, and she again started.

"What is this?" she exclaimed; "am I still in the shed? Mave Sullivan!—help me up, Biddy."

"I am here, dear Sarah," replied the gentle girl—"I am here; keep yourself quiet and don't attempt to sit up; you're not able to do it."

The composed and serene aspect of Mave, and the kind, touching tones of her voice, seemed to operate favorably upon her, and to aid her in collecting her confused and scattered thoughts into something like order.

"Oh, dear Mave," said she, "what is this? What has happened? Isn't there something wrong? I'm confused. Have I a mother? Have I a *livin'* mother, that will *love* me?"

Her large eyes suddenly sparkled with singular animation as she asked the last question, and Mave thought it was the most appropriate moment to make the mother known to her.

"You have, dear Sarah, an' here she is waitin' to clasp you to her heart, an' give you her blessin'."

"Where?" she exclaimed, starting up in her bed, as if in full health; "my mother! where?—where?"

She held her arms out towards her, for Mave had again assumed the mother's station at her bedside, and the latter stood at a little distance. On seeing her daughter's arms widely extended towards her, she approached her, but whether checked by Sarah's allusion to her conduct, or from a wish to spare her excitement, or from some natural coldness of disposition, it is difficult to say, she did it with so little appearance of the eager enthusiasm that the heart of the latter expected, and with a manner so singularly cool and unexcited, that Sarah, whose feelings were always decisive and rapid as lightning, had time to recognize her features as Hanlon's aunt whom she had seen and talked to before.

But that was not all; she perceived not in her these external manifestations of strong affection and natural tenderness for which her own heart yearned almost convulsively; there was no sparkling glance—no precipitate emotion—no gushing of tears—no mother's love—in short, nothing of what her noble and loving spirit could recognize as kindred to itself, and to her warm and impulsive heart. The moment—the glance—that sought and found not what it looked for—were decisive: the arms that had been extended remained extended still, but the spirit of that attitude was changed, as was that eager and tumultuous delight which had just flashed from her countenance. Her thoughts, as we said, were quick, and in almost a moment's time she appeared to be altogether a different individual.

"Stop!" she exclaimed, now repelling instead of soliciting the embrace—"there isn't the love of a mother in that woman's heart—an' what did I hear?—that she swore my father's life away—her husband's life away. No, no; I'm changed—I see my father's blood, shed by her, too, his own wife! Look at her features, they're hard and harsh—there's no love in her eyes—they're cowld and sevare. No, no; there's something wrong there—I feel that—I feel it—it's here—the feelin's in my heart—oh, what a dark

hour this is! You were right, Biddy, you brought me black news this day—but it won't—it won't throuble me long—it won't trouble this poor brain long—it won't pierce this poor heart long—I hope not. Oh!" she exclaimed, turning to Mave, and extending her arms towards her, "Mave Sullivan, let me die!"

The affectionate but disappointed girl had all Mave's sympathies, whose warm and affectionate feelings recoiled from the coldness and apparent want of natural tenderness which characterized the mother's manner, under circumstances in themselves so affecting. Still, after having soothed Sarah for a few minutes, and placed her head once more upon the pillow, she whispered to the mother, who seemed to think more than to feel:

"Don't be surprised; when you consider the state she's in—and indeed it isn't to be wondered at after what she has heard—you must make every allowance for the poor girl."

Sarah's emotions were now evidently in incessant play.

"Biddy," said she, "come here again; help me up."

"Dear Sarah," said Mave, "you are not able to bear all this; if you could compose yourself an' forget everything unpleasant for a while, till you grow strong—"

"If I could forget that my mother has no heart to love me with—that she's cowld and strange to me: if I could forget that she's brought my father to a shameful death—my father's heart wasn't *altogether* bad; no, an' he was wanst—I mane in his early life—a good man. I know that—I feel that—'*dear Sarah, sleep—sleep, dear Sarah*'—no, bad as he is, there was a thousand times more love and nature in the voice that spoke them words than in a hundred women like my mother, that hasn't yet kissed my lips. Biddy, come here, I say—here—lift me up again."

There was such energy, and fire, and command, in her voice and words now, that Mave could not remonstrate any longer, nor the nurse refuse to obey her. When she was once more placed sitting, she looked about her—

"Mother," she said, "come here!"

And as she pronounced the word *mother*, a trait so beautiful, so exquisite, so natural, and so pathetic, accompanied it, that Mave once more wept. Her voice, in uttering the word, quivered, and softened into tenderness, with the affection which nature itself seems to have associated with it. Sarah herself remarked this, even in the anguish of the moment.

"My very heart knows and loves the word," she said. "Oh! why is it that I am to suffer this? Is it possible that the empty name is all that's left me afther all? Mother, come here—I am pleadin' for my father now—you pleaded against him, but I always took the weakest side—here is God now among us—you must stand before him—look your daughter in the face—an' answer her as you expect to meet God, when you leave this throubled life—truth—truth now, mother, an' nothin' else. Mother, I am dyin'. Now, as God is to judge you, did you ever love my father as a wife ought?"

There was some irresistible spirit, some unaccountable power, in her manner and language,—such command and such wonderful love of candor in her full dark eye—that it was impossible to gainsay or withstand her.

"I will spake the thruth," replied her mother, evidently borne away and subdued, "although it's against myself—to my shame an' to my sorrow I say it—that when I married your father, another man had my affections—but, as I'm to appear before God, I never wronged him. I don't know how it is that you've made me confess it; but at any rate you're the first that ever wrung it out o' me."

"That will do," replied her daughter, calmly; "that sounds like murdher from a mother's lips! Lay me down now, Biddy."

Mave, who had scarcely ever taken her eyes from off her varying and busy features, was now struck by a singular change which she observed come over them—a change that was nothing but the shadow of death, and cannot be described.

"Sarah!" she exclaimed; "dear, darling Sarah, what is the matter with you? Have you got ill again?"

"Oh! my child!" exclaimed her mother—"am I to lose you this way at last? Oh! dear Sarah, forgive me—I'm you mother, and you'll forgive me."

"Mave," said Sarah, "take this—I remember seein' yours and mine together not very long ago—take this lock of my hair—I think you'll get a pair of scissors on the corner of the shelf—cut it off with your own hands—let it be sent to my father—an' when he's dyin' a disgraceful death, let him wear it next his heart—an' wherever he's to be buried, let him have this buried with him. Let whoever will give it to him, say that it comes from Sarah—an' that, if she was able, she would be with him through shame, an' disgrace, an' death; that she'd support him as well as she could in his trouble—that she'd scorn the world for him—an' that because he said wanst in his life that he loved

her; she'd forgive him all a thousand times, an' would lay down her life for him."

"You would do that, my noble girl!" exclaimed Mave, with a choking voice.

"An' above all things," proceeded Sarah, "let him be told, if it can be done, that Sarah said to him to die without fear—to bear it up like a man, an' not like a coward—to look manfully about him on the very scaffold—an'—an' to die as a man *ought* to die—bravely an' without fear—bravely an' without fear!"

Her voice and strength were, since the last change that Mave observed, both rapidly sinking, and her mother, anxious, if possible, to have her forgiveness, again approached her and said:

"Dear Sarah you are angry with me. Oh! forgive me—am I not your mother?"

The girl's resentments, however, had all passed, and the business of her life, and its functions, she now felt were all over—she said so—

"It's all over, at last now, mother," she replied—"I have no anger now—come and kiss me. Whatever you have done, you are still my mother. Bless me—bless your daughter Sarah, I have nothing now in my heart but love for everybody. Tell Nelly, dear Mave, that Sarah forgave her, an' hoped that she'd forgive Sarah. Mave, I trust that you an' *he* will be happy—that's my last wish, an' tell him so. Mave, there's sweet faces about me, sich as I seen in the shed; they're smilin' upon me—smilin' upon Sarah—upon poor, hasty Sarah McGowan—that would have loved every one. Mave, think of me sometimes—an' let *him*, when he thinks of the wild girl that loved him, look upon you, dearest Mave, an' love you, if possible, better for her sake. These sweet faces are about me again. Father, I'll be before you—but die—die like a man."

While uttering these last few sentences, which were spoken with great difficulty, she began to pull the bedclothes about with her hands, and whilst uttering the last word, her beautiful hand was slightly clenched, as if helping out a sentiment so completely in accordance with her brave spirit. These motions, however, ceased suddenly—she heaved a deep sigh, and the troubled spirit of the kind, the generous, the erring, but affectionate Sarah M'Gowan—as we shall call her still—passed away to another, and, we trust, a better life. The storms of her heart and brain were at rest forever.

Thus perished in early life one of those creatures, that sometimes seem as if they were placed by mistake in a wrong sphere of existence. It is impossible to say to what a height of moral grandeur and true greatness, culture and education might have elevated her, or to say with what brilliancy her virtues might have shone, had heart and affections been properly cultivated. Like some beautiful and luxuriant flower, however, she was permitted to run into wildness and disorder for want of a guiding hand; but no want, no absence of training, could ever destroy its natural delicacy, nor prevent its fragrance from smelling sweet, even in the neglected situation where it was left to pine and die.

There is little now to be added. "Time, the consoler," passes not in vain even over the abodes of wretchedness and misery. The sufferings of that year of famine we have endeavored to bring before those who may have the power in their hands of assuaging the similar horrors which are likely to visit this. The pictures we have given are not exaggerated, but drawn from memory and the terrible realities of 1817.

It is unnecessary to add, that when sickness and the severity of winter passed away, our lovers, Mave and young Condy Dalton, were happily married, as they deserved to be, and occupied the farm from which the good old man had been so unjustly expelled.

It was on the first social evening that the two families, now so happily reconciled, spent together subsequent to the trial, that Bartle Sullivan gratified them with the following account of his history:

"I remimber fightin'," he proceeded, "wid Condy on that night, an' the devil's own *bullish battha* he was. We went into a corner of the field near the Grey Stone to decide it. All at wanst I forgot what happened, till I found mysell lyin' upon a car wid the M'Mahons of Edinburg, that lived ten or twelve miles beyant the mountains, at the foot of Carnmore. They knew me, and good right they had, for I had been spakin' to their sister Shibby, but she *wasn't for* me at the time, although I was ready to kick my own shadow about her, God knows. Well, you see, I felt disgraced at bein' beaten by Con Dalton, an' I was fond of her, so what 'nd you have of us but off we went together to America, for you see she promised to marry me if I'd go.

"They had taken me up on one of their carts, thinkin' I was dhrunk, to have me for safety in the next neighbor's house we came to. Well, she an' I married when we got to Boston; but God never blessed us wid a family; and Toddy here, who tuk the life of a pedlar, came back afther many a long year, with a good purse, and lived with us. At last I began to long for home, and so we all came together. The Prophet's wife was wid us, an' another passenger tould me that Con

here had been suspected of murdherin' me. I got unwell in Liverpool, but I sent Toddy on before me to make their minds aisy. As we wor talkin' over these matthers, I happened to mention to the woman what I had seen the night the carman was murdhered, and I wondhered at the way she looked on hearin' it. She went on, but afther a time came back to Liverpool for me, an' took the typhus on her way home, but thank God, we were all in time to clear the innocent and punish the guilty; ay, an' reward the good, too, eh, Toddy?"

"I'll give Mave away," replied Toddy, "if there wasn't another man in Europe; an' when I'm puttin' your hand into Con's, Mave, it won't be an empty one. Ay, an' if your friend Sarah, the wild girl, had lived—but it can't be helped—death takes the young as well as the ould; and may God prepare us all to meet Him!"

Young Richard Henderson's anticipations were, unfortunately, too true. On leaving Mr. Travers' office, he returned home, took his bed, and, in the course of one short week, had paid, by a kind of judicial punishment, the fatal penalty of his contemplated profligacy. His father survived him only a few months, so that there is not at this moment, one of the name or blood of Henderson in the Grange. The old man died of a quarrel with Jemmy Branigan, to whom he left a pension of fifty pounds a year; and truly the grief of this aged servant after him was unique and original.

"What's to come o' me?" said Jemmy, with tears in his eye; "I have nothing to do, nobody to attend to, nobody to fight with, nothing to disturb me or put me out of timper; I knew, however, that he would stick to his wickedness to the last—an' so he did, for the devil tempted him, out of sheer malice, when he could get at me no way else, to lave me fifty pounds a year, *to kape me aisy!* Sich revenge and villany, by a dyin' man, was never heard of. God help me, what am I to do now, or what hand will I turn to? What is there before me but peace and quietness for the remainder of my life?—but I won't stand *that* long—an' to lave me fifty pounds a year, *to kape me aisy!* God forgive him!"

The Prophet suffered the sentence of the law, but refused all religious consolation. Whether his daughter's message ever reached him or not, we have had no means of ascertaining. He died, however, as she wished, firmly, but sullenly, and as if he despised and defied the world and its laws. He neither admitted his guilt, nor attempted to maintain his innocence, but passed out of existence like a man who was already wearied with its cares, and who now felt satisfied, when it was too late, that contempt for the laws of God and man, never leads to safety, much less to happiness. His only observation was the following—

"When I dreamt that young Dalton drove a nail in my coffin, little I thought it would end this way."

We have simply to conclude by saying that Rody Duncan was transported for perjury; and that Nelly became a devotee, or voteen, and, as far as one could judge, exhibited something like repentance for the sinful life she had led with the PROPHET.

Wildgoose Lodge.

I had read the anonymous summons, but from its general import I believed it to be one of those special meetings convened for some purpose affecting the usual objects and proceedings of the body; at least the terms in which it was conveyed to me had nothing extraordinary or mysterious in them, beyond the simple fact, that it was not to be a general but a select meeting: this mark of confidence flattered me, and I determined to attend punctually. I was, it is true, desired to keep the circumstances entirely to myself, but there was nothing startling in this, for I had often received summonses of a similar nature. I therefore resolved to attend, according to the letter of my instructions, "on the next night, at the solemn hour of midnight, to deliberate and act upon such matters as should then and there be submitted to my consideration." The morning after I received this message, I arose and resumed my usual occupations; but, from whatever cause it may have proceeded, I felt a sense of approaching evil hang heavily upon me; the beats of my pulse were languid, and an undefinable feeling of anxiety pervaded my whole spirit; even my face was pale, and my eye so heavy, that my father and brothers concluded me to be ill; an opinion which I thought at the time to be correct, for I felt exactly that kind of depression which precedes a severe fever. I could not understand what I experienced, nor can I yet, except by supposing that there is in human nature some mysterious faculty, by which, in coming calamities, the dread of some fearful evil is anticipated, and that it is possible to catch a dark presentiment of the sensations which they subsequently produce. For my part I can neither analyze nor define it; but on that day I knew it by painful experience, and so have a thousand others in similar circumstances.

It was about the middle of winter. The day was gloomy and tempestuous, almost beyond any other I remember; dark clouds rolled over the hills about me, and a close sleet-like rain fell in slanting drifts that chased each other rapidly towards the earth on the course of the blast. The outlying cattle sought the closest and calmest corners of the fields for shelter; the trees and young groves were tossed about, for the wind was so unusually high that it swept in hollow gusts through them, with that hoarse murmur which deepens so powerfully on the mind the sense of dreariness and desolation.

As the shades of night fell, the storm, if possible, increased. The moon was half gone, and only a few stars were visible by glimpses, as a rush of wind left a temporary opening in the sky. I had determined, if the storm should not abate, to incur any penalty rather than attend the meeting; but the appointed hour was distant, and I resolved to be decided by the future state of the night.

Ten o'clock came, but still there was no change: eleven passed, and on opening the door to observe if there were any likelihood of its clearing up, a blast of wind, mingled with rain, nearly blew me off my feet. At length it was approaching to the hour of midnight; and on examining it a third time, I found it had calmed a little, and no longer rained.

I instantly got my oak stick, muffled myself in my great coat, strapped my hat about my ears, and, as the place of meeting was only a quarter of a mile distant, I presently set out.

The appearance of the heavens was lowering and angry, particularly in that point where the light of the moon fell against the clouds, from a seeming chasm in them, through which alone she was visible. The edges of this chasm were faintly bronzed, but the dense body of the masses that hung piled on each side of her, was black and impenetrable to sight. In no other point of the heavens was there any part of the sky visible; a deep veil of clouds overhung the whole horizon, yet was the light sufficient to give occasional glimpses of the rapid shifting which took place in this dark canopy, and of the tempestuous agitation with which the midnight storm swept to and fro beneath it.

At length I arrived at a long slated house, situated in a solitary part of the neighborhood; a little below it ran a small stream, which was now swollen above its banks, and rushing with mimic roar over the flat meadows beside it. The appearance of the bare

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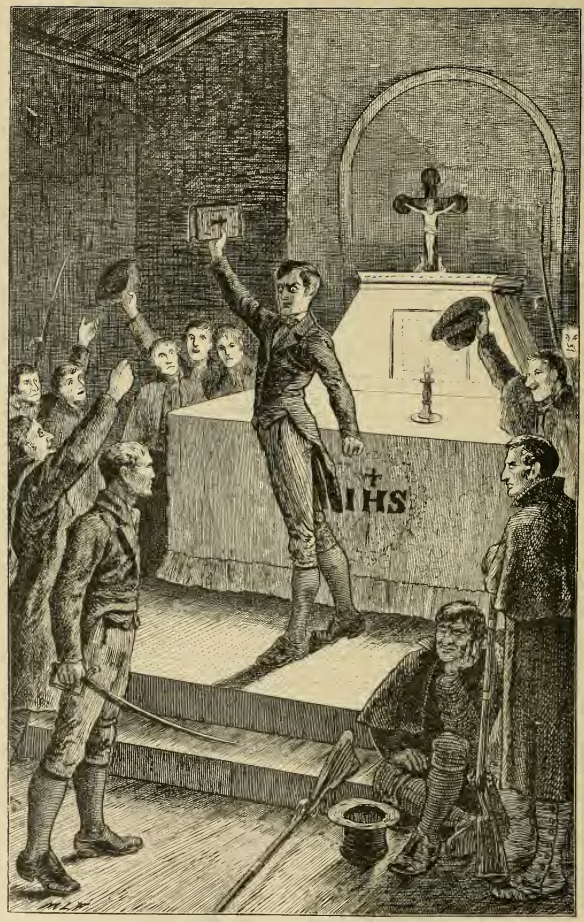

"BY THIS SACRED AND HOLY BOOK OF GOD, I WILL PERFORM THE ACTION WHICH WE HAVE MET THIS NIGHT TO ACCOMPLISH, BE THAT WHAT IT MAY."—*Wild Goose Lodge*, p. 939, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

slated building in such a night was particularly sombre, and to those, like me, who knew the purpose to which it was usually devoted, it was or ought to have been peculiarly so. There it stood, silent and gloomy, without any appearance of human life or enjoyment about or within it. As I approached, the moon once more had broken out of the clouds, and shone dimly upon the wet, glittering slates and windows, with a death-like lustre, that gradually faded away as I left the point of observation, and entered the folding-door. It was the parish chapel.

The scene which presented itself here was in keeping not only with the external appearance of the house, but with the darkness, the storm, and the hour, which was now a little after midnight. About forty persons were sitting in dead silence upon the circular steps of the altar. They did not seem to move; and as I entered and advanced, the echo of my footsteps rang through the building with a lonely distinctness, which added to the solemnity and mystery of the circumstances about me. The windows were secured with shutters on the inside, and on the altar a candle was lighted, which burned dimly amid the surrounding darkness, and lengthened the shadow of the altar itself, and those of six or seven persons who *stood* on its upper steps, until they mingled in the obscurity which shrouded the lower end of the chapel. The faces of the men who *sat* on the altar steps were not distinctly visible, yet their prominent and more characteristic features were in sufficient relief, and I observed, that some of the most malignant and reckless spirits in the parish were assembled. In the eyes of those who stood at the altar, and those whom I knew to be invested with authority over the others, I could perceive gleams of some latent and ferocious purpose, kindled, as I soon observed, into a fiercer expression of vengeance, by the additional excitement of ardent spirits, with which they had stimulated themselves to a point of determination that mocked at the apprehension of all future responsibility, either in this world or the next.

The welcome which I received on joining them was far different from the boisterous good-humor that used to mark our greetings on other occasions; just a nod of the head from this or that person, on the part of those *who sat*, with a *dhud dhemur tha thu?** in a suppressed voice, even below a common whisper: but from the standing group, who were evidently the projectors of the enterprise, I received a convulsive grasp of the hand, accompanied by a fierce and desperate look, that seemed to search my eye and countenance, to try if I were a person likely to shrink from whatever they had resolved to execute. It is surprising to think of the powerful expression which a moment of intense interest or great danger is capable of giving to the eye, the features and the slightest actions, especially in those whose station in society does not require them to constrain nature, by the force of social courtesies, into habits that conceal their natural emotions. None of the standing group spoke; but as each of them wrung my hand in silence, his eye was fixed on mine, with an expression of drunken confidence and secrecy, and an insolent determination not to be gainsaid without peril. If looks could be translated with certainty, they seemed to say, "We are bound upon a project of vengeance, and if *you* do *not* join us, remember we *can* revenge." Along with this grasp, they did not forget to remind me of the common bond by which we were united, for each man gave me the secret grip of Ribbonism in a manner that made the joints of my fingers ache for some minutes afterwards.

There was one present, however—the highest in authority—whose actions and demeanor were calm and unexcited. He seemed to labor under no unusual influence whatever, but evinced a serenity so placid and philosophical, that I attributed the silence of the sitting group, and the restraint which curbed in the outbreaking passions of those who *stood*, entirely to his presence. He was a schoolmaster, who taught his daily school in *that* chapel, and acted also on Sunday, in the capacity of clerk to the priest—an excellent and amiable old man, who knew little of his illegal connections and atrocious conduct.

When the ceremonies of brotherly recognition and friendship were past, the Captain (by which title I shall designate the last-mentioned person) stooped, and, raising a jar of whiskey on the corner of the altar, held a wineglass to its neck, which he filled, and with a calm nod handed it to me to drink. I shrank back, with an instinctive horror, at the profaneness of such an act, in the house, and on the altar of God, and peremptorily refused to taste the proffered draught. He smiled mildly at what he considered my superstition, and added quickly, and in a low voice, "You'll be wantin' it I'm thinkin', afther the wettin' you got."

"Wet or dry," said I—

"Stop, man!" he replied, in the same tone; "spake low. But why wouldn't you take the whiskey? Sure there's as holy people to the fore as you: didn't they all take it? An' I wish we may never do worse

* How are you?

nor dhrink a harmless glass o' whiskey, to keep the cowld out, any way."

"Well," said I, "I'll jist trust to God and the consequences, for the cowld, Paddy, ma bouchal; but a blessed dhrop of it won't be crossin' my lips, avick; so no more ghosther about it;—dhrink it yourself if you like. Maybe you want it as much as I do; wherein I've the patthern of a good big-coat upon me, so thick, your sowl, that if it was rainin' bullocks, a dhrop wouldn't get undher the nap of it."

He gave me a calm, but keen glance as I spoke.

"Well, Jim," said he, "it's a good comrade you've got for the weather that's in it; but, in the manetime, to set you a dacent patthern, I'll just take this myself,"—saying which, with the jar still upon its side, and the fore-finger of his left hand in his neck, he swallowed the spirits—"It's the first I dhrank to-night," he added, "nor would I dhrink it now, only to show you that I've heart an' spirit to do the thing that we're all bound an' sworn to, when the proper time comes;" after which he laid down the glass, and turned up the jar, with much coolness, upon the altar.

During our conversation, those who had been summoned to this mysterious meeting were pouring in fast; and as each person approached the altar, he received from one to two or three glasses of whiskey, according as he chose to limit himself; but, to do them justice, there were not a few of those present, who, in despite of their own desire, and the Captain's express invitation, refused to taste it in the house of God's worship. Such, however, as were scrupulous he afterwards recommended to take it on the outside of the chapel door, which they did, as, by that means, the sacrilege of the act was supposed to be evaded.

About one o'clock they were all assembled except six: at least so the Captain asserted, on looking at a written paper.

"Now, boys," said he in the same low voice, "we are all present except the thraitors, whose names I am goin' to read to you; not that we are to count thim thraitors, till we know whether or not it was in their power to come. Any how, the night's terrible—but, boys, you're to know, that neither fire nor wather is to prevint you, when duly summoned to attind a meeting—particularly whin the summons is widout a name, as you have been told that there is always something of consequence to be done *thin*."

He then read out the names of those who were absent, in order that the real cause of their absence might be ascertained, declaring that they would be dealt with accordingly. After this, with his usual caution, he shut and bolted the door, and having put the key in his pocket, ascended the steps of the altar, and for some time traversed the little platform from which the priest usually addresses the congregation.

Until this night I had never contemplated the man's countenance with any particular interest; but as he walked the platform, I had an opportunity of observing him more closely. He was slight in person, apparently not thirty; and, on a first view, appeared to have nothing remarkable in his dress or features. I, however, was not the only person whose eyes were fixed upon him at that moment; in fact, every one present observed him with equal interest, for hitherto he had kept the object of the meeting perfectly secret, and of course we all felt anxious to know it. It was while he traversed the platform that I scrutinized his features with a hope, if possible, to glean from them some evidence of what was passing within him. I could, however, mark but little, and that little was at first rather from the intelligence which seemed to subsist between him and those whom I have already mentioned as *standing* against the altar, than from any indication of his own. Their gleaming eyes were fixed upon him with an intensity of savage and demon-like hope, which blazed out in flashes of malignant triumph, as upon turning, he threw a cool but rapid glance at them, to intimate the progress he was making in the subject to which he devoted the undivided energies of his mind. But in the course of his meditation, I could observe, on one or two occasions, a dark shade come over his countenance, that contracted his brow into a deep furrow, and it was then, for the first time, that I saw the satanic expression of which his face, by a very slight motion of its muscles, was capable. His hands, during this silence, closed and opened convulsively; his eyes shot out two or three baleful glances, first to his confederates, and afterwards vacantly into the deep gloom of the lower part of the chapel; his teeth ground against each other, like those of a man whose revenge burns to reach a distant enemy, and finally, after having wound himself up to a certain determination, his features relapsed into their original calm and undisturbed expression.

At this moment a loud laugh, having something supernatural in it, rang out wildly from the darkness of the chapel; he stopped, and putting his open hand over his brows, peered down into the gloom, and said calmly in Irish, "*Bee dhu husth; ha nih anam inh:*—hold your tongue, it is not yet time."

Every eye was now directed to the same

spot, but, in consequence of its distance from the dim light on the altar, none could perceive the person from whom the laugh proceeded. It was, by this time, near two o'clock in the morning.

He now stood for a few moments on the platform, and his chest heaved with a depth of anxiety equal to the difficulty of the design he wished to accomplish.

"Brothers," said he—"for we are all brothers—sworn upon all that's blessed an' holy, to obey whatever them that's over us, *manin' among ourselves*, wishes us to do—are you now ready, in the name of God, upon whose althar I stand, to fulfil yer oaths?"

The words were scarcely uttered, when those who had *stood* beside the altar during the night, sprang from their places, and descending its steps rapidly turned round, and raising their arms, exclaimed, "By all that's good an' holy we're willin'."

In the meantime, those who *sat* upon the steps of the altar, instantly rose, and following the example of those who had just spoken, exclaimed after them, "To be sure—by all that's sacred an' holy we're willin'."

"Now, boys," said the Captain, "ar'n't ye big fools for your pains? an' one of ye doesn't know what I mane."

"You're our Captain," said one of those who had stood at the altar, "an' has yer ordhers from higher quarthers; of coorse, whatever ye command upon us we're bound to obey you in."

"Well," said he, smiling, "I only wanted to thry yez; an' by the oath ye tuck, there's not a captain in the county has as good a right to be proud of his min as I have. Well, ye won't rue it, maybe, when the right time comes; and for that same rason every one of ye must have a glass from the jar; thim that won't dhrink it *in* the chapel can dhrink it *widout;* an' here goes to open the door for thim."

He then distributed another glass to every one who would accept it, and brought the jar afterwards to the chapel door, to satisfy the scruples of those who would not drink within. When this was performed, and all duly excited, he proceeded:—

"Now, brothers, you are solemnly sworn to obay me, and I'm sure there's no thraithur here that 'ud parjure himself for a thrifle; but *I'm* sworn to obay them that's above me, manin' still among ourselves; an' to show that I don't scruple to do it, here goes!"

He then turned round, and taking the Missal between his hands placed it upon the altar. Hitherto every word was uttered in a low precautionary tone; but on grasping the book he again turned round, and looking upon his confederates with the same satanic expression which marked his countenance before, he exclaimed, in a voice of deep determination, first kissing the book!

"By this sacred an' holy book of God, I will perform the action which we have met this night to acomplish, be that what it may; an' this I swear upon God's book, and God's althar!"

On concluding, he struck the book violently with his open hand, thereby occasioning a very loud report.

At this moment the candle which burned before him went suddenly out, and the chapel was wrapped in pitchy darkness; the sound as if of rushing wings fell upon our ears, and fifty voices dwelt upon the last words of his oath with wild and supernatural tones, that seemed to echo and to mock what he had sworn. There was a pause, and an exclamation of horror from all present; but the Captain was too cool and steady to be disconcerted. He immediately groped about until he got the candle, and proceeding calmly to a remote corner of the chapel, took up a half-burned peat which lay there, and after some trouble succeeded in lighting it again. He then explained what had taken place; which indeed was easily done, as the candle happened to be extinguished by a pigeon which sat directly above it. The chapel, I should have observed, was at this time, like many country chapels, unfinished inside, and the pigeons of a neighboring dove-cot had built nests among the rafters of the unceiled roof; which circumstance also explained the rushing of the wings, for the birds had been affrighted by the sudden loudness of the noise. The mocking voices were nothing but the echoes, rendered naturally more awful by the scene, the mysterious object of the meeting, and the solemn hour of the night.

When the candle was again lighted, and these startling circumstances accounted for, the persons whose vengeance had been deepening more and more during the night, rushed to the altar in a body, where each, in a voice trembling with passionate eagerness, repeated the oath, and as every word was pronounced, the same echoes heightened the wildness of the horrible ceremony, by their long and unearthly tones. The countenances of these human tigers were livid with suppressed rage; their knit brows, compressed lips, and kindled eyes, fell under the dim light of the taper, with an expression calculated to sicken any heart not absolutely diabolical.

As soon as this dreadful rite was completed, we were again startled by several loud bursts of laughter, which proceeded from the lower darkness of the chapel; and the Captain, on hearing them, turned to the place,

and reflecting for a moment, said in Irish, "*Gutsho nish, avohelhee*—come hither now, boys."

A rush immediately took place from the corner in which they had secreted themselves all the night; and seven men appeared, whom we instantly recognized as brothers and cousins of certain persons who had been convicted, some time before, for breaking into the house of an honest poor man in the neighborhood, from whom, after having treated him with barbarous violence, they took away such fire-arms as he kept for his own protection.

It was evidently not the Captain's intention to have produced these persons until the oath should have been generally taken, but the exulting mirth with which they enjoyed the success of his scheme betrayed them, and put him to the necessity of bringing them forward somewhat before the concerted moment.

The scene which now took place was beyond all power of description; peals of wild, fiendlike yells rang through the chapel, as the party which *stood* on the altar and that which had crouched in the darkness met; wringing of hands, leaping in triumph, striking of sticks and fire-arms against the ground and the altar itself, dancing and cracking of fingers, marked the triumph of some hellish determination. Even the Captain for a time was unable to restrain their fury; but, at length, he mounted the platform before the altar once more, and with a stamp of his foot, recalled their attention to himself and the matter in hand.

"Boys," said he, "enough of this, and too much; an' well for us it is that the chapel is in a lonely place, or our foolish noise might do us no good. Let thim that swore so manfully jist now, stand a one side, till the rest kiss the book one by one."

The proceedings, however, had by this time taken too fearful a shape for even the Captain to compel them to a blindfold oath; the first man he called flatly refused to answer, until he should hear the nature of the service that was required. This was echoed by the remainder, who, taking courage from the firmness of this person, declared generally that, until they first knew the business they were to execute, none of them would take the oath. The Captain's lip quivered slightly, and his brow again became knit with the same hellish expression, which I have remarked gave him so much the appearance of an embodied fiend; but this speedily passed away, and was succeeded by a malignant sneer, in which lurked, if there ever did in a sneer, "a laughing devil," calmly, determinedly atrocious.

"It wasn't worth yer whiles to refuse the oath," said he, mildly, "for the truth is, I had next to nothing for yez to do. Not a hand, maybe, would have to *rise*, only jist to look on, an' if any resistance would be made, to show yourselves; yer numbers would soon make them see that resistance would be no use whatever in the present case. At all evints, the oath of *secrecy must* be taken, or woe be to him that will refuse *that*; he won't know the day, nor the hour, nor the minute, when he'll be made a spatch-cock of."

He then turned round, and, placing his right hand on the Missal, swore, "In the presence of God, and before his holy altar, that whatever might take place that night he would keep secret, from man or mortal, except the priest, and that neither bribery, nor imprisonment, nor death, would wring it from his heart."

Having done this, he again struck the book violently, as if to confirm the energy with which he swore, and then calmly descending the steps, stood with a serene countenance, like a man conscious of having performed a good action. As this oath did not pledge those who refused to take the other to the perpetration of any specific crime, it was readily taken by all present. Preparations were then made to execute what was intended: the half burned turf was placed in a little pot; another glass of whiskey was distributed; and the door being locked by the Captain, who kept the key as parish clerk and schoolmaster, the crowd departed silently from the chapel.

The moment those who lay in the darkness, during the night, made their appearance at the altar, we knew at once the persons we were to visit; for, as I said before, they were related to the miscreants whom one of those persons had convicted, in consequences of their midnight attack upon himself and his family. The Captain's object in keeping them unseen was, that those present, not being aware of the duty about to be imposed on them, might have less hesitation about swearing to its fulfilment. Our conjectures were correct; for on leaving the chapel we directed our steps to the house in which this devoted man resided.

The night was still stormy, but without rain: it was rather dark, too, though not so as to prevent us from seeing the clouds careering swiftly through the air. The dense curtain which had overhung and obscured the horizon was now broken, and large sections of the sky were clear, and thinly studded with stars that looked dim and watery, as did indeed the whole firmament; for in some places black clouds were still visible, threatening a continuance of tempestuous weather. The

road appeared washed and gravelly; every dike was full of yellow water; and every little rivulet and larger stream dashed its hoarse murmur into our ears; every blast, too, was cold, fierce, and wintry, sometimes driving us back to a standstill, and again, when a turn in the road would bring it in our backs, whirling us along for a few steps with involuntary rapidity At length the fated dwelling became visible, and a short consultation was held in a sheltered place, between the Captain and the two parties who seemed so eager for its destruction. Their fire-arms were now loaded, and their bayonets and short pikes, the latter shod and pointed with iron, were also got ready. The live coal which was brought in the small pot had become extinguished; but to remedy this, two or three persons from a remote part of the county entered a cabin on the wayside, and, under pretence of lighting their own and their comrades' pipes, procured a coal of fire, for so they called a lighted turf. From the time we left the chapel until this moment a profound silence had been maintained, a circumstance which, when I considered the number of persons present, and the mysterious and dreaded object of their journey, had a most appalling effect upon my spirits.

At length we arrived within fifty perches of the house, walking in a compact body, and with as little noise as possible; but it seemed as if the very elements had conspired to frustrate our design, for on advancing within the shade of the farm-hedge, two or three persons found themselves up to the middle in water, and on stooping to ascertain more accurately the state of the place, we could see nothing but one immense sheet of it—spread like a lake over the meadows which surrounded the spot we wished to reach.

Fatal night! The very recollection of it, when associated with the fearful tempests of elements, grows, if that were possible, yet more wild and revolting. Had we been engaged in any innocent or benevolent enterprise, there was something in our situation just then that had a touch of interest in it to a mind imbued with a relish for the savage beauties of nature. There we stood, about a hundred and thirty in number, our dark forms bent forward, peering into the dusky expanse of water, with its dim gleams of reflected light, broken by the weltering of the mimic waves into ten thousand fragments, whilst the few stars that overhung it in the firmament appeared to shoot through it in broken lines, and to be multiplied fifty-fold in the gloomy mirror on which we gazed.

Over us was a stormy sky, and around us a darkness through which we could only distinguish, in outline, the nearest objects, whilst the wild wind swept strongly and dismally upon us. When it was discovered that the common pathway to the house was inundated, we were about to abandon our object and return home. The Captain, however, stooped down low for a moment, and, almost closing his eyes, looked along the surface of the waters, and then, rising himself very calmly, said, in his usually quiet tone, "Ye needn't go back, boys, I've found a way; jist follow me."

He immediately took a more circuitous direction, by which we reached a causeway that had been raised for the purpose of giving a free passage to and from the house, during such inundations as the present. Along this we had advanced more than half way, when we discovered a breach in it, which, as afterwards appeared, had that night been made by the strength of the flood. This, by means of our sticks and pikes, we found to be about three feet deep, and eight yards broad. Again we were at a loss how to proceed, when the fertile brain of the Captain devised a method of crossing it.

"Boys," said he, "of coorse you've all played at leap-frog; very well, strip and go in, a dozen of you, lean one upon the back of another from this to the opposite bank, where one must stand facing the outside man, both their shoulders agin one another, that the outside man may be supported. Then *we* can creep over you, an' a dacent bridge you'll be, any way."

This was the work of only a few minutes, and in less than ten we were all safely over.

Merciful Heaven! how I sicken at the recollection of what is to follow! On reaching the dry bank, we proceeded instantly, and in profound silence, to the house; the Captain divided us into companies, and then assigned to each division its proper station. The two parties who had been so vindictive all the night, he kept about himself; for of those who were present, they only were in his confidence, and knew his nefarious purpose; their number was about fifteen. Having made these dispositions, he, at the head of about five of them, approached the house on the windy side, for the fiend possessed a coolness which enabled him to seize upon every possible advantage. That he had combustibles about him was evident, for in less than fifteen minutes nearly one-half of the house was enveloped in flames. On seeing this, the others rushed over to the spot where he and his gang were standing, and remonstrated earnestly, but in vain; the flames now burst forth with renewed violence, and as they flung their strong light upon the faces

of the foremost group, I think hell itself could hardly present anything more satanic than their countenances, now worked up into a paroxysm of infernal triumph at their own revenge. The Captain's look had lost all its calmness, every feature started out into distinct malignity, the curve in his brow was deep, and ran up to the root of the hair, dividing his face into two segments, that did not seem to have been designed for each other. His lips were half open, and the corners of his mouth a little brought back on each side, like those of a man expressing intense hatred and triumph over an enemy who is in the death-struggle under his grasp. His eyes blazed from beneath his knit eyebrows with a fire that seemed to be lighted up in the infernal pit itself. It is unnecessary, and only painful, to describe the rest of his gang; demons might have been proud of such horrible visages as they exhibited; for they worked under all the power of hatred, revenge, and joy; and these passions blended into one terrible scowl, enough almost to blast any human eye that would venture to look upon it.

When the others attempted to intercede for the lives of the inmates, there were at least fifteen guns and pistols levelled at them.

"Another word," said the Captain, "an' you're a corpse where you stand, or the first man who will dare to spake for them; no, no, it wasn't to spare them we came here. 'No mercy' is the pass-word for the night, an' by the sacred oath I swore beyant in the chapel, any one among yez that will attempt to show it, will find none at my hand. Surround the house, boys, I tell ye, I hear them stirring. 'No quarter—no mercy,' is the ordher of the night."

Such was his command over these misguided creatures, that in an instant there was a ring round the house to prevent the escape of the unhappy inmates, should the raging element give them time to attempt it; for none present durst withdraw themselves from the scene, not only from an apprehension of the Captain's present vengeance, or that of his gang, but because they knew that even had they then escaped, an early and certain death awaited them from a quarter against which they had no means of defence. The hour now was about half-past two o'clock. Scarcely had the last words escaped from the Captain's lips, when one of the windows of the house was broken, and a human head, having the hair in a blaze, was descried, apparently a woman's, if one might judge by the profusion of burning tresses, and the softness of the tones, notwithstanding that it called, or rather shrieked aloud for help and mercy. The only reply to this was the whoop from the Captain and his gang, of "No mercy—no mercy!" and that instant the former, and one of the latter, rushed to the spot, and ere the action could be perceived, the head was transfixed with a bayonet and a pike, both having entered it together. The word "mercy" was divided in her mouth; a short silence ensued, the head hung down on the window, but was instantly tossed back into the flames.

This action occasioned a cry of horror from all present, except the *gang* and their leader, which startled and enraged the latter so much, that he ran towards one of them, and had his bayonet, now reeking with the blood of its innocent victim, raised to plunge it in his body, when, dropping the point, he said in a piercing whisper, that hissed in the ears of all: "It's no use *now*, you know; if one's to hang, all will hang; so our safest way, you persave, is to have none of them to tell the story. Ye *may* go now, if you wish; but it won't save a hair of your heads. You cowardly set! I knew if I had tould yez the sport, that none of you, except my *own* boys, would come, so I jist played a thrick upon you; but remimber what you are sworn to, and stand to the oath ye tuck."

Unhappily, notwithstanding the wetness of the preceding weather, the materials of the house were extremely combustible; the whole dwelling was now one body of glowing flame, yet the shouts and shrieks within rose awfully above its crackling and the voice of the storm, for the wind once more blew in gusts, and with great violence. The doors and windows were all torn open, and such of those within as had escaped the flames rushed towards them, for the purpose of further escape, and of claiming mercy at the hands of their destroyers; but whenever they appeared, the unearthly cry of "NO MERCY" rang upon their ears for a moment, and for a moment only, for they were flung back at the points of the weapons which the demons had brought with them to make the work of vengeance more certain.

As yet there were many persons in the house, whose cry for life was strong as despair, and who clung to it with all the awakened powers of reason and instinct. The ear of man could hear nothing so strongly calculated to stifle the demon of cruelty and revenge within him, as the long and wailing shrieks which rose beyond the elements, in tones that were carried off rapidly upon the blast, until they died away in the darkness that lay behind the surrounding hills. Had not the house been in a solitary situation, and the hour the dead of night, any person sleeping within a moderate distance must have heard them, for such a cry of sorrow

rising into a yell of despair was almost sufficient to have awakened the dead. It was lost, however, upon the hearts and ears that heard it: to them, though in justice be it said, to only comparatively a few of them, it appeared as delightful as the tones of soft and entrancing music.

The claims of the surviving sufferers were now modified; they supplicated merely to suffer death *by the weapons of their enemies;* they were willing to bear that, provided they should be allowed to escape from the flames; but no—the horrors of the conflagration were calmly and malignantly gloried in by their merciless assassins, who deliberately flung them back into all their tortures. In the course of a few minutes a man appeared upon the side-wall of the house, nearly naked; his figure, as he stood against the sky in horrible relief, was so finished a picture of woebegone agony and supplication, that it is yet as distinct in my memory as if I were again present at the scene. Every muscle, now in motion by the powerful agitation of his sufferings, stood out upon his limbs and neck, giving him an appearance of desperate strength, to which by this time he must have been wrought up; the perspiration poured from his frame, and the veins and arteries of his neck were inflated to a surprising thickness. Every moment he looked down into the flames which were rising to where he stood; and as he looked, the indescribable horror which flitted over his features might have worked upon the devil himself to relent. His words were few:—

"My child," said he, "is still safe, she is an infant, a young crathur that never harmed you, or any one—she is still safe. Your mothers, your wives, have young innocent childhre like it. Oh, spare her, think for a moment that it's one of your own: spare it, as you hope to meet a just God, or if you don't, in mercy shoot me first—put an end to me, before I see her burned!"

The Captain approached him coolly and deliberately. "You'll prosecute no one now, you bloody informer," said he: "you'll convict no more boys for takin' an ould gun an' pistol from you, or for givin' you a neighborly knock or two into the bargain."

Just then, from a window opposite him, proceeded the shrieks of a woman, who appeared at it with the infant in her arms. She herself was almost scorched to death; but, with the presence of mind and humanity of her sex, she was about to put the little babe out of the window. The Captain noticed this, and, with characteristic atrocity, thrust, with a sharp bayonet, the little innocent, along with the person who endeavored to rescue it, into the red flames, where they both perished. This was the work of an instant. Again he approached the man: "Your child is a coal now," said he, with deliberate mockery; "I pitched it in myself, on the point of this,"—showing the weapon—"an' now is your turn,?—saying which, he clambered up, by the assistance of his gang, who stood with a front of pikes and bayonets bristling to receive the wretched man, should he attempt, in his despair, to throw himself from the wall. The Captain got up, and placing the point of his bayonet against his shoulder, flung him into the fiery element that raged behind him. He uttered one wild and terrific cry, as he fell back, and no more. After this nothing was heard but the crackling of the fire, and the rushing of the blast; all that had possessed life within were consumed, amounting either to eight or eleven persons.

When this was accomplished, those who took an active part in the murder, stood for some time about the conflagration; and as it threw its red light upon their fierce faces and rough persons, soiled as they now were with smoke and black streaks of ashes, the scene seemed to be changed to hell, the murderers to spirits of the damned, rejoicing over the arrival and the torture of some guilty soul. The faces of those who kept aloof from the slaughter were blanched to the whiteness of death: some of them fainted, and others were in such agitation that they were compelled to lean on their comrades. They became actually powerless with horror: yet to such a scene were they brought by the pernicious influence of Ribbonism.

It was only when the last victim went down, that the conflagration shot up into the air with most unbounded fury. The house was large, deeply thatched, and well furnished; and the broad red pyramid rose up with fearful magnificence towards the sky. Abstractedly it had sublimity, but now it was associated with nothing in my mind but blood and terror. It was not, however, without a purpose that the Captain and his gang stood to contemplate its effect. "Boys," said he, "we had betther be sartin that all's safe; who knows but there might be some of the sarpents crouchin' under a hape o' rubbish, to come out an' gibbet us to-morrow or next day: we had betther wait a while, anyhow, if it was only to see the blaze."

Just then the flames rose majestically to a surprising height. Our eyes followed their direction; and we perceived, for the first time, that the dark clouds above, together with the intermediate air, appeared to reflect back, or rather to have caught the red hue of the fire. The hills and country about us appeared with an alarming distinctness; but

the most picturesque part of it was the effect of reflection of the blaze on the floods that spread over the surrounding plains. These, in fact, appeared to be one broad mass of liquid copper, for the motion of the breaking waters caught from the blaze of the high waving column, as reflected in them, a glaring light, which eddied, and rose, and fluctuated, as if the flood itself had been a lake of molten fire.

Fire, however, destroys rapidly. In a short time the flames sank—became weak and flickering—by and by, they shot out only in fits—the crackling of the timbers died away—the surrounding darkness deepened—and, ere long, the faint light was overpowered by the thick volumes of smoke that rose from the ruins of the house and its murdered inhabitants.

"Now, boys," said the Captain, "all is safe—we may go. Remember, every man of you, what you've sworn this night, on the book an' altar of God—not on a heretic Bible. If you perjure yourselves, you may hang us; but let me tell you, for your comfort, that if you do, there is them livin' that will take care the lase of your own lives will be but short."

After this we dispersed every man to his own home.

Reader,—not many months elapsed ere I saw the bodies of this Captain, whose name was Patrick Devann, and all those who were actively concerned in the perpetration of this deed of horror, withering in the wind, where they hung gibbeted, near the scene of their nefarious villany; and while I inwardly thanked Heaven for my own narrow and almost undeserved escape, I thought in my heart how seldom, even in this world, justice fails to overtake the murderer, and to enforce the righteous judgment of God—that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

*** This tale of terror is, unfortunately, too true. The scene of hellish murder detailed in it lies at Wildgoose Lodge, in the county of Louth, within about four miles of Carrickmacross, and nine of Dundalk. No such multitudinous murder has occurred, under similar circumstances, except the burning of the Sheas, in the county of Tipperary. The name of the family burned in Wildgoose Lodge was Lynch. One of them had, shortly before this fatal night, prosecuted and convicted some of the neighboring Ribbonmen, who visited him with severe marks of their displeasure, in consequence of his having refused to enrol himself as a member of their body. The language of the story is partly fictitious; but the facts are pretty closely such as were developed during the trial of the murderers. Both parties were Roman Catholics, and either twenty-five or twenty-eight of those who took an active part in the burning, were hanged and gibbeted in different parts of the county of Louth. Devann, the ringleader, hung for some months in chains, within about a hundred yards of his own house, and about half a mile from Wildgoose Lodge. His mother could neither go into nor out of her cabin without seeing his body swinging from the gibbet. Her usual exclamation on looking at him was—"God be good to the sowl of my poor marthyr!" The peasantry, too, frequently exclaimed, on seeing him, "Poor Paddy!" A gloomy fact that speaks volumes!

TUBBER DERG;

OR, THE RED WELL.

THE following story owes nothing to any coloring or invention of mine; it is unhappily a true one, and to me possesses a peculiar and melancholy interest, arising from my intimate knowledge of the man whose fate it holds up as a moral lesson to Irish landlords. I knew him well, and many a day and hour have I played about his knee, and ran, in my boyhood, round his path, when, as he said to himself, the world was no trouble to him.

On the south side of a sloping tract of light ground, lively, warm, and productive, stood a white, moderate-sized farm-house, which, in consequence of its conspicuous situation, was a prominent and, we may add, a graceful object in the landscape of which it formed a part. The spot whereon it stood was a swelling natural terrace, the soil of which was heavier and richer than that of the adjoining lands. On each side of the house stood a clump of old beeches, the only survivors of that species then remaining in the country. These beeches extended behind the house in a kind of angle, with opening enough at their termination to form a vista, through which its white walls glistened with beautiful effect in the calm splendor of a summer evening. Above the mound on which it stood, rose two steep hills, overgrown with furze and fern, except on their tops, which were clothed with purple heath; they were also covered with patches of broom, and studded with gray rocks, which sometimes rose singly or in larger masses, pointed or rounded into curious and fantastic shapes. Exactly between these hills the sun went down during the month of June, and nothing could be in finer relief than the rocky and picturesque outlines of their sides, as crowned with thorns and clumps of wild ash, they appeared to overhang the valley whose green foliage was gilded by the sun-beams, which lit up the scene into radiant beauty. The bottom of this natural chasm, which opened against the deep crimson of the evening sky, was nearly upon a level with the house, and completely so with the beeches that surrounded it. Brightly did the sinking sun fall upon their tops, whilst the neat white house below, in their quiet shadow, sent up its wreath of smoke among their branches, itself an emblem of contentment, industry, and innocence. It was, in fact, a lovely situation; perhaps the brighter to me, that its remembrance is associated with days of happiness and freedom from the cares of a world, which, like a distant mountain, darkens as we approach it, and only exhausts us in struggling to climb its rugged and barren paths.

There was to the south-west of this house another little hazel glen, that ended in a precipice formed by a single rock some thirty feet high, over which tumbled a crystal cascade into a basin worn in its hard bed below. From this basin the stream murmured away through the copse-wood, until it joined a larger rivulet that passed, with many a winding, through a fine extent of meadows adjoining it. Across the foot of this glen, and past the door of the house we have described, ran a bridle road, from time immemorial; on which, as the traveller ascended it towards the house, he appeared to track his way in blood, for a chalybeate *spa* arose at its head, oozing out of the earth, and spread itself in a crimson stream over the path in every spot whereon a foot-mark could be made. From this circumstance it was called Tubber Derg, or the Red Well. In the meadow where the glen terminated, was another spring of delicious crystal; and clearly do I remember the ever-beaten pathway that led to it through the grass, and up the green field which rose in a gentle slope to the happy-looking house of Owen M'Carthy, for so was the man called who resided under its peaceful roof.

I will not crave your pardon, gentle reader, for dwelling at such length upon a scene so dear to my heart as this, because I write not now so much for your gratification as my own. Many an eve of gentle May have I pulled the Maygowans which grew about that well, and over that smooth meadow

Often have I raised my voice to its shrillest pitch, that I might hear its echoes rebounding in the bottom of the green and still glen, where silence, so to speak, was deepened by the continuous murmur of the cascade above; and when the cuckoo uttered her first note from among the hawthorns on its side, with what trembling anxiety did I, an urchin of some eight or nine years, look under my right foot for the white hair, whose charm was such, that by keeping it about me the first female name I should hear was destined, I believed in my soul, to be that of my future wife.* Sweet was the song of the thrush, and mellow the whistle of the blackbird, as they rose in the stillness of evening over the "hirken shaws" and green dells of this secluded spot of rural beauty. Far, too, could the rich voice of Owen M'Carthy be heard along the hills and meadows, as, with a little chubby urchin at his knee, and another in his arms, he sat on a bench beside his own door, singing the "Trougha" in his native Irish; whilst Kathleen his wife, with her two maids, each crooning a low song, sat before the door milking the cows, whose sweet breath mingled its perfume with the warm breeze of evening.

Owen M'Carthy was descended from a long line of honest ancestors, whose names had never, within the memory of man, been tarnished by the commission of a mean or disreputable action. They were always a kind-hearted family, but stern and proud in the common intercourse of life. They believed themselves to be, and probaby were, a branch of the MacCarthy More stock; and, although only the possessors of a small farm, it was singular to observe the effect which this conviction produced upon their bearing and manners. To it might, perhaps, be attributed the high and stoical integrity for which they were remarkable. This severity, however, was no proof that they wanted feeling, or were insensible to the misery and sorrows of others: in all the little cares and perplexities that chequered the peaceful neighborhood in which they lived, they were ever the first to console, or, if necessary, to support a distressed neighbor with the means which God had placed in their possession; for, being industrious, they were seldom poor. Their words were few, but sincere, and generally promised less than the honest hearts that dictated them intended to perform. There is in some persons a hereditary feeling of just principle, the result neither of education nor of a clear moral sense, but rather a kind of instinctive honesty which descends, like a constitutional bias, from father to son, pervading every member of the family. It is difficult to define this, or to assign its due position in the scale of human virtues. It exists in the midst of the grossest ignorance, and influences the character in the absence of better principles. Such was the impress which marked so strongly the family of which I speak. No one would ever think of imputing a dishonest act to the M'Carthys; nor would any person acquainted with them, hesitate for a moment to consider their word as good as the bond of another. I do not mean to say, however, that their motives of action were not higher than this instinctive honesty; far from it: but I say, that they possessed it in *addition* to a strong feeling of family pride, and a correct knowledge of their moral duties.

I can only take up Owen M'Carthy at that part of the past to which my memory extends. He was then a tall, fine-looking young man; silent, but kind. One of the earliest events within my recollection is his wedding; after that the glimpse of his state and circumstances are imperfect; but as I grew up, they became more connected, and I am able to remember him the father of four children; an industrious, inoffensive small farmer, beloved, respected, and honored. No man could rise, be it ever so early, who would not find Owen up before him; no man could anticipate him in an early crop, and if a widow or a sick acquaintance were unable to get in their harvest, Owen was certain to collect the neighbors to assist them; to be the first there himself, with quiet benevolence, encouraging them to a zealous performance of the friendly task in which they were engaged.

It was, I believe, soon after his marriage, that the lease of the farm held by him expired. Until that time he had been able to live with perfect independence; but even the enormous rise of one pound per acre, though it deprived him in a great degree of his usual comforts, did not sink him below the bare necessaries of life. For some years after that he could still serve a deserving neighbor; and never was the hand of Owen M'Carthy held back from the wants and distresses of those whom he knew to be honest.

I remember once an occasion upon which a widow Murray applied to him for a loan of five pounds, to prevent her two cows from being auctioned for a half year's rent, of which she only wanted that sum. Owen sat at dinner with his family when she entered the house in tears, and, as well as her agitation of mind permitted, gave him a detailed account of her embarrassment.

* Such is the superstition; and, as I can tell, faithfully is it believed.

"The blessin' o' God be upon all here," said she, on entering.

"The double o' that to you, Rosha," replied Owen's wife: "won't you sit in an' be atin'?—here's a sate beside Nanny; come over, Rosha."

Owen only nodded to her, and continued to eat his dinner, as if he felt no interest in her distress. Rosha sat down at a distance, and with the corner of a red handkerchief to her eyes, shed tears in that bitterness of feeling which marks the helplessness of honest industry under the pressure of calamity.

"In the name o' goodness, Rosha," said Mrs. M'Carthy, "what ails you, asthore? Sure Jimmy—God spare him to you—wouldn't be dead?"

"Glory be to God! no, avourneen machree. Och, och! but it 'ud be the black sight, an' the black day, that 'ud see my brave boy, the staff of our support, an' the bread of our mouth, taken away from us!—No, no, Kathleen dear, it's not that bad wid me yet. I hope we'll never live to see his manly head laid down before us. Twas his own manliness, indeed, brought it an him—backin' the sack when he was bringin' home our last *meldhre** from the mill; for you see he should do it, the crathur, to show his strinth, an' the sack, when he got it an was too heavy for him, an' hurted the small of his back; for his bones, you see, are too young, an' hadn't time to fill up yet. No, avourneen. Glory be to God! he's gettin' betther wid me!" and the poor creature's eyes glistened with delight through her tears and the darkness of her affliction.

Without saying a word, Owen, when she finished the eulogium on her son, rose, and taking her forcibly by the shoulder, set her down at the table, on which a large potful of potatoes had been spread out, with a circle in the middle for a dish of rashers and eggs, into which dish every right hand of those about it was thrust, with a quickness that clearly illustrated the principle of competition as a stimulus to action.

"Spare your breath," said Owen, placing her rather roughly upon the seat, "an' take share of what's goin': when all's cleared off we'll hear you, but the sorra word till then."

"Musha, Owen," said the poor woman, "you're the same man still; sure we all know your ways; I'll strive, avourneen, to ate—I'll strive, asthore—to plase you, an' the Lord bless you an' yours, an' may you never be as I an' my fatherless childhre are this sorrowful day!" and she accompanied her words by a flood of tears.

* Meldhre—whatever quantity of grain is brought to the mill to be ground on one occasion.

Owen, without evincing the slightest sympathy, withdrew himself from the table. Not a muscle of his face was moved; but as the cat came about his feet at the time, he put his foot under her, and flung her as easily as possible to the lower end of the kitchen.

"Arrah, what harm did the crathur do," asked his wife, "that you'd kick her for, that way? an' why but you *ate out* your dinner?"

"*I'm* done," he replied, "but that's no rason that Rosha, an' you, an' thim boys that has the work afore them, shouldn't finish your male's mate."

Poor Rosha thought that by his withdrawing he had already suspected the object of her visit, and of course concluded that her chance of succeeding was very slender.

The wife, who guessed what she wanted, as well as the nature of her suspicion, being herself as affectionate and obliging as Owen, reverted to the subject, in order to give her an opportunity of proceeding.

"Somethin' bitther an' out o' the common coorse, is a throuble to you, Rosha," said she, "or you wouldn't be in the state you're in. The Lord look down on you this day, you poor crathur—widout the father of your childhre to stand up for you, an' your only other depindance laid on the broad of his back, all as one as a cripple; but no matther, Rosha; trust to Him that can be a husband to you an' a father to your orphans—trust to Him, an' his blessed mother in heaven, this day, an' never fear but they'll *rise* up a frind for you. Musha, Owen, ate your dinner as you ought to do, wid your capers! How can you take a spade in your hand upon that morsel?"

"Finish your own," said her husband, "an' never heed me; jist let me alone. Don't you see that if I wanted it, I'd ate it, an' what more would you have about!"

"Well, acushla, it's your own loss, sure, of a sartinty. An' Rosha, whisper, ahagur, what can Owen or I do for you? Throth, it would be a bad day we'd see you at a *deshort** for a friend, for you never wor nothin' else nor a civil, oblagin' neighbor yourself; an' him that's gone before—the Lord make his bed in heaven this day—was as good a warrant as ever broke bread, to sarve a friend, if it was at the hour of midnight."

"Ah! when I had *him*," exclaimed the distracted widow, "I never had occasion to trouble aither friend or neighbor; but he's gone an' now it's otherwise wid me—glory be to God for all his mercies—a wurrah dheelish! Why, thin, since I must spake, an' has no other frind to go to—but some-

* That is, at a loss; or more properly speaking, taken short, which it means.

how I doubt Owen looks dark upon me—sure I'd put my hand to a stamp, if my word wouldn't do for it, an' sign the blessed crass that saved us, for the payment of it; or I'd give it to him in oats, for I hear you want some, Owen—Phatie oates it is, an' a bether shouldhered or fuller-lookin' grain never went undher a harrow—indeed it's it that's the beauty, all out, if it's good seed you want."

"What is it for, woman alive?" inquired Owen, as he kicked a three-legged stool out of his way."

"What is it for, is it? Och, Owen darlin', sure my two brave cows is lavin' me. Owen M'Murt, the driver, is over wid me beyant, an' has them ready to set off wid. I reared them both, the two of them, wid my own hands; *Chechoney*, that knows my voice, an' would come to me from the fardest corner o' the field, an' nothin' will we have—nothin' will my poor sick boy have—but the black wather, or the dhry salt; besides the butther of them being lost to us for rent, or a small taste of it, of an odd time, for poor Jimmy. Owen, next to God, I have no friend to depind upon but yourself!"

"Me!" said Owen, as if astonished. "Phoo, that's quare enough! Now do you think, Rosha,—hut, hut, woman alive! Come, boys, you're all done; out wid you to your spades, an' finish that *meerin* * before night. Me!—hut, tut!"

"I have it all but five pounds, Owen, an' for the sake of him that's in his grave—an' that, maybe, is able to put up his prayer for you"——

"An' what would you want *me* to do, Rosha? Either for you to sit down an' finish your dinner, when it's before you. I'm goin' to get an ould glove † that's somewhere about this chist, for I must weed out that bit of oats before night, wid a blessin'," and, as he spoke he passed into another room, as if he had altogether forgotten her solicitation, and in a few minutes returned.

"Owen, avick!—an' the blessin' of the fatherless be upon you, sure, an' many a one o' them you have, any how, Owen!"

"Well, Rosha—well?"

"Och, och, Owen, it's low days wid me to be depindin' upon the sthranger? Little thim that reared me ever thought it 'ud come to this. You know I'm a dacent father's child, an' I have stooped to you, Owen M'Carthy—what I'd scorn to do to any other but yourself—poor an' friendless as I stand here before you. Let them take the cows, thin, from my childhre; but the father of the fatherless will support thim an' me. Och, but it's well for the O'Donohoes that their landlord lives at home among themselves, for may the heavens look down on me, I wouldn't know where to find mine, if one sight of him 'ud save me an' my childre from the grave! The Agent even, he lives in Dublin, an' how could I lave my sick boy, an' small *girshas* by themselves, to go a hundre miles, an' maybe not see him afther all. Little hopes I'd have from him, even if I did; he's paid for gatherin' in his rents; but it's well known he wants the touch of nathur for the sufferins of the poor, an' of them that's honest in their intintions."

"I'll go over wid you, Rosha, if that will be of any use," replied Owen, composedly; "come, I'll go an' spake to Frank M'Murt."

"The sorra blame I blame him, Owen," replied Rosha, "his bread's depindin' upon the likes of sich doins, an' he can't get over it; but a word from you, Owen, will save me, for who ever refused to take the word of a M'Carthy?"

When Owen and the widow arrived at the house of the latter, they found the situation of the bailiff laughable in the extreme. Her eldest son, who had been confined to his bed by a hurt received in his back, was up, and had got the unfortunate driver, who was rather old, wedged in between the dresser and the wall, where his cracked voice—for he was asthmatic—was raised to the highest pitch, calling for assistance. Beside him was a large tub half-filled with water, into which the little ones were emptying small jugs, carried at the top of their speed from a puddle before the door. In the meantime, Jemmy was tugging at the bailiff with all his strength—fortunately for that personage, it was but little—with the most sincere intention of inverting him into the tub which contained as much muddy water as would have been sufficient to make him a subject for the deliberation of a coroner and twelve honest men. Nothing could be more conscientiously attempted than the task which Jemmy had proposed to execute: every tug brought out his utmost strength, and when he failed in pulling down the bailiff, he compensated himself for his want of success by cuffing his ribs, and peeling his shins by hard kicks; whilst from those open points which the driver's grapple with his man naturally exposed, were inflicted on him by the rejoicing urchins numberless punches of tongs, potato-washers, and sticks whose points were from time to time hastily thrust into the coals, that they might more effectually either blind or disable him in some other manner.

As one of the little ones ran out to fill

* Meerin—a march ditch, a boundary.

† In "hand-weeding," old gloves are used to prevent the hands from being injured by the thistles.

his jug, he spied his mother and Owen approaching, on which, with the empty vessel in his hand, he flew towards them, his little features distorted by glee and ferocity, wildly mixed up together.

"Oh mudher, mudher—ha, ha, ha!—don't come in yet; don't come in, Owen, till Jimmy un' huz, an' the Denisses, gets the bailie drownded. We'll soon have the *bot** full; but Paddy an' Jack Denis have the eyes a'most pucked out of him; an' Katty's takin' the rapin' hook from behind the *cappel*, to get it about his neck."

Owen and the widow entered with all haste, precisely at the moment when Frank's head was dipped, for the first time, into the vessel.

"Is it goin' to murdher him ye are?" said Owen, as he seized Jemmy with a grasp that transferred him to the opposite end of the house; "hould back ye pack of young divils, an' let the man up. What did he come to do but his duty? I tell you, Jimmy, if you wor *at* yourself, an' in full strinth, that you'd have the man's blood on you where you stand, and would suffer as you ought to do for it."

"There, let me," replied the lad, his eyes glowing and his veins swollen with passion; "I don't care if I did. It would be no sin, an' no disgrace, to hang for the like of him; dacenter to do that, than stale a creel of turf, or a wisp of straw, 'tanny rate."

In the meantime the bailiff had raised his head out of the water, and presented a visage which it was impossible to view with gravity. The widow's anxiety prevented her from seeing it in a ludicrous light; but Owen's severe face assumed a grave smile, as the man shook himself and attempted to comprehend the nature of his situation. The young urchins, who had fallen back at the appearance of Owen and the widow, now burst into a peal of mirth, in which, however, Jemmy, whose fiercer passions had been roused, did not join.

"Frank M'Murt," said the widow, "I take the mother of heaven to witness, that it vexes my heart to see you get sich thratement in my place; an' I wouldn't for the best cow I have that sich a *brieuliagh* † happened. *Dher charp agusmanim*,‡ Jimmy, but I'll make you suffer for drawin' down this upon my head, and me had enough over it afore."

"I don't care," replied Jemmy; "whoever comes to take our property from us, an' us willin' to work will suffer for it. Do you think I'd see thim crathurs at their dhry phatie, an' our cows standin' in a pound for no rason? No; high hangin' to me, but I'll split to the skull the first man that takes them; an' all I'm sorry for is, that it's not the vagabone Landlord himself that's near me. That's our thanks for paying many a good pound, in honesty and dacency, to him an' his; lavin' us to a schamin' agent, an' not even to that same, but to his undher-strappers, that's robbin' us on both sides between them. May hard fortune attind him, for a landlord! You may tell him this, Frank,—that his wisest plan is to keep clear of the country. Sure, it's a gambler he is, they say; an' we must be harrished an' racked to support his villany! But wait a bit; maybe there's a good time comin', when we'll pay our money to thim that won't be too proud to hear our complaints wid their own ears, an' who won't turn us over to a divil's limb of an agent. *He* had need, any how, to get his coffin sooner nor he thinks. What signifies hangin' in a good cause?" said he, as the tears of keen indignation burst from his glowing eyes. "It's a dacent death, an' a happy death, when it's for the right," he added—for his mind was evidently fixed upon the contemplation of those means of redress, which the habits of the country, and the prejudices of the people, present to them in the first moments of passion.

"It's well that Frank's one of ourselves," replied Owen, coolly, "otherwise, Jemmy, you said words that would lay you up by the heels. As for you, Frank, you must look over this. The boy's the son of dacent poor parents, an' it's a new thing for him to see the cows druv from the place. The poor fellow's vexed, too, that he has been so long laid up wid a sore back; an' so you see one thing or another has put him through other. Jimmy is warm-hearted after all, an' will be sorry for it when he cools, an' remimbers that *you* wor only doin' your duty."

"But what am I to do about the cows? Sure, I can't go back widout either thim or the rint?" said Frank, with a look of fear and trembling at Jemmy.

"The cows!" said another of the widow's sons who then came in: "why, you dirty spalpeen of a rip, you may whistle on the wrong side o' your mouth for them. I *druv* them off of the estate; an' now take them, if you dar! It's conthrairy to law," said the urchin; "an' if you'd touch them, I'd make my mudher sarve you wid a *lattilat* or a *fiery-flashes*."

This was a triumph to the youngsters, who began to shake their little fists at him, and to exclaim in a chorus—"Ha, you dirty rip! wait till we get you out o' the house, an' if we don't put you from ever drivin'! Why, but you work like another!—ha, you'll get

* Tub. † Brieuliagh—squabble. ‡ By my soul and body.

it!"—and every little fist was shook in vengeance at him.

"Whist wid ye," said Jemmy to the little ones; "let him alone, he got enough. There's the cows for you; an keen may the curse o' the widow an' orphans light upon you, and upon them that sent you, from first to last!—an' that's the *best* we wish you!"

"Frank," said Owen to the bailiff, "is there any one in the town below that will take the rint, an' give a resate for it? Do you think, man, that the neighbors of an honest, industrious woman 'ud see the cattle taken out of her byre for a thrifle? Hut tut! no, man alive—no sich thing! There's not a man in the parish, wid manes to do it, would see them taken away to be canted, at only about a fourth part of their value. Hut, tut.—no!"

As the sterling fellow spoke, the cheeks of the widow were suffused with tears, and her son Jemmy's hollow eyes once more kindled, but with a far different expression from that which but a few minutes before flashed from them.

"Owen," said he, and utterance nearly failed him: "Owen, if *I* was well it wouldn't be as it is wid us; but—no, indeed it would not; but—may God bless you for this! Owen, never fear but you'll be paid; may God bless you, Owen!"

As he spoke the hand of his humble benefactor was warmly grasped in his. A tear fell upon it: for with one of those quick and fervid transitions of feeling so peculiar to the people, he now felt a strong, generous emotion of gratitude, mingled, perhaps, with a sense of wounded pride, on finding the poverty of their little family so openly exposed.

"Hut, tut, Jimmy, avick," said Owen, who understood his feelings; "phoo, man alive! but—hem!—why, sure it's nothin' at all, at all; anybody would do it—only a bare five an'-twenty shillins [it was five pound]: any neighbor—Mick Cassidy, Jack Moran, or Pether M'Cullagh, would do it.—Come, Frank, step out; the money's to the fore. Rosha, put your cloak about you, and let us go down to the agint, or clerk, or whatsomever he is—sure, that makes no maxin anyhow;—I suppose he has power to give a resate. Jemmy, go to bed again, you're pale, poor bouchal; and, childhre, ye crathurs ye, the cows won't be taken from ye this bout.—Come, in the name of God, let us go, and see everything rightified at once—hut, tut—come."

Many similar details of Owen M'Carthy's useful life could be given, in which he bore an equally benevolent and Christian part. Poor fellow! he was, ere long, brought low; but, to the credit of our peasantry, much as is said about their barbarity, he was treated, when helpless, with gratitude, pity, and kindness.

Until the peace of 1814, Owen's regular and systematic industry enabled him to struggle successfully against a weighty rent and sudden depression in the price of agricultural produce; that is, he was able, by the unremitting toil of a man remarkable alike for an unbending spirit and a vigorous frame of body, to pay his rent with tolerable regularity. It is true, a change began to be visible in his personal appearance, in his farm, in the dress of his children, and in the economy of his household. Improvements, which adequate capital would have enabled him to effect, were left either altogether unattempted, or in an imperfect state, resembling neglect, though, in reality, the result of poverty. His dress at mass, and in fairs and markets, had, by degrees, lost that air of comfort and warmth which bespeak the independent farmer. The evidences of embarrassment began to disclose themselves in many small points—inconsiderable, it is true, but not the less significant. His house, in the progress of his declining circumstances, ceased to be annually ornamented by a new coat of whitewash; it soon assumed a faded and yellowish hue, and sparkled not in the setting sun as in the days of Owen's prosperity. It had, in fact, a wasted, unthriving look, like its master. The thatch became black and rotten upon its roof; the chimneys sloped to opposite points; the windows were less neat, and ultimately, when broken, were patched with a couple of leaves from the children's blotted copy-books. His out-houses also began to fail. The neatness of his little farm-yard, and the cleanliness which marked so conspicuously the space fronting his dwelling-house, disappeared in the course of time. Filth began to accumulate where no filth had been; his garden was not now planted so early, nor with such taste and neatness as before; his crops were later, and less abundant; his haggarts neither so full nor so trim as they were wont to be, nor his ditches and enclosures kept in such good repair. His cars, ploughs, and other farming implements, instead of being put under cover, were left exposed to the influence of wind and weather, where they soon became crazy and useless.

Such, however, were only the slighter symptoms of his bootless struggle against the general embarrassment into which the agricultural interests were, year after year, so unhappily sinking.

Had the tendency to general distress among the class to which he belonged become

stationary, Owen would have continued by toil and incessant exertion to maintain his ground; but, unfortunately, there was no point at which the national depression could then stop. Year after year produced deeper, more extensive, and more complicated misery; and when he hoped that every succeeding season would bring an improvement in the market, he was destined to experience not merely a fresh disappointment, but an unexpected depreciation in the price of his corn, butter, and other disposable commodities.

When a nation is reduced to such a state, no eye but that of God himself can see the appalling wretchedness to which a year of disease and scarcity strikes down the poor and working classes.

Owen, after a long and noble contest for nearly three years, sank, at length, under the united calamities of disease and scarcity. The father of the family was laid low upon the bed of sickness, and those of his little ones who escaped it were almost consumed by famine. This two-fold shock sealed his ruin; his honest heart was crushed—his hardy frame shorn of its strength, and he to whom every neighbor fled as to a friend, now required friendship at a moment when the widespread poverty of the country rendered its assistance hopeless.

On rising from his bed of sickness, the prospect before him required his utmost fortitude to bear. He was now wasted in energy both of mind and body, reduced to utter poverty, with a large family of children, too young to assist him, without means of retrieving his circumstances, his wife and himself gaunt skeletons, his farm neglected, his house wrecked, and his offices falling to ruin, yet every day bringing the half-year's term nearer! Oh, ye who riot on the miseries of such men—ye who roll round the easy circle of fashionable life, think upon this picture! Ye vile and heartless landlords, who see not, hear not, know not those to whose heart-breaking toil ye owe the only merit ye possess—that of rank in society—come and contemplate this virtuous man, as unfriended, unassisted, and uncheered by those who are bound by a strong moral duty to protect and aid him, he looks shuddering into the dark, cheerless future! Is it to be wondered at that he, and such as he, should, in the misery of his despair, join the nightly meetings, be lured to associate himself with the incendiary, or seduced to grasp, in the stupid apathy of wretchedness, the weapon of the murderer? By neglecting the people; by draining them, with merciless rapacity, of the means of life; by goading them on under a cruel system of rack rents, ye become not their natural benefactors, but curses and scourges, nearly as much in reality as ye are in their opinion.

When Owen rose, he was driven by hunger, direct and immediate, to sell his best cow; and having purchased some oatmeal at an enormous price, from a well-known devotee in the parish, who hoarded up this commodity for a "dear summer," he laid his plans for the future, with as much judgment as any man could display. One morning after breakfast he addressed his wife as follows:

"Kathleen, mavourneen, I want to consult wid you about what we ought to do; things are low wid us, asthore; and except our heavenly Father puts it into the heart of them I'm goin' to mention, I don't know what we'll do, nor what'll become of these poor crathurs that's naked and hungry about us. God pity them, they don't know—and maybe that same's some comfort—the hardships that's before them. Poor crathurs! see how quiet and sorrowful they sit about their little play, passin' the time for themselves as well as they can! Alley, acushla machree, come over to me. Your hair is bright and fair, Alley, and curls so purtily that the finest lady in the land might envy it; but, acushla, your color's gone, your little hands are wasted away, too; that sickness was hard and sore upon you, *a colleen machree*,* and he that 'ud spend his heart's blood for you, darlin', can do nothin' to help you!"

He looked at the child as he spoke, and a slight motion in the muscles of his face was barely preceptible, but it passed away; and after kissing her, he proceeded:

"Ay, ye crathurs—you and I, Kathleen, could earn our bread for ourselves yet, but these can't do it. This last stroke, darlin', has laid us at the door of both poverty and sickness, but blessed be the mother of heaven for it, they are all left wid us; and sure that's a blessin' we've to be thankful for—glory be to God!"

"Ay, poor things, it's well to have them spared, Owen dear; sure I'd rather a thousand times beg from door to door, and have my childher to look at, than be in comfort widout them."

"Beg: that 'ud go hard wid me, Kathleen. I'd work—I'd live on next to nothing all the year round; but to see the crathurs that wor dacently bred up brought to *that*, I couldn't bear it, Kathleen—'twould break the heart widin in me. Poor as they are, they have the blood of kings in their veins; and besides, to see a M'Carthy beggin' his bread in the country where his name was once great—The M'Carthy More, that was their title—no, acushla, I love them as I do the blood in

* Girl of my heart.

my own veins; but I'd rather see them in the arms of God in heaven, laid down decently with their little sorrowful faces washed, and their little bodies stretched out purtily before my eyes—I would—in the grave-yard there beyant, where all belonging to me lie, than have it cast up to them, or have it said, that ever a M'Carthy was seen beggin' on the highway."

"But, Owen, can you strike out no plan for us that 'ud put us in the way of comin' round agin? These poor ones, if we could hould out for two or three year, would soon be able to help us."

"They would—they would. I'm thinkin' this day or two of a plan: but I'm doubtful whether it 'ud come to anything."

"What is it, acushla? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, any way."

"I'm goin' to go to Dublin. I'm tould that the landlord's come home from France, and that he's there now; and if I didn't see him, sure I could see the agent. Now, Kathleen, my intintion 'ud be to lay our case before the head landlord himself, in hopes he might hould back his hand, and spare us for a while. If I had a line from the agent, or a scrape of a pen, that I could show at home to some of the nabors, who knows but I could borry what 'ud set us up agin! I think many of them 'ud be sorry to see me turned out; eh, Kathleen?"

The Irish are an imaginative people; indeed, too much so for either their individual or national happiness. And it is this and superstition, which also depends much upon imagination, that makes them so easily influenced by those extravagant dreams that are held out to them by persons who understand their character.

When Kathleen heard the plan on which Owen founded his expectations of assistance, her dark melancholy eye flashed with a portion of its former fire; a transient vivacity lit up her sickly features, and she turned a smile of hope and affection upon her children, then upon Owen.

"Arrah, thin, who knows, indeed!—who knows but he might do something for us? And maybe we might be as well as ever yet! May the Lord put it into his heart, this day! I declare, ay!—maybe it was God put it into *your* heart, Owen!"

"I'll set off," replied her husband, who was a man of decision; "I'll set off on other morrow mornin'; and as nobody knows anything about it, so let there not be a word said upon the subject, good or bad. If I have success, well and good; but if not, why, nobody need be the wiser."

The heart-broken wife evinced, for the remainder of the day, a lightness of spirits which she had not felt for many a month before. Even Owen was less depressed than usual, and employed himself in making such arrangements as he knew would occasion his family to feel the inconvenience of his absence less acutely. But as the hour of his departure drew nigh, a sorrowful feeling of affection rising into greater strength and tenderness threw a melancholy gloom around his hearth. According to their simple view of distance, a journey to Dublin was a serious undertaking, and to them it was such. Owen was in weak health, just risen out of illness, and what was more trying than any other consideration was, that since their marriage they had never been separated before.

On the morning of his departure, he was up before daybreak, and so were his wife and children, for the latter had heard the conversation already detailed between them, and, with their simple-minded parents, enjoyed the gleam of hope which it presented; but this soon changed—when he was preparing to go, an indefinite sense of fear, and a more vivid clinging of affection marked their feelings. He himself partook of this, and was silent, depressed, and less ardent than when the speculation first presented itself to his mind. His resolution, however, was taken, and, should he fail, no blame at a future time could be attached to himself. It was the last effort; and to neglect it, he thought, would have been to neglect his duty. When breakfast was ready, they all sat down in silence; the hour was yet early, and a rush-light was placed in a wooden candlestick that stood beside them to afford light. There was something solemn and touching in the group as they sat in dim relief, every face marked by the traces of sickness, want, sorrow, and affection. The father attempted to eat, but could not; Kathleen sat at the meal, but could taste nothing; the children ate, for hunger at the moment was predominant over every other sensation. At length it was over, and Owen rose to depart; he stood for a minute on the floor, and seemed to take a survey of his cold, cheerless house, and then of his family; he cleared his throat several times, but did not speak.

"Kathleen," said he, at length, "in the name of God I'll go; and may his blessin' be about you, asthore machree; and guard you and these darlins till I come back to yez."

Kathleen's faithful heart could bear no more; she laid herself on his bosom—clung to his neck, and, as the parting kiss was given, she wept aloud, and Owen's tears fell silently down his worn cheeks. The children crowded about them in loud wailings, and the grief of this virtuous and afflicted family

was of that profound description, which is ever the companion, in such scenes, of pure and genuine love.

"Owen!" she exclaimed; "Owen, *a-suilish mchuil agus machree!** I doubt we wor wrong in thinkin' of this journey. How can you, mavourneen, walk all the way to Dublin, and you so worn and weakly with that sickness, and the bad feedin' both before and since? Och, give it up, achree, and stay wid us, let what will happen. You're not able for sich a journey, indeed you're not. Stay wid me and the childher, Owen; sure we'd be so lonesome widout you—will you, agrah? and the Lord will do for us some other way, maybe."

Owen pressed his faithful wife to his heart, and kissed her chaste lips with a tenderness which the heartless votaries of fashionable life can never know.

"Kathleen, asthore," he replied, in those terms of endearment which flow so tenderly through the language of the people; "sure whin I remimber your fair young face—your yellow hair, and the light that was in your eyes, acushla machree—but that's gone long ago—och, don't ax me to stop. Isn't your lightsome laugh, whin you wor young, in my ears? and your step that 'ud not bend the flower of the field—Kathleen, I can't, indeed I can't, bear to think of what you wor, nor of what you are now, when in the coorse of age and natur, but a small change ought to be upon you! Sure I ought to make every struggle to take you and these sorrowful crathurs out of the state you're in."

The children flocked about them, and joined their entreaties to those of their mother. "Father, don't lave us—we'll be lonesome if you go, and if my mother 'ud get unwell, who'd be to take care of her? Father, don't lave your own 'weeny crathurs' (a pet name he had for them)—maybe the meal 'ud be cat out before you'd come back; or maybe something 'ud happen you in that strange place."

"Indeed, there's truth in what they say, Owen," said the wife; "do be said by your own Kathleen for this time, and don't take sich a long journey upon you. Afther all, maybe, you wouldn't see him—sure the nabors will help us, if you could only humble yourself to ax them!"

"Kathleen," said Owen, "when this is past you'll be glad I went—indeed you will; sure it's only the timdher feelin' of your hearts, darlins. Who knows what the landlord may do when I see himself, and show him these resates—every penny paid him by our own family. Let me go, acushla; it *does* cut me to the heart to lave yez the way yez are in, even for a while; but it's far worse to see your poor wasted faces, widout havin' it in my power to do anything for yez."

He then kissed them again, one by one; and pressing the affectionate partner of his sorrows to his breaking heart, he bade God bless them, and set out in the twilight of a bitter March morning. He had not gone many yards from the door when little Alley ran after him in tears; he felt her hand upon the skirts of his coat, which she plucked with a smile of affection that neither tears nor sorrow could repress. "Father, kiss *me* again," said she. He stooped down, and kissed her tenderly. The child then ascended a green ditch, and Owen, as he looked back, saw her standing upon it; her fair tresses were tossed by the blast about her face, as with straining eyes she watched him receding from her view. Kathleen and the other children stood at the door, and also with deep sorrow watched his form, until the angle of the bridle-road rendered him no longer visible; after which they returned slowly to the fire and wept bitterly.

We believe no men are capable of bearing greater toil or privation than the Irish. Owen's *viaticum* was only two or three oaten cakes tied in a little handkerchief, and a few shillings in silver to pay for his bed. With this small stock of food and money, an oaken stick in his hand, and his wife's kerchief tied about his waist, he undertook a journey of one hundred and ten miles, in quest of a landlord who, so far from being acquainted with the distresses of his tenantry, scarcely knew even their names, and not one of them in person.

Our scene now changes to the metropolis.

One evening, about half past six o'clock, a toil-worn man turned his steps to a splendid mansion in Mountjoy Square; his appearance was drooping, fatigued, and feeble. As he went along, he examined the numbers on the respective doors, until he reached a certain *one*—before which he stopped for a moment; he then stepped out upon the street, and looked through the windows, as if willing to ascertain whether there was any chance of his object being attained. Whilst in this situation a carriage rolled rapidly up, and stopped with a sudden check that nearly threw back the horses on their haunches. In an instant the thundering knock of the servant intimated the arrival of some person of rank; the hall door was opened, and Owen, availing himself of that opportunity, entered the hall. Such a visitor, however, was too remarkable to escape notice. The hand of the menial was rudely placed against

* Light of my eyes and of my heart.

his breast; and, as the usual impertinent interrogatories were put to him, the pampered ruffian kept pushing him back, until the afflicted man stood upon the upper step leading to the door.

"For the sake of God, let me spake but two words to him. I'm his tenant; and I know he's too much of a jintleman to turn away a man that has lived upon his honor's estate, father and son, for upwards of three hundred years. My name's Owen——"

"You can't see him, my good fellow, at this hour. Go to Mr. M——, his Agent: we have company to dinner. He never speaks to a tenant on business; his Agent manages all that. Please, leave the way, here's more company."

As he uttered the last word, he pushed Owen back; who, forgetting that the stairs were behind him, fell,—received a severe cut, and was so completely stunned, that he lay senseless and bleeding. Another carriage drove up, as the fellow now much alarmed, attempted to raise him from the steps; and, by order of the gentleman who came in it, he was brought into the hall. The circumstance now made some noise. It was whispered about, that one of Mr. S——'s tenants, a drunken fellow from the country, wanted to break in forcibly to see him; but then it was also asserted, that his skull was broken, and that he lay dead in the hall. Several of the gentlemen above stairs, on hearing that a man had been killed, immediately assembled about him, and, by the means of restoratives, he soon recovered, though the blood streamed copiously from the wound in the back of his head.

"Who are you, my good man?" said Mr. S——.

Owen looked about him rather vacantly; but soon collected himself, and replied in a mournful and touching tone of voice—"I'm one of your honor's tenants from Tubber Derg; my name is Owen M'Carthy, your honor—that is, if you be Mr. S——."

"And pray, what brought you to town, M'Carthy?"

"I wanted to make an humble appale to your honor's feelins, in regard to my bit of farm. I, and my poor family, your honor, have been broken down by hard times and the sickness of the sason—God knows how *they* are."

"If you wish to speak to me about that, my good man, you must know I refer all these matters to my Agent. Go to him—he knows them best; and whatever is right and proper to be done for you, he will do it. Sinclair, give him a crown, and send him to the —— Dispensary, to get his head dressed. I say, Carthy, go to my Agent; he knows whether your claim is just or not, and will attend to it accordingly."

"Plase, your honor, I've been wid him, and he says he can do nothin' whaisomever for me. I went two or three times, and couldn't see him, he was so busy; and, when I did get a word or two wid him, he tould me there was more offered for my land than I'm payin'; and that if I did not pay up, I must be put out, God help me!"

"But I tell you, Carthy, I never interfere between him and my tenants."

"Och, indeed! and it would be well, both for your honor's tenants and yourself, if you did, sir. Your honor ought to know, sir, more about us, and how we're thrated. I'm an honest man, sir, and I tell you so for your good."

"And pray, sir," said the Agent, stepping forward, for he had arrived a few minutes before, and heard the last observation of M'Carthy—"pray how are they treated, you that know so well, and are so honest a man?—As for honesty, you might have referred to me for that, I think," he added.

"Mr. M——," said Owen, "we're thrated very badly. Sir, you needn't look at me, for I'm not afeerd to spake the thruth; no bullyin', sir, will make me say anything in your favor that you don't desarve. You've broken the half of them by severity; you've turned the tenants aginst yourself and his honor here; and I tell you now, though you're to the fore, that, in the coorse of a short time, there'll be bad work upon the estate, except his honor, here, looks into his own affairs, and hears the complaints of the people. Look at these resates, your honor; they'll show you, sir,——"

"Carthy, I can hear no such language against the gentleman to whom I entrust the management of my property; of course, I refer the matter solely to him. I can do nothing in it."

"Kathileen, avourneen!" exclaimed the poor man, as he looked up despairingly to heaven; "and ye, poor darlins of my heart! is this the news I'm to have for yez whin I go home?—As you hope for mercy, sir, don't turn away your ear from my petition, that I'd humbly make to *yourself*. Cowld, and hunger, and hardship, are at home before me, yer honor. If you'd be plased to look at these resates, you'd see that I always paid my rint; and 'twas sickness and the hard times——"

"And your own honesty, industry, and good conduct," said the Agent, giving a dark and malignant sneer at him. "Carthy, it shall be my business to see that you do not spread a bad spirit through the tenantry much longer.—Sir, you have heard the fel-

low's admission. It is an implied threat he will give us much serious trouble. There is not such another incendiary on your property—not one, upon my honor."

"Sir," said a servant, "dinner is on the table."

"Sinclair," said his landlord, "give him another crown, and tell him to trouble me no more." Saying which, he and the Agent went up to the drawing-room, and, in a moment, Owen saw a large party sweep down stairs, full of glee and vivacity, by whom both himself and his distresses were as completely forgotten as if they had never existed.

He now slowly departed, and knew not whether the house-steward had given him money or not until he felt it in his hand. A cold, sorrowful weight lay upon his heart; the din of the town deadened his affliction into a stupor; but an overwhelming sense of his disappointment, and a conviction of the Agent's diabolical falsehood, entered like barbed arrows into his heart.

On leaving the steps, he looked up to heaven in the distraction of his agonizing thoughts; the clouds were black and lowering—the wind stormy—and, as it carried them on its dark wing along the sky, he wished, if it were the will of God, that his head lay in the quiet grave-yard where the ashes of his forefathers reposed in peace. But he again remembered his Kathleen and their children; and the large tears of anguish, deep and bitter, rolled slowly down his cheeks.

We will not trace him into an hospital, whither the wound on his head occasioned him to be sent, but simply state, that, on the second week after this, a man, with his head bound in a handkerchief, lame, bent, and evidently laboring under a severe illness or great affliction, might be seen toiling slowly up the little hill that commanded a view of Tubber Derg. On reaching the top he sat down to rest for a few minutes, but his eye was eagerly turned to the house which contained all that was dear to him on this earth. The sun was setting, and shone, with half his disk visible, in that dim and cheerless splendor which produces almost in every temperament a feeling of melancholy. His house which, in happier days, formed so beautiful and conspicuous an object in the view, was now, from the darkness of its walls, scarcely discernible. The position of the sun, too, rendered it more difficult to be seen; and Owen, for it was he, shaded his eyes with his hand, to survey it more distinctly. Many a harrowing thought and remembrance passed through his mind, as his eye traced its dim outline in the fading light. He had done his duty—he had gone to the fountain-head, with a hope that his simple story of affliction might be heard; but all was fruitless: the only gleam of hope that opened upon their misery had now passed into darkness and despair for ever. He pressed his aching forehead with distraction as he thought of this; then clasped his hands bitterly, and groaned aloud.

At length he rose, and proceeded with great difficulty, for the short rest had stiffened his weak and fatigued joints. As he approached home his heart sunk; and as he ascended the blood-red stream which covered the bridle-way that led to his house, what with fatigue and affliction, his agitation weakened him so much that he stopped, and leaned on his staff several times, that he might take breath.

"It's too dark, maybe, for them to see me, or poor Kathleen would send the darlins to give me the *she dha veha*.* Kathleen, avourneen machree! how my heart beats wid longin' to see you, asthore, and to see the weeny crathurs—glory be to Him that has left *them* to me—praise and glory to His name!"

He was now within a few perches of the door; but a sudden misgiving shot across his heart when he saw it shut, and no appearance of smoke from the chimney, nor of stir or life about the house. He advanced—

"Mother of glory, what's this!—But, wait, let me rap agin. Kathleen, Kathleen!—are you widin, avourneen? Owen—Alley—arn't ye widin, childhre? Alley, sure I'm come back to you all!" and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house;—all was still as death within. "Alley!" he called once more to his little favorite; "I'm come home wid something for *you*, asthore! I didn't forget *you*, alanna!—I brought it from Dublin all the way. Alley!" but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew as misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated by the appearance of a neighbor who was passing.

"Why, thin, Owen, but yer welcome home agin, my poor fellow; and I'm sorry that I haven't betther news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech.

"Frank," said he, and he wrung his hand "What—what? was death among them? For the sake of heaven, spake!"

The severe pressure which he received in

* The welcome.

return ran like a shock of paralysis to his heart.

"Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yez, and may the Almighty pity and support yez! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favorite Alley, is gone. Yestherday she was berrid; and dacently the nabors attinded the place, and sent in, as far as they had it, both mate and dhrink to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you've heard it; trust in God, an' be a man."

A deep and convulsive throe shook him to the heart. "Gone!—the fair-haired one!—Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts; the sweet, the quiet, and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys——! Oh, my darlin', my darlin'! gone from my eyes for ever!—God of glory; won't you support me this night of sorrow and misery!" With a sudden yet profound sense of humility, he dropped on his knees at the threshold, and, as the tears rolled down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry—"I thank you, O my God! I thank you, an' I put myself an' my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght*,* into your hands. I thank you, O God, for what has happened! Keep me up and support me—och, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her; she was the light of my eyes, and the pulse of my broken heart, but you took her, blessed Father of heaven! an' we can't be angry wid you for so doin'! Still if you had spared *her*—if—if—O, blessed Father, my heart was *in* the *very* one you took—but I thank you, O God! May she rest in pace, now and for ever, Amin!"

He then rose up, and slowly wiping the tears from his eyes, departed.

"Let me hould your arm, Frank, dear," said he, "I'm weak and tired wid a long journey. Och, an' can it be that she's gone—the fair-haired colleen! When I was lavin' home, an' had kissed them all—'twas the first time we ever parted, Kathleen and I, since our marriage—the blessed child came over an' held up her mouth, sayin', 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' an' this was afther herself an' all of them had kissed me afore. But, och! oh! blessed Mother! Frank, where's my Kathleen and the rest?—and why are they out of their own poor place?"

"Owen, I tould you awhile agone, that you must be a man. I gave you the worst news first, an' what's to come doesn't signify much. It was too dear; for if any man could live upon it you could:—you have neither house nor home, Owen, nor land. An ordher came from the Agint; your last cow was taken, so was all you had in the world—hem—barrin' a thrifle. No,—bad manners to it! no,—you're not widout *a home* anyway. The family's in my barn, brave and comfortable, compared to what your own house was, that let in the wather through the roof like a sieve; and, while the same barn's to the fore, never say you want a home."

"God bless you, Frank, for that goodness to them and me; if you're not rewarded for it here you will in a betther place. Och, I long to see Kathleen and the childher! But I'm fairly broken down, Frank, and hardly able to mark the ground; and, indeed, no wondher, if you knew but all: still, let God's will he done! Poor Kathleen, I must bear up afore her, or she'll break her heart; for I know how she loved the golden-haired darlin' that's gone from us. Och, and how did she go, Frank, for I left her betther?"

"Why, the poor girsha took a relapse, and wasn't strong enough to bear up against the last attack; but it's one comfort that you know she's happy."

Owen stood for a moment, and, looking solemnly in his neighbor's face, exclaimed, in a deep and exhausted voice, "Frank!"

"What are you goin' to say, Owen?"

"The heart widin me's broke—broke!"

The large tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and he proceeded in silence to the house of his friend. There was, however, a feeling of sorrow in his words and manner which Frank could not withstand. He grasped Owen's hand, and, in a low and broken voice, simply said—"Keep your spirits up—keep them up."

When they came to the barn in which his helpless family had taken up their temporary residence, Owen stood for a moment to collect himself; but he was nervous, and trembled with repressed emotion. They then entered; and Kathleen, on seeing her beloved and affectionate husband, threw herself on his bosom, and for some time felt neither joy nor sorrow—she had swooned. The poor man embraced her with a tenderness at once mournful and deep. The children, on seeing their father safely returned, forgot their recent grief, and clung about him with gladness and delight. In the meantime Kathleen recovered, and Owen for many minutes could not check the loud and clamorous grief, now revived by the presence of her husband, with which the heart-broken and emaciated mother deplored her departed child; and Owen himself, on once more looking among the little ones, on seeing her little frock hanging up, and her stool vacant by the fire—on missing her voice and her blue laughing eyes—and remembering the affec-

* My poor children.

tionate manner in which, as with a presentiment of death, she held up her little mouth and offered him the last kiss—he slowly pulled the toys and cakes he had purchased for her out of his pocket, surveyed them for a moment, and then, putting his hands on his face, bent his head upon his bosom, and wept with the vehement outpouring of a father's sorrow.

The reader perceives that he was a meek man; that his passions were not dark nor violent; he bore no revenge to those who neglected or injured him, and in this he differed from too many of his countrymen. No; his spirit was broken down with sorrow, and had not room for the fiercer and more destructive passions. His case excited general pity. Whatever his neighbors could do to soothe him and alleviate his affliction was done. His farm was not taken; for fearful threats were held out against those who might venture to occupy it. In these threats he had nothing to do; on the contrary, he strongly deprecated them. Their existence, however, was deemed by the Agent sufficient to justify him in his callous and malignant severity towards him.

We did not write this story for effect. Our object was to relate facts that occurred. In Ireland, there is much blame justly attached to landlords, for their neglect and severity, in such depressed times, towards their tenants: there is also much that is not only indefensible but atrocious on the part of the tenants. But can the landed proprietors of Ireland plead ignorance or want of education for their neglect and rapacity, whilst the crimes of the tenants, on the contrary, may in general be ascribed to both? He who lives—as, perhaps, his forefathers have done—upon any man's property, and fails from unavoidable calamity, has as just and clear a right to assistance from the landlord as if the amount of that aid were a bonded debt. Common policy, common sense, and common justice, should induce the Irish landlords to lower their rents according to the market for agricultural produce, otherwise poverty, famine, crime, and vague political speculations, founded upon idle hopes of a general transfer of property, will spread over and convulse the kingdom. Any man who looks into our poverty may see that our landlords ought to reduce their rents to a standard suitable to the times and to the ability of the tenant.

But to return. Owen, for another year, struggled on for his family, without success; his firm spirit *was* broken; employment he could not get, and even had it been regular, he would have found it impracticable to support his helpless wife and children by his labor. The next year unhappily was also one of sickness and of want; the country was not only a wide waste of poverty, but overspread with typhus fever. One Saturday night he and the family found themselves without food; they had not tasted a morsel for twenty-four hours. There were murmuring and tears and, finally, a low conversation among them, as if they held a conference upon some subject which filled them with both grief and satisfaction. In this alternation of feeling did they pass the time until the sharp gnawing of hunger was relieved by sleep. A keen December wind blew with a bitter blast on the following morning; the rain was borne along upon it with violence, and the cold was chill and piercing. Owen, his wife, and their six children, issued at day-break out of the barn in which, ever since their removal from Tubber Derg, they had lived until then; their miserable fragments of bed-clothes were tied in a bundle to keep them dry; their pace was slow, need we say sorrowful; all were in tears. Owen and Kathleen went first, with a child upon the back, and another in the hand, of each. Their route lay by their former dwelling, the door of which was open, for it had not been inhabited. On passing it they stood a moment; then with a simultaneous impulse both approached—entered—and took one last look of a spot to which their hearts clung with enduring attachment. They then returned; and as they passed, Owen put forth his hand, picked a few small pebbles out of the wall, and put them in his pocket.

"Farewell!" said he, "and may the blessing of God rest upon you! We now lave you for ever! We're goin' at last to beg our bread through the world wide, where none will know the happy days we passed widin your walls! We *must* lave you; but glory be to the Almighty, we are goin' wid a clear conscience; we took no revenge into our own hands, but left everything to God above us. We are poor, but there is neither blood, nor murder, nor dishonesty upon our heads. Don't cry, Kathleen—don't cry, childher; there is still a good god above who ean and may do something for us *yet*, glory be to his holy name!"

He then passed on with his family, which, including himself, made in all, eight paupers, being an additional burden upon the country, which might easily have been avoided. His land was about two years waste, and when it was ultimately taken, the house was a ruin, and the money allowed by the landlord for building a new one, together with the loss of two years' rent, would if humanely directed, have enabled Owen M'Carthy to remain a solvent tenant.

When an Irish peasant is reduced to pauperism, he seldom commences the melancholy task of soliciting alms in his native place. The trial is always a severe one, and he is anxious to hide his shame and misery from the eyes of those who know him. This is one reason why some system of poor laws should be introduced into the country. Paupers of this description become a burden upon strangers, whilst those who are capable of entering with friendly sympathy into their misfortunes have no opportunity of assisting them. Indeed this shame of seeking alms from those who have known the mendicant in better days, is a proof that the absence of poor laws takes away from the poorer classes one of the strongest incitements to industry; for instance, if every Pauper in Ireland were confined to his own parish, and compelled to beg from his acquaintances, the sense of shame alone would, by stirring them up to greater industry, reduce the number of mendicants one-half. There is a strong spirit of family pride in Ireland, which would be sufficient to make many poor, of both sexes, exert themselves to the uttermost rather than cast a stain upon their name, or bring a blush to the face of their relations. But now it is not so: the mendicant sets out to beg, and in most instances commences his new mode of life in some distant part of the country, where his name and family are not known.

Indeed, it is astonishing how any man can, for a moment, hesitate to form his opinion upon the subject of poor laws. The English and Scotch gentry know something about the middle and lower classes of their respective countries, and of course they have a fixed system of provision for the poor in each. The ignorance of the Irish gentry, upon almost every subject connected with the real good of the people, is only in keeping with their ignorance of the people themselves. It is to be feared, however, that their disinclination to introduce poor laws arises less from actual ignorance, than from an illiberal selfishness. The facts of the case are these: In Ireland the whole support of the inconceivable multitude of paupers, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the country, rests upon the middle and lower classes, or rather upon the latter, for there is scarcely such a thing in this unhappy country as a middle class. In not one out of a thousand instances do the gentry contribute to the mendicant poor. In the first place, a vast proportion of our landlords are absentees, who squander upon their own pleasures or vices, in the theatres, saloons, or gaming-houses of France, or in the softer profligacies of Italy, that which ought to return in some shape to stand in the place of duties so shamefully neglected. These persons contribute nothing to the poor, except the various evils which their absence entails upon them.

On the other hand, the *resident* gentry never in any case assist a beggar, even in the remote parts of the country, where there are no Mendicity Institutions. Nor do the beggars ever think of applying to them. They know that his honor's dogs would be slipped at them; or that the whip might be laid, perhaps, to the shoulders of a broken-hearted father, with his brood of helpless children wanting food; perhaps, upon the emaciated person of a miserable widow, who begs for her orphans, only because the hands that supported, and would have defended both her and them, are mouldered into dust.

Upon the middle and lower classes, therefore, comes *directly* the heavy burden of supporting the great mass of pauperism that presses upon Ireland. It is certain that the Irish landlords know this, and that they are reluctant to see any law enacted which might make the performance of their duties to the poor compulsory. This, indeed, is natural in men who have so inhumanly neglected them.

But what must the state of a country be where those who are on the way to pauperism themselves are exclusively burdened with the support of the vagrant poor? It is like putting additional weight on a man already sinking under the burden he bears. The landlords suppose, that because the maintenance of the idle who are able, and of the aged and infirm who are not able to work, comes upon the renters of land, they themselves are exempted from their support. This, if true, is as bitter a stigma upon their humanity as upon their sense of justice: but it is *not* true. Though the cost of supporting such an incredible number of the idle and helpless does, in the first place, fall upon the tenant, yet, by diminishing his means, and by often compelling him to purchase, towards the end of the season, a portion of food equal to that which he has given away in charity, it certainly becomes ultimately a clear deduction from the landlord's rent. In either case it is a deduction, but in the latter it is often doubly so; inasmuch as the poor tenants must frequently pay, at the close of a season, double, perhaps treble, the price which provision brought at the beginning of it.

Any person conversant with the Irish people must frequently have heard such dialogues as the following, during the application of a beggar for alms:—

Mendicant.—"We're axin your charity for God's sake!"

Poor Tenant.—"Why thin for His sake you would get it, poor crathur, if we had it; but it's not for you widin the four corners of the house. It 'ud be well for us if we had *now* all we gave away in charity *durin' the whole year;* we wouldn't have to be buyin' for ourselves at three prices. Why don't you go up to the Big House? *They're* rich and can afford it."

Mendicant, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—"Och! och! The Big House, inagh! Musha, do you want me an' the childhre here, to be torn to pieces wid the dogs? or lashed wid a whip by one o' the sarvints? No, no, avourneen!" (with a hopeless shake of the head.) "That 'ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin'."

Poor Tenant.—"Then, indeed, we haven't it to help you, now, poor man. We're buyin' ourselves."

Mendicant.—"Thin, throth, that's lucky, so it is! I've as purty a grain o' male here, as you'd wish to thicken wather wid, that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarther o' tobaccy, along wid a pair o' new bades an' scapular for myself. I'm suspicious that there's about a stone ov it, altogether. You can have it anunder the market price, for I'm frettin' at not havin' the scapular an me. Sure the Lord will sind me an' the childhre a bit an' sup some way else—glory to his name!—beside a lock of praties in the corner o' the bag here, that'll do us for this day, any way."

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment.

This, certainly, is not a state of things which should be permitted to exist. Every man ought to be compelled to support the poor of his native parish according to his means. It is an indelible disgrace to the legislature so long to have neglected the paupers of Ireland. Is it to be thought of with common patience that a person rolling in wealth shall feed upon his turtle, his venison, and his costly luxuries of every description, for which he will not scruple to pay the highest price—that this heartless and selfish man, whether he reside at home or abroad, shall thus unconscionably pamper himself with viands purchased by the toil of the people, and yet not contribute to assist them, when poverty, sickness, or age, throws them upon the scanty support of casual charity?

Shall this man be permitted to batten in luxury in a foreign land, or at home; to whip our paupers from his carriage; or hunt them, like beasts of prey, from his grounds, whilst the lower classes—the gradually decaying poor—are compelled to groan under the burden of their support, in addition to their other burdens? Surely it is not a question which admits of argument. This subject has been darkened and made difficult by fine-spun and unintelligible theories, when the only knowledge necessary to understand it may be gained by spending a few weeks in some poor village in the interior of the country. As for Parliamentary Committees upon this or any other subject, they are, with reverence be it spoken, thoroughly contemptible. They will summon and examine witnesses who, for the most part, know little about the habits or distresses of the poor; public money will be wasted in defraying their expenses and in printing reports; resolutions will be passed; something will be said about it in the House of Commons; and, in a few weeks, after resolving and re-resolving, it is as little thought of, as if it had never been the subject of investigation. In the meantime the evil proceeds—becomes more inveterate—eats into the already declining prosperity of the country—whilst those who suffer under it have the consolation of knowing that a Parliamentary Committee sat longer upon it than so many geese upon their eggs, but hatched nothing. Two circumstances, connected with pauperism in Ireland, are worthy of notice. The first is this—the Roman Catholics, who certainly constitute the bulk of the population, feel themselves called upon, from the peculiar tenets of their religion, to exercise indiscriminate charity largely to the begging poor. They act under the impression that eleemosynary good works possess the power of cancelling sin to an extent almost incredible. Many of their religious legends are founded upon this view of the case; and the reader will find an appropriate one in the Priest's sermon, as given in our tale of the "Poor Scholar." That legend is one which the author has many a time heard from the lips of the people, by whom it was implicitly believed. A man who may have committed a murder overnight, will the next day endeavor to wipe away his guilt by alms given for the purpose of getting the benefit of "the poor man's prayer." The principle of assisting our distressed fellow-creatures, when rationally exercised, is one of the best in society; but here it becomes entangled with error, superstition, and even with crime—acts as a bounty upon imposture, and in some degree predisposes to guilt, from an erroneous belief that sin may be cancelled by alms and the prayers of mendicant impostors.

The second point, in connection with

pauperism, is the immoral influence that proceeds from the relation in which the begging poor in Ireland stand towards the class by whom they are supported. These, as we have already said, are the poorest, least educated, and consequently the most ignorant description of the people. They are also the most numerous. There have been for centuries, probably since the Reformation itself, certain opinions floating among the lower classes in Ireland, all tending to prepare them for some great change in their favor, arising from the discomfiture of heresy, the overthrow of their enemies, and the exaltation of themselves and their religion.

Scarcely had the public mind subsided after the Rebellion of Ninety-eight, when the success of Buonaparte directed the eyes and the hopes of the Irish people towards *him*, as the person designed to be their deliverer. Many a fine fiction has the author of this work heard about that great man's escapes, concerning the bullets that conveniently turned aside from his person, and the sabres that civilly declined to cut him down. Many prophecies too were related, in which the glory of this country under his reign was touched off in the happiest colors. Pastorini also gave such notions an impulse. Eighteen twenty-five was to be the year of their deliverance: George the Fourth was never to fill the British throne; and the mill of Lowth was to be turned three times with human blood. The miller with the two thumbs was then living," said the mendicants, for they were the principal propagators of these opinions, and the great expounders of their own prophecies; so that of course there could be no further doubt upon the subject. Several of them had seen him, a red-haired man with broad shoulders, stout legs, exactly such as a miller ought to have, and two thumbs on his right hand; all precisely as the prophecy had stated. Then there was *Beal-derg*, and several others of the fierce old Milesian chiefs, who along with their armies lay in an enchanted sleep, all ready to awake and take a part in the delivery of the country. "Sure such a man," and they would name one in the time of the mendicant's grandfather, "was once going to a fair to sell a horse—well and good; the time was the dawn of morning, a little before daylight: he met a man who undertook to purchase his horse; they agreed upon the price, and the seller of him followed the buyer into a Rath, where he found a range of horses, each with an armed soldier asleep by his side, ready to spring upon him if awoke. The purchaser cautioned the owner of the horse as they were about to enter the subterraneous dwelling, against touching either horse or man; but the countryman happening to stumble, inadvertently laid his hand upon a sleeping soldier, who immediately leaped up, drew his sword, and asked, '*Wid anam inh?* 'Is the time in it? Is the time arrived?' To which the horse-dealer of the Rath replied, '*Ha niel. Gho dhee collhow areesht.*' 'No: go to sleep again.' Upon this the soldier immediately sank down in his former position, and unbroken sleep reigned throughout the cave." The influence on the warm imaginations of an ignorant people, of such fictions concocted by vagrant mendicants, is very pernicious. They fill their minds with the most palpable absurdities, and, what is worse, with opinions, which, besides being injurious to those who receive them, in every instance insure for those who propagate them a cordial and kind reception.

These mendicants consequently pander, for their own selfish ends, to the prejudices of the ignorant, which they nourish and draw out in a manner that has in no slight degree been subversive of the peace of the country. Scarcely any political circumstance occurs which they do not immediately seize upon and twist to their own purposes, or, in other words, to the opinions of those from whom they derive their support. When our present police first appeared in their uniforms and black belts, another prophecy, forsooth, was fulfilled. Immediately before the downfall of heresy, a body of "Black Militia" was to appear; the police, then, are the black militia, and the people consider themselves another step nearer the consummation of their vague speculations.

In the year Ninety-eight, the Irish mendicants were active agents, clever spies, and expert messengers on the part of the people; and to this day they carry falsehood, and the materials of outrage in its worst shape, into the bosom of peaceable families, who would, otherwise, never become connected with a system which is calculated to bring ruin and destruction upon those who permit themselves to join it.

This evil, and it is no trifling one, would, by the introduction of poor-laws, be utterly abolished, the people would not only be more easily improved, but education, when received, would not be corrupted by the infusion into it of such ingredients as the above. In many other points of view, the confirmed and hackneyed mendicants of Ireland are a great evil to the morals of the people. We could easily detail them, but such not being our object at present, we will now dismiss the subject of poor-laws, and resume our narrative.

Far—far different from this description of

impostors, were Owen M'Carthy and his family. Their misfortunes were not the consequences of negligence or misconduct on their own part. They struggled long but unavailingly against high rents and low markets; against neglect on the part of the landlord and his agent; against sickness, famine, and death. They had no alternative but to beg or starve. Owen was willing to work, but he could not procure employment: and provided he could, the miserable sum of sixpence a day, when food was scarce and dear, would not support him, his wife, and six little ones. He became a pauper, therefore, only to avoid starvation.

Heavy and black was his heart, to use the strong expression of the people, on the bitter morning when he set out to encounter the dismal task of seeking alms, in order to keep life in himself and his family. The plan was devised on the preceding night, but to no mortal, except his wife, was it communicated. The honest pride of a man whose mind was above committing a mean action, would not permit him to reveal what he considered the first stain that ever was known to rest upon the name of M'Carthy; he therefore sallied out under the beating of the storm, and proceeded, without caring much whither he went, until he got considerably beyond the bounds of his own parish.

In the meantime hunger pressed deeply upon him and them. The day had no appearance of clearing up; the heavy rain and sleet beat into their thin, worn garments, and the clamor of his children for food began to grow more and more importunate. They came to the shelter of a hedge which inclosed on one side a remote and broken road, along which, in order to avoid the risk of being recognized, they had preferred travelling. Owen stood here for a few minutes to consult with his wife, as to where and when they should "make a beginning;" but on looking round, he found her in tears.

"Kathleen, asthore," said he, "I can't bid you not to cry; bear up, acushla machree; bear up: sure, as I said when we came out this mornin', there's a good God above us, that can still turn over the good life for us, if we put our hopes in him."

"Owen," said his sinking wife, "it's not altogether bekase we're brought to this that I'm cryin'; no, indeed."

"Thim what ails you, Kathleen darlin'?"

The wife hesitated, and evaded the question for some time; but at length, upon his pressing her for an answer, with a fresh gush of sorrow, she replied,

"Owen, since you *must* know—och, may God pity us!—since you must know, it's wid hunger—*wid hunger*! I kept, unknownst, a little bit of bread to give the childhre this mornin', and that was part of it I gave you yesterday early—I'm near two days fastin'."

"Kathleen! Kathleen! Och! sure I know your worth, avillish. You were too good a wife, an' too good a mother, a'most! God forgive me, Kathleen! I fretted about beginnin', dear; but as my Heavenly Father's above me, I'm now happier to beg wid you by my side, nor if I war in the best house of the province widout you! Houid up, avourneen, for a while. Come on, childhre, darlins, an' the first house we meet we'll ax their char——, their assistance. Come on, darlins, and all of yees. Why my heart's asier, so it is. Sure we have your mother, childhre, safe wid us, an' what signifies anything so long as *she's* left to us?"

He then raised his wife tenderly, for she had been compelled to sit from weakness, and they bent their steps to a decent farmhouse that stood a few perches off the road, about a quarter of a mile before them.

As they approached the door, the husband hesitated a moment; his face got paler than usual, and his lip quivered, as he said—

"Kathleen—"

"I know what you're goin' to say, Owen. No, acushla, *you* won't; *I'll* ax it myself."

"Do," said Owen, with difficulty; "I can't do it; but I'll overcome my pride afore long, I hope. It's thryin' to me, Kathleen, an' you know it is—for you know how little I ever expected to be brought to this."

"Husht, avillish! We'll thry, then, in the name o' God."

As she spoke, the children, herself, and her husband entered, to beg, for the first time in their lives, a morsel of food. Yes! timidly—with a blush of shame, red even to crimson, upon the pallid features of Kathleen—with grief acute and piercing—they entered the house together.

For some minutes they stood and spoke not. The unhappy woman, unaccustomed to the language of supplication, scarcely knew in what terms to crave assistance. Owen himself stood back, uncovered, his fine, but much changed features overcast with an expression of deep affliction. Kathleen cast a single glance at him, as if for encouragement. Their eyes met; she saw the upright man—the last remnant of the M'Carthy—himself once the friend of the poor, of the unhappy, of the afflicted—standing crushed and broken down by misfortunes which he had not deserved, waiting with patience for a morsel of charity. Owen, too, had *his* remembrances. He recollected the days when he sought and gained the pure and fond affections of his Kathleen: when beauty, and youth, and innocence encircled her with

their light and their grace, as she spoke or moved; he saw her a happy wife and mother in her own home, kind and benevolent to all who required her good word or her good office, and remembered the sweetness of her light-hearted song; but now she was homeless. He remembered, too, how she used to plead with himself for the afflicted. It was but a moment; yet when their eyes met, that moment was crowded by recollections that flashed across their minds with a keen sense of a lot so bitter and wretched as theirs. Kathleen could not speak, although she tried; her sobs denied her utterance; and Owen involuntarily sat upon a chair, and covered his face with his hand.

To an observing eye it is never difficult to detect the cant of imposture, or to perceive distress when it is real. The good woman of the house, as is usual in Ireland, was in the act of approaching them, unsolicited, with a double handful of meal—that is what the Scotch and northern Irish call a *gowpen*, or as much as both hands locked together can contain—when, noticing their distress, she paused a moment, eyed them more closely, and exclaimed—

"What's this? Why there's something wrong wid you, good people! But first an' foremost take this, in the name an' honor of God."

"May the blessin' of the same Man * rest upon yees!" replied Kathleen. "This is a sorrowful thrial to us; for it's our first day to be upon the world; an' this is the first help of the kind we ever axed for, or ever got; an' indeed now I find we haven't even a place to carry it in. I've no—b—b—cloth, or anything to hould it."

"Your first, is it?" said the good woman. "Your first! May the marciful queen o' heaven look down upon yees, but it's a bitther day yees war driven out in! Sit down, there, you poor crathur. God pity you, I pray this day, for you *have* a heart-broken look! Sit down awhile, near the fire, you an' the childre! Come over, darlins, an' warm yourselves. Och, oh! but it's a thousand pities to see sich fine childre—handsome an' good lookin' even as they are, brought to this! Come over, good man; get near the fire, for you're wet an' could all of ye. Brian, *ludher* them two lazy thieves o' dogs out o' that. *Eirce suas, a wadhre bradagh, agus go mah a shin!*—be off wid yez, ye lazy divils, that's not worth your feedin'! Come over, honest man."

Owen and his family were placed near the fire; the poor man's heart was full, and he sighed heavily.

"May He that is plased to thry us," he exclaimed, "reward you for this! We are," he continued, "a poor an' a sufferin' family; but it's the will of God that we should be so, an' sure we can't complain widout committin' sin. All we ax now, is, that it may be plasin' to him that brought us low, to enable us to bear up undher our thrials. We would take it to our choice to beg an' be honest, sooner nor to be wealthy, an' wicked! We have our failings, an' our sins, God help us; but still there's nothin' dark or heavy on our consciences. Glory be to the name o' God for it!"

"Throth, I believe you," replied the farmer's wife; "there's thruth an' honesty in your face; one may easily see the remains of dacency about you all. Musha, throw your little things aside, an' stay where ye are today: you can't bring out the childre under the teem of rain an' sleet that's in it. *Warrah dheelish*, but it's the bitther day all out! Faix, Paddy will get a dhrookin, so he will, at that weary fair wid the stirks, poor bouchal—a son of ours that's gone to Ballyboulteen to sell some cattle, an' he'll not be worth three hapuns afore he comes back. I hope he'll have sinse to go into some house, when he's done, an' dhry himself well, any how, besides takin' somethin' to keep out the could. Put by your things, an' don't think of goin' out sich a day."

"We thank you," replied Owen. "Indeed we're glad to stay undher your roof; for poor things, they're badly able to thravel sich a day—these childre."

"Musha, ye ate no breakfast, maybe?"

Owen and his family were silent. The children looked wistfully at their parents, anxious that they should confirm what the good woman surmised; the father looked again at his famished brood and his sinking wife, and nature overcame him.

"Food did not crass our lips this day," replied Owen; "an' I may say hardly anything yestherday."

"Oh, blessed mother! Here, Katty Murray, drop scrubbin' that dresser, an' put down the midlin' pot for stirabout. Be livin'! *manim an diouol*, woman alive, handle yourself; you might a had it boilin' by this. God presurve us!—to be two days widout atin! Be the crass, Katty, if you're not alive, I'll give you a douse o' the churnstaff that'll bring the fire to your eyes! Do you hear me?"

"I do hear you, an' did often feel you, too, for fraid hearin' wouldn't do. You think there's no places in the world but your own, I b'lieve. Faix, indeed! it's well come up

* God is sometimes thus termed in Ireland. By "Man" here is meant person or being. He is also called the "Man above;" although this must have been intended for, and often is applied to, Christ only.

wid us, to be randied about wid no less a switch than a churnstaff!"

"Is it givin' back talk, you are? Bad end to me, if you look crucked but I'll have you a mark to reminder me by. What woman 'ud put up wid you but myself, you shkamin flipe? It wasn't to give me your bad tongue I hired you, but to do your business; and be the crass above us, if you turn your tongue on me agin, I'll give you the weight o' the churnstaff. Is it bekase they're poor people that it plased God to bring to this, that you turn up your nose at doin' anything to sarve them? There's not wather enough there, I say—put in more What signifies all the stirabout that 'ud make? Put plinty in: it's bether always to have too much than too little. Faix, I tell you, you'll want a male's meat an' a night's lodgin' afore you die, if you don't mend your manners."

"Och, musha, the poor girl is doin' her best," observed Kathleen; "an' I'm sure she wouldn't be guilty of usin' pride to the likes of us, or to any one that the Lord has laid his hand upon."

"She had betther not, while I'm to the fore," said her mistress. "What is she herself? Sure if it was a sin to be poor, God help the world. No; it's neither a sin nor a shame."

"Thanks be to God, no," said Owen: "it's neither the one nor the other. So long as we keep a fair name, an' a clear conscience, we can't ever say that our case is hard."

After some further conversation, a comfortable breakfast was prepared for them, of which they partook with an appetite sharpened by their long abstinence from food. Their stay here was particularly fortunate, for as they were certain of a cordial welcome, and an abundance of that which they much wanted—wholesome food—the pressure of immediate distress was removed. They had time to think more accurately upon the little preparations for misery which were necessary, and, as the day's leisure was at their disposal, Kathleen's needle and scissors were industriously plied in mending the tattered clothes of her husband and her children, in order to meet the inclemency of the weather.

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer's wife addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life—

Wife—"Now, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Farmer—"Ay, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Wife—"Hould your tongue, Brian, an' suck your dhudeen. It's me that's spakin' to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I'm done, an' then you may prache till Tib's Eve, an' that's neither before Christmas nor afther it."

Farmer—"Sure I'm sayin' nothin', Elveen, bekase I'm holdin' my tongue, *a shuchar*." *

Wife—"Your takin' the world on yez, an' God knows 'tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs."

Farmer—"A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it's that."

Wife—"Brian! *Gluntho ma?*—did you hear me? You'll be puttin' in your gab, an' me spakin'? How-an-iver, as I was sayin', our house was the first ye came to, an' they say there's a great blessin' to thim that gives the *first* charity to a poor man or woman settin' out to look for their bit."

Farmer—"Throgs, ay! Whin they set out to look for their bit."

Wife—"By the crass, Brian, you'd vex a saint. What have you to say in it, you *pittioque?* † Hould your whisht now, an' suck your dhudeen, I say; sure I allow you a quarther o' tobaccy a week, an' what right have you to be puttin' in your gosther when other people's spakin'?"

Farmer—"Go an."

Wife—"So, you see, the long an' the short of it is that whenever you happen to be in this side of the counthry, always come to *us*. You know the ould sayin'—when the poor man comes he brings a blessin', an' when he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much meal as will last yez a day or two; an' God he sees you're heartily welcome to all ye got?"

Farmer—"God he sees you're heartily welcome——"

Wife—"*Chorp an diouol*, Brian, hould your tongue, or I'll turn you out o' the kitchen. One can't hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin' dhrone. By the crass, I'll—eh? Will you whisht, now?"

Farmer—"Go an. Amn't I dhrawin' my pipe?"

Wife—"Well dhraw *it*; but don't dhraw *me* down upon you, barrin——. Do you hear me? an' the sthrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yez, an' bless yez! But afore yez go, jist lave your blessin' wid us; for it's a good thing to have the blessin' of the poor?"

"The Lord bless you, an' yours!" said

* My sugar.

† Untranslatable—but means a womanly man, a poor, effeminate creature.

Owen, fervently. "May you and them never —oh, may you never—*never* suffer what we've suffered; nor know what it is to want a male's mate, or a night's lodgin'!"

"Amin!" exclaimed Kathleen; "may the world flow upon you! for your good, kind heart desarves it."

Farmer—"An' whisper; I wish you'd offer up a prayer for the ruhin' o' the tongue. The Lord might hear *you*, but there's no great hopes that ever he'll hear *me;* though I've prayed for it almost ever since I was married, night an' day, winther and summer; but no use, she's as bad as ever."

This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

They then recommenced their journey, after having once more blessed, and been invited by their charitable entertainers, who made them promise never to pass their house without stopping a night with them.

It is not our intention to trace Owen M'Carthy and his wife through all the variety which a wandering pauper's life affords. He never could reconcile himself to the habits of a mendicant. His honest pride and integrity of heart raised him above it: neither did he sink into the whine and cant of imposture, nor the slang of knavery. No; there was a touch of manly sorrow about him, which neither time, nor familiarity with his degraded mode of life, could take away from him. His usual observation to his wife, and he never made it without a pang of intense bitterness, was—"Kathleen, darlin', it's thrue we have enough to ate an' to dhrink; but *we have no home—no home!*" to a man like him it was a thought of surpassing bitterness, indeed.

"Ah! Kathleen," he would observe, "if we had but the poorest shed that could be built, provided it was *our own*, wouldn't we be happy? The bread we ate, avourneen, doesn't do us good. We don't work for it; it's the bread of shame and idleness: and yet it's Owen M'Carthy that ates it! But, avourneen, that's past; an' we'll never see our own home, or our own hearth agin. That's what's cuttin' into my heart, Kathleen. Never!—never!"

Many a trial, too, of another kind, was his patience called upon to sustain; particularly from the wealthy and the more elevated in life, when his inexperiences as a mendicant led him to solicit their assistance.

"Begone, sirrah, off my grounds!" one would say. "Why don't you work, you sturdy impostor," another would exclaim, "rather than stroll about so lazily, training your brats to the gallows?" "You should be taken up, fellow, as a vagrant," a third would observe; "and if I ever catch you coming up my avenue again, depend upon it, I will slip my dogs at you and your idle spawn."

Owen, on these occasions, turned away in silence; he did not curse them; but the pangs of his honest heart went before Him who will, sooner or later, visit upon the heads of such men their cruel spurning and neglect of the poor.

"Kathleen," he observed to his wife, one day, about a year or more after they had begun to beg; "Kathleen, I have been turnin' it in my mind, that some of these childhre might sthrive to earn their bit an' sup, an' their little coverin' of clo'es, poor things. We might put them to herd cows in the summer, an' the *girshas* to somethin' else in the farmers' house. What do you think, asthore?"

"For God's sake do, Owen; sure my heart's crushed to see them—my own childhre, that I could lay down my life for—beggin' from door to door. Och, do something for them that way, Owen, an' you'll relieve the heart that loves them. It's a sore sight to a mother's eye, Owen, to see her childhre beggin' their morsel."

"It is darlin'—it is; we'll hire out the three eldest—Brian, an' Owen, an' Pether, to herd cows; an' we may get Peggy into some farmer's house to do loose jobs an' run of messages. Then we'd have only little Kathleen an' poor Ned along wid us. I'll thry any way, an' if I can get them places, who knows what may happen? I have a plan in my head that I'll tell you, thin."

"Arrah, what is it, Owen, jewel. Sure if I know it, maybe when I'm sorrowful, that thinkin' of it, an' lookin' forrid to it will make me happier. An' I'm sure, acushla, you would like that."

"But maybe, Kathleen, if it wouldn't come to pass, that the disappointment 'ud be heavy on you?"

"How could it, Owen? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, whatever happens?"

"Thrue enough, indeed, I forgot that; an' yet we might, Kathleen. Sure we'd be worse, if we or the childhre had bad health."

"God forgive me thin, for what I said! We might be worse. Well, but what is the plan, Owen?"

"Why, when we got the childhre places, I'll sthrive to take a little house, an' work as a cottar. Then, Kathleen, '*we'd have a home of our own.*' I'd work from light to light; I'd work before hours an' afther hours; ay, nine days in the week, or we'd be comfortable in our own little home. We might be poor, Kathleen, I know that, an' hard pressed

too; but then, as I said, we'd have our own home, an' our own hearth; our morsel, if it 'ud be homely, would be sweet, for it would be the fruits of our own labor."

"Now, Owen, do you think you could manage to get that?"

"Wait, acushla, till we get the childhre settled. Then I'll thry the other plan, for it's good to thry anything that could take us out of this disgraceful life."

This humble speculation was a source of great comfort to them. Many a time have they forgotten their sorrows in contemplating the simple picture of their happy little cottage. Kathleen, in particular, drew with all the vivid coloring of a tender mother, and an affectionate wife, the various sources of comfort and contentment to be found even in a cabin, whose inmates are blessed with a love of independence, industry, and mutual affection.

Owen, in pursuance of his intention, did not neglect, when the proper season arrived, to place out his eldest children among the farmers. The reader need not be told that there was that about him which gained respect. He had, therefore, little trouble in obtaining his wishes on this point, and to his great satisfaction, he saw three of them hired out to earn their own support.

It was now a matter of some difficulty for him to take a cabin and get employment. They had not a single article of furniture, and neither bed nor bedding, with the exception of blankets almost worn past use. He was resolved, however, to give up, at all risks, the life of a mendicant. For this purpose, he and the wife agreed to adopt a plan quite usual in Ireland, under circumstances somewhat different from his: this was, that Kathleen should continue to beg for their support, until the first half-year of their children's service should expire; and in the meantime, that he, if possible, should secure employment for himself. By this means, his earnings and that of his children might remain untouched, so that in half a year he calculated upon being able to furnish a cabin, and proceed, as a cotter, to work for, and support his young children and his wife, who determined, on her part, not to be idle any more than her husband. As the plan was a likely one, and as Owen was bent on earning his bread, rather than be a burthen to others, it is unnecessary to say that it succeeded. In less than a year he found himself once more in a home, and the force of what he felt on sitting, for the first time since his pauperism, at his own hearth, may easily be conceived by the reader. For some years after this, Owen got on slowly enough; his wages as a daily laborer being so miserable, that it required him to exert every nerve to keep the house over their head. What, however, will not carefulness and a virtuous determination, joined to indefatigable industry, do?

After some time, backed as he was by his wife, and even by his youngest children, he found himself beginning to improve. In the mornings and evenings he cultivated his garden and his rood of potato-ground. He also collected with a wheelbarrow, which he borrowed from an acquaintance, compost from the neighboring road; scoured an old drain before his door; dug rich earth, and tossed it into the pool of rotten water beside the house, and in fact adopted several other modes of collecting manure. By this means he had, each spring, a large portion of rich stuff on which to plant his potatoes. His landlord permitted him to spread this for planting upon his land; and Owen, ere long, instead of a rood, was able to plant half an acre, and ultimately, an acre of potatoes. The produce of this, being more than sufficient for the consumption of his family, he sold the surplus, and with the money gained by the sale was enabled to sow half an acre of oats, of which, when made into meal, he disposed of the greater share.

Industry is capital; for even when unaided by capital it creates it; whereas, idleness with capital produces only poverty and ruin. Owen, after selling his meal and as much potatoes as he could spare, found himself able to purchase a cow. Here was the means of making more manure; he had his cow, and he had also straw enough for her provender during the winter. The cow by affording milk to his family, enabled them to live more cheaply; her butter they sold, and this, in addition to his surplus meal and potatoes every year, soon made him feel that he had a few guineas to spare. He now bethought him of another mode of helping himself forward in the world: after buying the best "slip" of a pig he could find, a sty was built for her, and ere long he saw a fine litter of young pigs within a snug shed. These he reared until they were about two months old, when he sold them, and found that he had considerably gained by the transaction. This department, however, was under the management of Kathleen, whose life was one of incessant activity and employment. Owen's children, during the period of his struggles and improvements, were, by his advice, multiplying *their* little capital as fast as himself. The two boys, who had now shot up into the stature of young men, were at work as laboring servants in the neighborhood. The daughters were also engaged as servants with the adjoining farmers. The boys bought

each a pair of two-year old heifers, and the daughter one. These they sent to graze up in the mountains at a trifling charge, for the first year or two: when they became springers, they put them to rich infield grass for a few months, until they got a marketable appearance, after which their father brought them to the neighboring fairs, where they usually sold to great advantage, in consequence of the small outlay required in rearing them.

In fact, the principle of industry ran through the family. There was none of them idle; none of them a burthen or a check upon the profits made by the laborer. On the contrary, "they laid their shoulders together," as the phrase is, and proved to the world, that when the proper disposition is followed up by suitable energy and perseverance, it must generally reward him who possesses it.

It is certainly true that Owen's situation in life *now* was essentially different from that which it had been during the latter years of his struggles *as a farmer*. It was much more favorable, and far better calculated to develop successful exertion. If there be a class of men deserving public sympathy, it is that of the small farmers of Ireland. Their circumstances are fraught with all that is calculated to depress and ruin them; rents far above their ability, increasing poverty, and bad markets. The land which, during the last war, might have enabled the renter to pay three pounds per acre, and yet still maintain himself with tolerable comfort, could not now pay more than one pound, or, at the most, one pound ten; and yet, such is the infatuation of landlords, that, in most instances, the terms of leases taken out then are rigorously exacted. Neither can the remission of yearly arrears be said to strike at the root of the evils under which they suffer. The fact of the disproportionate rent hanging over them is a disheartening circumstance, that paralyzes their exertion, and sinks their spirits. If a landlord remit the rent for one term, he deals more harshly with the tenant at the next; whatever surplus, if any, his former indulgence leaves in the tenant's hands, instead of being expended upon his property as capital, and being permitted to lay the foundation of hope and prosperity, is drawn from him, at next term, and the poor, struggling tenant is thrown back into as much distress, embarrassment, and despondency as ever. There are, I believe, few tenants in Ireland of the class I allude to, who are not from one gale to three in arrear. Now, how can it be expected that such men will labor with spirit and earnestness to raise crops which they may never reap? crops which the landlord may seize upon to secure as much of his rent as he can.

I have known a case in which the arrears were not only remitted, but the rent lowered to a reasonable standard, such as, considering the markets, could be paid. And what was the consequence? The tenant who was looked upon as a negligent man, from whom scarcely any rent could be got, took courage, worked his farm with a spirit and success which he had not evinced before; and ere long was in a capacity to pay his gales to the very day; so that the judicious and humane landlord was finally a gainer by his own excellent economy. This was an experiment, and it succeeded beyond expectation.

Owen M'Carthy did not work with more zeal and ability as an humble cotter than he did when a farmer; but the tide was against him as a landholder, and instead of having advanced, he actually lost ground until he became a pauper. No doubt the peculiarly unfavorable run of two hard seasons, darkened by sickness and famine, were formidable obstacles to him; but he must eventually have failed, even had they not occurred. They accelerated his downfall, but did not cause it.

The Irish people, though poor, are exceedingly anxious to be independent. Their highest ambition is to hold a farm. So strong is this principle in them, that they will, without a single penny of capital, or any visible means to rely on, without consideration or forethought, come forward and offer a rent which, if they reflected only for a moment, they must feel to be unreasonably high. This, indeed, is a great evil in Ireland. But what, in the meantime, must we think of those imprudent landlords, and their more imprudent agents, who let their land to such persons, without proper inquiry into their means, knowledge of agriculture, and general character as moral and industrious men? A farm of land is to be let; it is advertised through the parish; application is to be made before such a day, to so and so. The day arrives, the agent or the land-steward looks over the proposals, and after singling out the highest bidder, declares him tenant, as a matter of course. Now, perhaps, this said tenant does not possess a shilling in the world, nor a shilling's worth. Most likely he is a new-married man, with nothing but his wife's bed and bedding, his wedding-suit, and his blackthorn cudgel, which we may suppose him to keep in reserve for the bailiff. However, he commences his farm; and then follow the shiftings, the scramblings, and the fruitless struggles to succeed, where success is impossible. His farm is not half tilled; his crops are miserable; the gale-day has already passed; yet, he can pay nothing until

he takes it out of the land. Perhaps he runs away—makes a moonlight flitting—and, by the aid of his friends, succeeds in bringing the crop with him. The landlord, or agent, declares he is a knave; forgetting that the man had no other alternative, and that they were the greater knaves and fools too, for encouraging him to undertake a task that was beyond his strength.

In calamity we are anxious to derive support from the sympathy of our friends; in our success, we are eager to communicate to them the power of participating in our happiness. When Owen once more found himself independent and safe, he longed to realize two plans on which he had for some time before been seriously thinking. The first was to visit his former neighbors, that they might at length know that Owen M'Carthy's station in the world was such as became his character. The second was, if possible, to take a farm in his native parish, that he might close his days among the companions of his youth, and the friends of his maturer years. He had, also, another motive; there lay the burying-place of the M'Carthys, in which slept the mouldering dust of his own "golden-haired" Alley. With them—in his daughter's grave—he intended to sleep his long sleep. Affection for the dead is the memory of the heart. In no other graveyard could he reconcile it to himself to be buried; to it had all his forefathers been gathered; and though calamity had separated him from the scenes where they had passed through existence, yet he was resolved that death should not deprive him of its last melancholy consolation;—that of reposing with all that remained of the "departed," who had loved him, and whom he had loved. He believed, that to neglect this, would be to abandon a sacred duty, and felt sorrow at the thought of being like an absent guest from the assembly of *his own* dead; for there is a principle of undying hope in the heart, that carries, with bold and beautiful imagery, the realities of life into the silent recesses of death itself.

Having formed the resolution of visiting his old friends at Tubber Derg, he communicated it to Kathleen and his family; his wife received the intelligence with undisguised delight.

"Owen," she replied, "indeed I'm glad you mintioned it. Many a time the thoughts of our place, an' the people about it, comes over me. I know, Owen, it'll go to your heart to see it; but still, avourneen, you'd like, too, to see the ould faces an' the warm hearts of them that pitied us, an' helped us, as well as they could, whin we war broken down."

"I would, Kathleen; but I'm not going merely to see thim an' the place. I intind, if I can, to take a bit of land somewhere *near* Tubber Derg. I'm uuasy in my mind, for 'fraid I'd not sleep in the grave-yard where all belongin' to me lie."

A chord of the mother's heart was touched; and in a moment the memory of their beloved child brought the tears to her eyes.

"Owen, avourneen, I have one requist to ax of you, an' I'm sure you won't refuse it to me; if I die afore you, let me be buried wid Alley. Who has a right to sleep so near her as her own mother?"

"The child's in my heart still," said Owen, suppressing his emotion; "thinkin' of the unfortunate mornin' I wint to Dublin, brings her back to me. I see her standin', wid her fair pale face—pale—oh, my God!—wid hunger an' sickness—her little thin clo'es, an' her goolden hair, tossed about by the dark blast—the tears in her eyes, an' the smile, that she once had, on her face—houldin' up her mouth, an' sayin' 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' as if she knew, somehow, that I'd never see her, nor her me, any more. An' whin I looked back, as I was turnin' the corner, there she stood, strainin' her eyes after her father, that she was then takin' the last sight of until the judgment-day."

His voice here became broken, and he sat in silence for a few minutes.

"It's sthrange," he added, with more firmness, "how she's so often in my mind!"

"But, Owen, dear," replied Kathleen, "sure it was the will of God that she should have us. She's now a bright angel in heaven, an' I dunna if it's right—indeed, I doubt it's sinful for us to think so much about her. Who knows but her innocent spirit is makin' inthercession for us all, before the blessed Mother o' God! Who knows but it was her that got us the good fortune that flowed in upon us, an' that made our strugglin' an' our laborin' turn out so *lucky*."

The idea of being *lucky* or *unlucky* is, in Ireland, an enemy to industry. It is certainly better that the people should believe success in life to be, as it is, the result of virtuous exertion, than of contingent circumstances, over which they themselves have no control. Still there was something beautiful in the superstition of Kathleen's affections; something that touched the heart and its dearest associations.

"It's very true, Kathleen," replied her husband; "but God is ever ready to help them that keeps an honest heart, an' do everything in their power to live creditably. They may fail for a time, or he may try them for awhile, but sooner or later good intintions and honest labor will be re-

warded. Look at ourselves—blessed be his name!"

"But whin do you mane to go to Tubber Derg, Owen!"

"In the beginnin' of the next week. An', Kathleen, alagur, if you remimber the bitther mornin' we came upon the world—but we'll not be spakin' of that now. I don't like to think of it. Some other time, maybe, when we're settled among our ould friends, I'll mintion it."

"Well, the Lord bliss your endayvors, any how! Och, Owen, do thry an' get us a snug farm somewhere near them. But you didn't answer me about Alley, Owen?"

"Why, you must have your wish, Kathleen, although I intended to keep that place for myself. Still we can sleep one on aich side of her; an' that may be aisily done, for our buryin'-ground is large: so set your mind at rest on that head. I hope God won't call us till we see our childhre settled dacently in the world. But sure, at all evints, let his blessed will be done!"

"Amin! amin! It's not right of any one to keep their hearts fixed too much upon the world; nor even, they say, upon one's own childhre."

"People may love their childhre as much as they plase, Kathleen, if they don't let their *grah* for them spoil the erathurs, by givin' them their own will, till they become headstrong an' overbearin'. Now, let my linen be as white as a bone before Monday, plase goodness; I hope, by that time, that Jack Dogherty will have my new clo'es made; for I intind to go as dacent as ever they seen me in my best days."

"An' so you will, too, avillish. Throth, Owen, it's you that'll be the proud man, steppin' in to them in all your grandeur! Ha, ha, ha! The spirit o' the M'Carthys is in you still, Owen."

"Ha, ha, ha! It is, darlin'; it is, indeed; an' I'd be sarry it wasn't. I long to see poor Widow Murray. I dunna is her son, Jemmy, married. Who knows, afther all we suffered, but I might be able to help her yet?—that is, if she stands in need of it. But, I suppose, her childhre's grown up now, an' able to assist her. Now, Kathleen, mind Monday next; an' have everything ready. I'll stay away a week or so, at the most, an' afther that I'll have news for you about all o' them."

When Monday morning arrived, Owen found himself ready to set out for Tubber Derg. The tailor had not disappointed him; and Kathleen, to do her justice, took care that the proofs of her good housewifery should be apparent in the whiteness of his linen. After breakfast, he dressed himself in all his finery; and it would be difficult to say whether the harmless vanity that peeped out occasionally from his simplicity of character, or the open and undisguised triumph of his faithful wife, whose eye rested on him with pride and affection, was most calculated to produce a smile.

"Now, Kathleen," said he, when preparing for his immediate departure, "I'm thinkin' of what they'll say, when they see me so smooth an' warm-lookin'. I'll engage they'll be axin' one another, 'Musha, how did Owen M'Carthy get an, at all, to be so well to do in the world, as he appears to be, afther failin' on his ould farm?'"

"Well, but Owen, you know how to manage them."

"Throth, I do that. But there is *one* thing they'll never get out o' me, any way."

"You won't tell *that* to any o' them, Owen?"

"Kathleen, if I thought they only suspected it, I'd never show my face in Tubber Derg agin. I think I could bear to be—an' yet it 'ud be a hard struggle with me too—but I *think* I could bear to be buried among black strangers, rather than it should be said, over my grave, among my own, 'there's where Owen M'Carthy lies—who was the only man, of his name, that ever begged his morsel on the king's highway. There he lies, the descendant of the great M'Carthy Mores, an' yet he was a beggar.' I know, Kathleen achora, it's neither a sin nor a shame to ax one's bit from our fellow-creatures, whin fairly brought to it, widout any fault of our own; but still I feel something in me, that can't bear to think of it widout shame an' heaviness of heart."

"Well, it's one comfort, that nobody knows it but ourselves. The poor childhre, for their own sakes, won't ever breathe it; so that it's likely the sacret 'll be berrid wi' us."

"I hope so, acushla. Does this coat sit asy atween the shouldhers? I feel it catch me a little."

"The sorra nicer. There; it was only your waistcoat that was turned down in the collar. Here—hould your arm. There now—it wanted to be pulled down a little at the cuffs. Owen, it's a beauty; an' I think I have good right to be proud of it, for it's every thread my own spinnin'."

"How do I look in it, Kathleen? Tell me thruth, now."

"Throth, you're twenty years younger; the never a day less."

"I think I needn't be ashamed to go afore my ould friends in it, any way. Now bring me my staff, from undher the bed above; an', in the name o' God, I'll set out."

"Which o' them, Owen? Is it the oak or the blackthorn?"

"The oak, acushla. Oh, no; not the blackthorn. It's it that I brought to Dublin wid me, the unlucky thief, an' that I had while we wor *a shaughran*. Divil a one o' me but 'ud blush in the face, if I brought it even in my hand afore them. The oak, ahagur; the oak. You'll get it atween the foot o' the bed an' the wall."

When Kathleen placed the staff in his hand, he took off his hat and blessed himself, then put it on, looked at his wife, and said—"Now darlin', in the name o' God, I'll go. Hush, avillish machree, don't be cryin'; sure I'll be back to you in a week."

"Och! I can't help it, Owen. Sure this is the second time you wor ever away from me more nor a day; an' I'm thinkin' of what happened both to you an' me, the *first* time you went. Owen, acushla, I feel that if anything happened you, I'd break my heart."

"Arrah, what 'ud happen me, darlin', wid God to protect me? Now, God be wid you, Kathleen dheelish, till I come back to you wid good news, I hope. I'm not goin' in sickness an' misery, as I went afore, to see a man that wouldn't hear my appale to him; an' I'm lavin' you comfortable, agrah, an' wantin' for nothin'. Sure it's only about five-an'-twenty miles from this—a mere step. The good God bless an' take care of you, my darlin' wife, till I come home to you!"

He kissed the tears that streamed from her eyes; and, hemming several times, pressed her hand, his face rather averted, then grasped his staff, and commenced his journey.

Scenes like this were important events to our humble couple. Life, when untainted by the crimes and artificial manners which destroy its purity, is a beautiful thing to contemplate among the virtuous poor; and, where the current of affection runs deep and smooth, the slightest incident will agitate it. So it was with Owen M'Carthy and his wife. Simplicity, truth, and affection, constituted their character. In them there was no complication of incongruous elements. The order of their virtues was not broken, nor the purity of their affections violated, by the anomalous blending together of opposing principles, such as are to be found in those who are involuntarily contaminated by the corruption of human society.

Owen had not gone far, when Kathleen called to him: "Owen, ahagur—stand, darlin'; but don't come back a step, for fraid o' bad luck."*

"Did I forget anything, Kathleen?" he inquired. "Let me see; no; sure I have my beads an' my tobacey box, an' my two clane shirts an' handkerchers in the bundle. What is it, acushla?"

"I needn't be axin' you, for I know you wouldn't forget it; but for fraid you might—Owen, whin you're at Tubber Derg, go to little Alley's grave, an' look at it; an' bring me back word how it appears. You might get it cleaned up, if there's weeds or anything growin' upon it; an' Owen, would you bring me a bit o' the clay, tied up in your pocket. Whin you're there, spake to her; tell her it was the lovin' mother that bid you, an' say anything that you think might keep her asy, an' give her pleasure. Tell her we're not now as we wor whin she was wid us; that we don't feel hunger, nor cowld, nor want; an' that nothin' is a throuble to us, barrin' that we miss *her*—ay, even yet—a *suillish machree** that she was—that we miss her fair face an' goolden hair from among us. Tell her this; an' tell her it was the lovin' mother that said it, an' that sint the message to her."

"I'll do it all, Kathleen; I'll do it all—all, An' now go in, darlin', an' don't be frettin'. Maybe we'll soon be near her, plase God, where we can see the place she sleeps in, often."

They then separated again; and Owen, considerably affected by the maternal tenderness of his wife, proceeded on his journey. He had not, actually, even at the period of his leaving home, been able to determine on what particular friend he should first call. That his welcome would be hospitable, nay, enthusiastically so, he was certain. In the meantime he vigorously pursued his journey; and partook neither of refreshment nor rest, until he arrived, a little after dusk, at a turn of the well-known road, which, had it been daylight, would have opened to him a view of Tubber Derg. He looked towards the beeches, however, under which it stood; but to gain a sight of it was impossible. His road now lying a little to the right, he turned to the house of his sterling friend, Frank Farrell, who had given him and his family shelter and support, when he was driven, without remorse, from his own holding. In a short time he reached Frank's residence, and felt a glow of sincere satisfaction at finding the same air of comfort and warmth about it as formerly. Through the kitchen window he saw the strong light of the blazing fire, and heard, ere he presented himself, the loud hearty laugh of his friend's wife, precisely as light and animated as it had been fifteen years before.

* When an Irish peasant sets out on a journey, or to transact business in fair or market, he will not, if possible, turn back. It is considered unlucky; as it is also to be crossed by a hare, or met by a red-haired woman.

* Light of my heart.

Owen lifted the latch and entered, with that fluttering of the pulse which every man feels on meeting with a friend, after an interval of many years.

"Musha, good people, can ye tell me is Frank Farrell at home?"

"Why, thin, he's not jist widin now, but he'll be here in no time entirely," replied one of his daughters. "Won't you sit down, honest man, an' we'll stand for him."

"I'm thankful to you," said Owen. "I'll sit, sure enough, till he comes in."

"Why thin!—eh! it must—it *can* be no other!" exclaimed Farrell's wife, bringing over a candle and looking Owen earnestly in the face; "sure I'd know that voice all the world over! Why, thin, marciful Father—Owen M'Carthy.—Owen M'Carthy, is it your four quarthers that's livin' an' well? Queen o' heaven, Owen M'Carthy darlin', you're welcome!" the word was here interrupted by a hearty kiss from the kind housewife;—"welcome a thousand an' a thousand times! *Vick ne hoish!* Owen dear, an' are you livin' at all? An' Kathleen, Owen, an' the childhre, an' all of yez—an' how are they?"

"Throth, we're livin' an' well, Bridget; never was betther, thanks be to God an' you, in our lives."

Owen was now surrounded by such of Farrell's children as were old enough to remember him; every one of whom he shook hands with, and kissed.

"Why, thin, the Lord save my sowl, Bridget," said he, "are these the little bouchaleens an' colleens that were runnin' about my feet whin I was here afore? Well, to be sure! How they do shoot up! An' is this Atty?"

"No: but *this* is Atty, Owen; faix, Brian outgrew him; an' here's Mary, an' this is Bridget Oge."

"Well!—well! But where did these two young shoots come from? this boy an' the colleen here? They won't to the fore, in *my* time, Bridget."

"This is Owen, called afther yourself,—an' this is Kathleen. I needn't tell you who she was called afther."

"*Gutsho, alanna? thurm pogue?*—come here, child, and kiss me," said Owen to his little namesake; "an' sure I can't forget the little woman here; *gutsho*, a colleen, and kiss me too."

Owen took her on his knee, and kissed her twice.

"Och, but poor Kathleen," said he, "will be the proud woman of this, when she hears it; in throth she will be that."

"Arrah! what's comin' over me!" said Mrs. Farrell. "Brian, run up to Micky Lowrie's for your father, An' see, Brian, don't say who's wantin' him, till we give him a start. Mary, come here, acushla," she added to her eldest daughter in a whisper—"take these two bottles an' fly up to Peggy Finigan's for the full o' them o' whiskey. Now be back before you're there, or if you don't, that I mightn't, but you'll see what you'll get. Fly, aroon, an' don't let the grass grow undher your feet. An' Owen, darlin'—but first sit over to the fire:—here get over to this side, it's the snuggest;—arrah, Owen—an' sure I dunna what to ax you first. You're all well? all to the fore?"

"All well, Bridget, an' thanks be to heaven, all to the fore."

"Glory be to God! Throth it warms my heart to hear it. An' the childre's all up finely, boys an' girls?"

"Throth, they are, Bridget, as good-lookin' a family o' childre as you'd wish to see. An' what is betther, they're as good as they're good-lookin'."

"Throth, they couldn't but be that, if they tuck at all afther their father an' mother. Bridget, aroon, rub the pan betther—an' lay the knife down, I'll cut the bacon myself, but go an' get a dozen o' the freshest eggs;—an' Kathleen, Owen, how does poor Kathleen look? Does she stand it as well as yourself?"

"As young as ever you seen her. God help her!—a thousand degrees betther nor whin you seen her last."

"An' well to do, Owen?—now tell the truth? Och, musha, I forget who I'm speakin' to, or I wouldn't disremember the ould sayin' that's abroad this many a year:—'who ever knew a M'Carthy of Tubber Derg to tell a lie, break his word, or refuse to help a friend in distress.' But, Owen, you're well to do in the world?"

"We're as well, Bridget, or may be betther, nor you ever knew us, except, indeed, afore the ould lase was run out wid us."

"God be praised again? Musha, turn round a little, Owen, for 'fraid Frank 'ud get too clear a sight of your face at first. Arrah, do you think he'll know you? Och, to be sure he will; I needn't ax. Your voice would tell upon you, any day."

"Know me! Indeed Frank 'nd know my shadow. He'll know me wid half a look."

And Owen was right, for quickly did the eye of his old friend recognize him, despite of the little plot that was laid to try his penetration. To describe their interview would be to repeat the scene we have already attempted to depict between Owen and Mrs. Farrell. No sooner were the rites of hospitality performed, than the tide of conversation began to flow with greater freedom. Owen ascertained one important fact, which we will here

mention, because it produces, in a great degree, the want of anything like an independent class of yeomanry in the country. On inquiring after his old acquaintances, he discovered that a great many of them, owing to high rents, had emigrated to America. They belonged to that class of independent farmers, who, after the expiration of their old leases, finding the little capital they had saved beginning to diminish, in consequence of rents which they could not pay, deemed it more prudent, while anything remained in their hands, to seek a country where capital and industry might be made available. Thus did the landlords, by their mismanagement and neglect, absolutely drive off their estates, the only men, who, if properly encouraged, were capable of becoming the strength and pride of the country. It is this system, joined to the curse of middlemen and sub-letting, which has left the country without any third grade of decent, substantial yoemen, who might stand as a bond of peace between the highest and the lowest classes. It is this which has split the kingdom into two divisions, constituting the extreme ends of society—the wealthy and the wretched, If this third class existed, Ireland would neither be so political nor discontented as she is; but, on the contrary, more remarkable for peace and industry. At present, the lower classes, being too poor, are easily excited by those who promise them a better order of things than that which exists. These theorists step into the exercise of that legitimate influence which the landed proprietors have lost by their neglect. There is no middle class in the country, who can turn round to them and say, "Our circumstances are easy, we want nothing; carry your promises to the poor, for that which you hold forth to *their* hopes, *we* enjoy in reality." The poor soldier, who, because he was wretched, volunteered to go on the forlorn hope, made a fortune; but when asked if he would go on a second enterprise of a similar kind, shrewdly replied, "General, I am *now* an independent man; send some *poor* devil on your forlorn hope who wants to make a fortune."

Owen now heard anecdotes and narratives of all occurrences, whether interesting or strange, that had taken place during his absence. Among others, was the death of his former landlord, and the removal of the agent who had driven him to beggary. Tubber Derg, he found, was then the property of a humane and considerate man, who employed a judicious and benevolent gentleman to manage it.

"One thing, I can tell you," said Frank; "it was but a short time in the new agent's hands, when the dacent farmers stopped goin' to America."

"But Frank," said Owen, and he sighed on putting the question, "who is in Tubber Derg, now?"

"Why, thin, a son of ould Rousin' Red-head's of Tullyvernon—young Con Roe, or the Ace o' Hearts—for he was called both by the youngsters—if you remimber him. His head's as red an' double as big, even, as his father's was, an' you know that no hat would fit ould Con, until he sent his measure to Jemmy Lamb, the hatter. Dick Nugent put it out on him, that Jemmy always made Rousin' Red-head's hat, either upon the half-bush el pot or a five-gallon keg of whiskey. 'Talkin' of the keg,' says Dick, 'for the matther o' that,' says he, 'divil a much differ the hat will persave; for the one'—meanin' ould Con's head, who was a hard dhrinker—'the one,' says Con, 'is as much a keg as the other—ha! ha! ha!' Dick met Rousin' Red-head another day: 'Arrah, Con,' says he, 'why do you get your hats made upon a *pot*, man alive? Sure that's the rason that you're so fond o' *poteen*.' A quare mad crathur was Dick an' would go forty miles for a fight. Poor fellow, he got his skull broke in a scrimmage betwixt the Redmonds and the O'Hanlons; an' his last words were, 'Bad luck to you, Redmond—O'Hanlon, I never thought *you*, above all men dead and gone, would be the death o' me.' Poor fellow! he was for pacifyin' them, for a wondher, but instead o' that he got pacified himself."

"An' how is young Con doin', Frank?"

"Hut, divil a much time he has to do aither well or ill, yit. There was four tenants on Tubber Derg since you left it, an' he's the fifth. It's hard to say how he'll do; but I believe he's the best o' thim, for so far. That may be owin' to the landlord. The rent's let down to him; an' I think he'll be able to take bread, an' good bread too, out of it."

"God send, poor man!"

"Now, Owen, would you like to go back to it?"

"I can't say that. I love the place, *but I suffered too much in it.* No; but I'll tell you, Frank, if there was e'er a snug farm near it that I could get rasonable, I'd take it."

Frank slapped his knee exultingly. "*Ma chuirp!*—do you say so, Owen?"

"Indeed, I do."

"Thin, upon my song, that's the luckiest thing I ever knew. There's, this blessed minute, a farm o' sixteen acres, that the Lacys is lavin'—goin' to America—an' it's to be set. They'll go the week afther next, an' the house needn't be cowld, for you can come to it the very day afther they have it."

"Well," said Owen, "I'm glad of that. Will you come wid me to-morrow, an' we'll see about it?"

"To be sure I will; an' what's betther, too; the Agint is a son of ould Misther Rogerson's, a man that knows you, an' the history o' them you came from, well. An', another thing, Owen! I tell you, whin it's abroad that *you* want to take the farm, there's not a man in the parish will bid agin you. You may know that yourself."

"I think, indeed, they would rather sarve me than otherwise," replied Owen; "an', in the name o' God, we'll see what can be done. Misther Rogerson, himself, 'ud spake to his son for me; so that I'll be sure of his intherest. Arrah, Frank, how is an ould friend o' mine, that I have a great regard for—poor Widow Murray?"

"Widow Murray. Poor woman, *she's* happy."

"You don't mane she's dead?"

"She's dead, Owen, and happy, I trust, in the Saviour. She died last spring was a two years."

"God be good to her sowl! An' are the childhre in her place still? It's she that was the decent woman."

"Throth, they are; an' sorrow a betther doin' family in the parish than they are. It's they that'll be glad to see you, Owen. Many a time I seen their poor mother, heavens be her bed, lettin' down the tears, whin she used to be spakin' of you, or mintionin' how often you sarved her; espeshially, about some way or other that you privinted her cows from bein' canted for the rint. She's dead now, an' God he knows, an honest hard-workin' woman she ever was."

"Dear me, Frank, isn't it a wondher to think how the people dhrop off! There's Widow Murray, one o' my oulldest frinds, an' Pether M'Mahon, an' Barny Lorinan—not to forget pleasant Rousin' Red-head—all taken away! Well!—Well! Sure it's the will o' God! We can't be here always."

After much conversation, enlivened by the bottle, though but sparingly used on the part of Owen, the hour of rest arrived, when the family separated for the night.

The gray dawn of a calm, beautiful summer's morning found Owen up and abroad, long before the family of honest Frank had risen. When dressing himself, with an intention of taking an early walk, he was asked by his friend why he stirred so soon, or if he—his host—should accompany him.

"No," replied Owen; "lie still; jist let me look over the counthry while it's asleep. When I'm musin' this a-way I don't like any body to be along wid me. I have a place to go an' see, too—an' a message—a tendher message, from poor Kathleen, to deliver, that I wouldn't wish a second person to hear. Sleep, Frank. I'll jist crush the head o' my pipe agin' one o' the half-burned turf that the fire was raked wid, an' walk out for an hour or two. Arther our breakfast we'll go an' look about this new farm."

He sallied out as he spoke, and closed the door after him in that quiet, thoughtful way for which he was ever remarkable. The season was midsummer, and the morning wanted at least an hour of sunrise. Owen ascended a little knoll, above Frank's house, on which he stood and surveyed the surrounding country with a pleasing but melancholy interest. As his eye rested on Tubber Derg, he felt the difference strongly between the imperishable glories of nature's works, and those which are executed by man. His house he would not have known, except by its site. It was not, in fact, the same house, but another which had been built in its stead. This disappointed and vexed him. An object on which his affections had been placed was removed. A rude stone house stood before him, rough and unplastered; against each end of which was built a stable and a cow-house, sloping down from the gables to low doors at both sides; adjoining these rose two mounds of filth, large enough to be easily distinguished from the knoll on which he stood. He sighed as he contrasted it with the neat and beautiful farm-house, which shone there in his happy days, white as a lily, beneath the covering of the lofty beeches. There was no air of comfort, neatness, or independence, about it; on the contrary, everything betrayed the evidence of struggle and difficulty, joined, probably, to want both of skill and of capital. He was disappointed, and turned his gaze upon the general aspect of the country, and the houses in which either his old acquaintances or their children lived. The features of the landscape were, certainly, the same; but even here was a change for the worse. The warmth of coloring which wealth and independence give to the appearance of a cultivated country, was gone. Decay and coldness seemed to brood upon everything he saw. The houses, the farm-yards, the ditches, and enclosures, were all marked by the blasting proofs of national decline. Some exceptions there were to this disheartening prospect; but they were only sufficient to render the torn and ragged evidences of poverty, and its attendant—carelessness—more conspicuous. He left the knoll, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, ascended a larger hill, which led to the grave-yard where his child lay buried. On his way to

this hill, which stood about half a mile distant, he passed a few houses of an humble description, with whose inhabitants he had been well acquainted. Some of these stood nearly as he remembered them; but others were roofless, with their dark mud gables either fallen in or partially broken down. He surveyed their smoke-colored walls with sorrow; and looked, with a sense of the transient character of all man's works upon the chickweed, docks, and nettles, which had shot up so rankly on the spot where many a chequered scene of joy and sorrow had flitted over the circumscribed circle of humble life, ere the annihilating wing of ruin swept away them and their habitations.

When he had ascended the hill, his eye took a wider range. The more distant and picturesque part of the country lay before him. "Ay!" said he in a soliloquy, "Lord bless us, how sthrange is this world!—an' what poor crathurs are men! There's the dark mountains, the hills, the rivers, an' the green glens, all the same; an' nothin' else amost but's changed! The very song of that blackbird, in thim thorn-bushes an' hazels below me, is like the voice of an ould friend to my ears. Och, indeed, hardly that, for even the voice of man changes; but that song is the same as I heard it for the best part o' my life. That mornin' star, too, is the same bright crathur up there that it ever was! God help us! Hardly any thing changes but man, an' he seems to think that he can never chauge; if one is to judge by his thoughtlessness, folly, an' wickedness!"

A smaller hill, around the base of which went the same imperfect road that crossed the glen of Tubber Derg, prevented him from seeing the grave-yard to which he was about to extend his walk. To this road he directed his steps. On reaching it he looked, still with a strong memory of former times, to the glen in which his children, himself, and his ancestors had all, during their day, played in the happy thoughtlessness of childhood and youth. But the dark and ragged house jarred upon his feelings. He turned from it with pain, and his eye rested upon the still green valley with evident relief. He thought of his "buried flower"—"his-golden-haired darlin'," as he used to call her—and almost fancied that he saw her once more wandering waywardly through its tangled mazes, gathering berries, or strolling along the green meadow, with a garland of gowans about her neck. Imagination, indeed, cannot heighten the image of the dead whom we love; but even if it could, there was no standard of ideal beauty in her father's mind beyond that of her own. She had been beautiful; but her beauty was pensive: a fair yet melancholy child; for the charm that ever encompassed her was one of sorrow and tenderness. Had she been volatile and mirthful, as children usually are, he would not have carried so far into his future life the love of her which he cherished. Another reason why he still loved her strongly, was a consciousness that her death had been occasioned by distress and misery; for, as he said, when looking upon the scenes of her brief but melancholy existence—"Avourneen machree, I remimber to see you pickin' the berries; but asthore—asthore—it wasn't for play you did it. It was to keep away the cuttin' of hunger from your heart! Of all our childhre every one said that *you* wor the M'Carthy—never sayin' much, but the heart in you ever full of goodness and affection. God help me, I'm glad—an', now, that I'm comin' near it—loth to see her grave."

He had now reached the verge of the grave-yard. Its fine old ruin stood there as usual, but not altogether without the symptoms of change. Some persons had, for the purposes of building, thrown down one of its most picturesque walls. Still its ruins clothed with ivy, its mullions moss-covered, its gothic arches and tracery, gray with age, were the same in appearance as he had ever seen them.

On entering this silent palace of Death, he reverently uncovered his head, blessed himself, and, with feelings deeply agitated, sought the grave of his beloved child. He approached it; but a sudden transition from sorrow to indignation took place in his mind, even before he reached the spot on which she lay. "Sacred Mother!" he exclaimed, "who has dared to bury in our ground? Who has—what villain has attimpted to come in upon the M'Carthys—upon the M'Carthy Mores, of Tubber Derg? Who could—had I no friend to prev——eh? Sacred Mother, what's this? Father of heaven forgive me! Forgive me, sweet Saviour, for this bad feelin' I got into! Who—who—could raise a head-stone over the darlin' o' my heart, widout one of us knowin' it! Who—who could do it? But let me see if I can make it out. Oh, who could do this blessed thing, for the poor an' the sorrowful?" He began, and with difficulty read as follows:—

"Here lies the body of Alice M'Carthy, the beloved daughter of Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, aged nine years. She was descended from the M'Carthy Mores.

"Requiescat in pace.

"This head-stone was raised over her by widow Murray, and her son, James Murray, out of grateful respect for Owen and Kath-

leen M'Carthy, who never suffered the widow and orphan, or a distressed neighbor, to crave assistance from them in vain, until it pleased God to visit them with affliction."

"Thanks to you, my Saviour!" said Owen, dropping on his knees over the grave,—"thanks an' praise be to your holy name, that in the middle of my poverty—of all my poverty—I was not forgotten! nor my darlin' child let to lie widout honor in the grave of her family! Make me worthy, blessed Heaven, of what is written down upon me here! An' if the departed spirit of her that honored the dust of my buried daughter is unhappy, oh, let her be relieved, an' let this act be remembered to her! Bless her son, too, gracious Father, an' all belonging to her on this earth! an', if it be your holy will, let them never know distress, or poverty, or wickedness?"

He then offered up a Pater Noster for the repose of his child's soul, and another for the kind-hearted and grateful widow Murray, after which he stood to examine the grave with greater accuracy.

There was, in fact, no grave visible. The little mound, under which lay what was once such a touching image of innocence, beauty, and feeling, had sunk down to the level of the earth about it. He regretted this, inasmuch as it took away, he thought, part of her individuality. Still he knew it was the spot wherein she had been buried, and with much of that vivid feeling, and strong figurative language, inseparable from the habits of thought and language of the old Irish families, he delivered the mother's message to the inanimate dust of her once beautiful and heart-loved child. He spoke in a broken voice, for even the mention of her name aloud, over the clay that contained her, struck with a fresh burst of sorrow upon his heart.

"Alley," he exclaimed in Irish, "Alley, *mhien machree*, your father that loved *you* more nor he love I any other human crathur, brings a message to you from the mother of your heart, avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, an' to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oge machree*, an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all! You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered—an' bittherly we did suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish*, we thought of you, an' cried afther our poor dead flower, many an' many's the time. An' she bid me tell you, darlin' of my heart, that we feel nothin' now so much as that you are not wid us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her; but it can't be—an' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin, in health an' in life—but it can't be. The lovin' mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her; she bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favor an' compassion? Farewell, Alley asthore! May you sleep in peace, an' rest on the breast of your great Father in Heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your goolden head is now upon your grave."

He wiped his eyes as he concluded, and after lifting a little of the clay from her grave, he tied it carefully up, and put it into his pocket.

Having left the grave-yard, he retraced his steps towards Frank Farrell's house. The sun had now risen, and as Owen ascended the larger of the two hills which we have mentioned, he stood again to view the scene that stretched beneath him. About an hour before all was still, the whole country lay motionless, as if the land had been a land of the dead. The mountains, in the distance, were covered with the thin mists of morning; the milder and richer parts of the landscape had appeared in that dim gray distinctness which gives to distant objects such a clear outline. With the exception of the blackbird's song, every thing seemed as if stricken into silence; there was not a breeze stirring; both animate and inanimate nature reposed as if in a trance; the very trees appeared asleep, and their leaves motionless, as if they had been of marble. But now the scene was changed. The sun had flung his splendor upon the mountain-tops, from which the mists were tumbling in broken fragments to the valleys between them. A thousand birds poured their songs upon the ear; the breeze was up, and the columns of smoke from the farm-houses and cottages played, as if in frolic, in the air. A white haze was beginning to rise from the meadows; early teams were afoot; and laborers going abroad to their employment. The lakes in the distance shone like mirrors; and the clear springs on the mountain-sides glittered in the sun, like gems on which the eye could scarcely rest. Life, and light, and motion, appear to be inseparable. The dew of morning lay upon nature like a brilliant veil,

realizing the beautiful image of Horace, as applied to woman :

Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.

By-and-by the songs of the early workmen were heard ; nature had awoke, and Owen, whose heart was strongly, though unconsciously, alive to the influence of natural religion, participated in the general elevation of the hour, and sought with freshened spirits the house of his entertainer.

As he entered this hospitable roof, the early industry of his friend's wife presented him with a well-swept hearth and a pleasant fire, before which had been placed the identical chair that they had appropriated to his own use. Frank was enjoying "a blast o' the pipe," after having risen ; to which luxury the return of Owen gave additional zest and placidity. In fact, Owen's presence communicated a holiday spirit to the family ; a spirit, too, which declined not for a moment during the period of his visit.

"Frank," said Owen, "to tell you the thruth, I'm not half plased wid you this mornin'. I think you didn't thrate me as I ought to expect to be thrated."

"Musha, Owen M'Carthy, how is that ?"

"Why, you said nothin' about widow Murray raisin' a head-stone over our child. You kept me in the dark there, Frank, an' sich a start I never got as I did this mornin', in the grave-yard beyant."

"Upon my sowl, Owen, it wasn't my fau't, nor any of our fau'ts ; for, to tell you the thruth, we had so much to think and discoorse of last night, that it never shtruck me, good or bad. Indeed it was Bridget that put it first in my head, affther you wint out, an' thin it was too late. Ay, poor woman, the dacent strain was ever in her, the heaven's be her bed."

"Frank, if any one of her family was to abuse me till the dogs wouldn't lick my blood, I'd only give them back good for evil affter that. Oh, Frank, that goes to my heart ! To put a head-stone over my weeny goolden-haired darlin', for the sake of the little thrifles I sarved thim in ! Well ! may none belongin' to her ever know poverty or hardship ! but if they do, an' that I have it ——. How-an'-iver, no matther. God bless thim ! God bless thim ! Wait till Kathleen hears it !"

"An' the best of it was, Owen, that she never expected to see one of your faces. But, Owen, you think too much about that child. Let us talk about something else. You've seen Tubber Derg wanst more ?"

"I did ; an' I love it still, in spite of the state it's in."

"Ah ! it's different from what it was in your happy days. I was spakin' to Bridget about the farm, an' she a'vises us to go, widout losin' a minute, an' take it if we can."

"It's near this place I'll die, Frank. I'd not rest in my grave if I wasn't berrid among my own ; so we'll take the farm if possible."

"Well, then, Bridget, hurry the breakfast, avourneen ; an' in the name o' goodness, we'll set out, an' clinch the business this very day."

Owen, as we said, was prompt in following up his determinations. After breakfast they saw the agent and his father, for both lived together. Old Rogerson had been intimately acquainted with the M'Carthys, and, as Frank had anticipated, used his influence with the agent in procuring for the son of his old friend and acquaintance the farm which he sought.

"Jack," said the old gentleman, "you don't probably know the history and character of the Tubber Derg M'Carthys so well as I do. No man ever required the written bond of a M'Carthy ; and it was said of them, and is said still, that the widow and orphan, the poor man or the stranger, never sought their assistance in vain. I, myself, will go security, if necessary, for Owen M'Carthy."

"Sir," replied Owen, "I'm thankful to you ; I'm grateful to you. But I wouldn't take the farm, or bid for it at all, unless I could bring forrid enough to stock it as I wish, an' to lay in all that's wantin' to work it well. It 'ud be useless for me to take it —to struggle a year or two—impoverish the land—an' thin run away out of it. No, no ; I have what'll put me upon it wid dacency an' comfort."

"Then, since my father has taken such an interest in you, M'Carthy, you must have the farm. We shall get leases prepared, and the business completed in a few days ; for I go to Dublin on this day week. Father, I now remember the character of this family ; and I remember, too, the sympathy which was felt for one of them, who was harshly ejected about seventeen or eighteen years ago, out of the lands on which his forefathers had lived, I understand, for centuries."

"I am that man, sir," returned Owen. "It's too long a story to tell now ; but it was only out o' *part* of the lands, sir, that I was put. What I held was but a poor patch compared to what the family held in my grandfather's time. A great part of it went out of our hands at his death."

"It was very kind of you, Misther Rogerson, to offer to go security for him," said Frank ; "but if security was wantin', sir, I'd not be willin' to let anybody but myself back him. I'd go all I'm worth in the world—an'

by my sowl, double as much—for the same man."

"I know that, Frank, an' I thank you; but I could put security in Mr. Rogerson's hands, here, if it was wanted. Good-mornin' an' thank you both, gintleman. To tell yez the thruth," he added, with a smile, "I long to be among my ould friends—manin' the people, an' the hills, an' the green fields of Tubber Derg—agin; an' thanks be to goodness, sure I will soon."

In fact, wherever Owen went, within the bounds of his native parish, his name, to use a significant phrase of the people, was before him. His arrival at Frank Farrel's was now generally known by all his acquaintances, and the numbers who came to see him were almost beyond belief. During the two or three successive days, he went among his old "*cronies*;" and no sooner was his arrival at any particular house intimated, than the neighbors all flocked to him. Scythes were left idle, spades were stuck in the earth, and work neglected for the time being; all crowded about him with a warm and friendly interest, not proceeding from idle curiosity, but from affection and respect for the man.

The interview between him and widow Murray's children was affecting. Owen felt deeply the delicate and touching manner in which they had evinced their gratitude for the services he had rendered them; and young Murray remembered with a strong gush of feeling, the distresses under which they lay when Owen had assisted them. Their circumstances, owing to the strenuous exertions of the widow's eldest son, soon afterwards improved; and, in accordance with the sentiments of hearts naturally grateful, they had taken that method of testifying what they felt. Indeed, so well had Owen's unparalleled affection for his favorite child been known, that it was the general opinion about Tubber Derg that her death had broken his heart.

"Poor Owen, he's dead," they used to say; "the death of his weeny one, while he was away in Dublin, gave him the finishin' blow. It broke his heart."

Before the week was expired, Owen had the satisfaction of depositing the lease of his new farm, held at a moderate rent, in the hands of Frank Farrel; who, tying it up along with his own, secured it in the "black chest." Nothing remained now but to return home forthwith, and communicate the intelligence to Kathleen. Frank had promised, as soon as the Lacy's should vacate the house, to come with a long train of cars, and a number of his neighbors, in order to transfer Owen's family and furniture to his new dwelling. Everything therefore, had been arranged; and Owen had nothing to do but hold himself in readiness for the welcome arrival of Frank and his friends.

Owen, however, had no sense of enjoyment when not participated in by his beloved Kathleen. If he felt sorrow, it was less as a personal feeling than as a calamity to her. If he experienced happiness, it was doubly sweet to him as reflected from his Kathleen. All this was mutual between them. Kathleen loved Owen precisely as he loved Kathleen. Nor let our readers suppose that such characters are not in humble life. It is in humble life, where the springs of feeling are not corrupted by dissimulation and evil knowledge, that the purest, and tenderest, and strongest virtues are to be found.

As Owen approached his home, he could not avoid contrasting the circumstances of his return *now* with those under which, almost broken-hearted after his journey to Dublin, he presented himself to his sorrowing and bereaved wife about eighteen years before. He raised his hat, and thanked God for the success which had, since that period, attended him, and, immediately after his silent thanksgiving, entered the house.

His welcome, our readers may be assured, was tender and affectionate. The whole family gathered about him, and, on his informing them that they were once more about to reside on a farm adjoining to their beloved Tubber Derg, Kathleen's countenance brightened, and the tear of delight gushed to her eyes.

"God be praised, Owen," she exclaimed; "we will have the ould place afore our eyes, an' what is betther, we will be near where Alley is lyin'. But that's true, Owen," she added, "did you give the light of our hearts the mother's message?"

Owen paused, and his features were slightly overshadowed, but only by the solemnity of the feeling.

"Kathleen," said he, "I gave her your message; but, avourneen, I have sthrange news for you about Alley."

"What, Owen? What is it, acushla? Tell me quick?"

"The blessed child was not neglected: no, but she was honored in our absence. A head-stone was put over her, an' stands there partily this minute."

"Mother of Glory, Owen!"

"It's thruth. Widow Murray an' her son Jemmy put it up, wid words upon it that brought the tears to my eyes. Widow Murray is dead, but her childher's doin' well. May God bless an' prosper them, an' make her happy!"

The delighted mother's heart was not proof against the widow's gratitude, expressed, as it had been, in a manner so affecting. She

rocked herself to and fro in silence, whilst the tears fell in showers down her cheeks. The grief, however, which this affectionate couple felt for their child, was not always such as the reader has perceived it to be. It was rather a revival of emotions that had long slumbered, but never died; and the associations arising from the journey to Tubber Derg, had thrown them back, by the force of memory, almost to the period of her death. At times, indeed, their imagination had conjured her up strongly, but the present was an epoch in the history of their sorrow.

There is little more to be said. Sorrow was soon succeeded by cheerfulness and the glow of expected pleasure, which is ever the more delightful, as the pleasure is pure. In about a week their old neighbors, with their carts and cars, arrived; and before the day was closed on which Owen removed to his new residence, he found himself once more sitting at his own hearth, among the friends of his youth, and the companions of his maturer years. Ere the twelvemonth elapsed, he had his house perfectly white, and as nearly resembling that of Tubber Derg in its better days as possible. About two years* ago we saw him one evening in the month of June, as he sat on a bench beside the door, singing with a happy heart his favorite song of "*Colleen dhas crootha na mo.*" It was about an hour before sunset. The house stood on a gentle eminence, beneath which a sweep of green meadow stretched away to the skirts of Tubber Derg. Around him was a country naturally fertile, and, in spite of the national depression, still beautiful to contemplate. Kathleen and two servant maids were milking, and the whole family were assembled about the door.

"Well, childher," said the father, "didn't I tell yez the bitther mornin' we left Tubber Derg, not to cry or be disheartened—that 'there was a good God above who might do somethin' for us *yet?*' I never *did* give up my trust in Him, an' I never *will*. You see, after all our little troubles, He has wanst more brought us together, an' made us happy. Praise an' glory to His name!"

I looked at him as he spoke. He had raised his eyes to heaven, and a gleam of elevated devotion, perhaps worthy of being called sublime, irradiated his features. The sun, too, in setting, fell upon his broad temples and iron-gray locks, with a light solemn and religious. The effect to me, who knew his noble character, and all that he had suffered, was as if the eye of God then rested upon the decline of a virtuous man's life with approbation;—as if he had lifted up the glory of his countenance upon him. Would that many of his thoughtless countrymen had been present! They might have blushed for their crimes, and been content to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of Owen M'Carthy.

* It is unnecessary to add, that years have passed since this date was given.

Neal Malone.

There never was a greater souled or doughtier tailor than little Neal Malone. Though but four feet four in height, he paced the earth with the courage and confidence of a giant; nay, one would have imagined that he walked as if he feared the world itself was about to give way under him. Let none dare to say in future that a tailor is but the ninth part of a man. That reproach has been gloriously taken away from the character of the cross-legged corporation by Neal Malone. He has wiped it off like a stain from the collar of a second-hand coat; he has pressed this wrinkle out of the lying front of antiquity; he has drawn together this rent in the respectability of his profession. No. By him who was breeches-maker to the gods—that is, except, like Highlanders, they eschewed inexpressibles—by him who cut Jupiter's frieze jocks for winter, and eke by the bottom of his thimble, we swear, that Neal Malone was *more* than the ninth part of a man!

Setting aside the Patagonians, we maintain that two-thirds of mortal humanity were comprised in Neal; and, perhaps, we might venture to assert, that two-thirds of Neal's humanity were equal to six-thirds of another man's. It is right well known that Alexander the Great was a little man, and we doubt whether, had Alexander the Great been bred to the tailoring business, he would have exhibited so much of the hero as Neal Malone. Neal was descended from a fighting family, who had signalized themselves in as many battles as ever any single hero of antiquity fought. His father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all fighting men, and his ancestors in general, up, probably, to Con of the Hundred Battles himself. No wonder, therefore, that Neal's blood should cry out against the cowardice of his calling; no wonder that he should be an epitome of all that was valorous and heroic in a peaceable man, for we neglected to inform the reader that Neal, though "bearing no base mind," never fought any man in his own person. That, however, deducted nothing from his courage. If he did not fight, it was simply because he found cowardice universal. No man would engage him; his spirit blazed in vain; his thirst for battle was doomed to remain unquenched, except by whiskey, and this only increased it. In short, he could find no foe. He has often been known to challenge the first cudgel-players and pugilists of the parish; to provoke men of fourteen stone weight; and to bid mortal defiance to faction heroes of all grades—but in vain. There was that in him which told them that an encounter with Neal would strip them of their hurds. Neal saw all this with a lofty indignation; he deplored the degeneracy of the times, and thought it hard that the descendant of such a fighting family should be doomed to pass through life peaceably, while so many excellent rows and riots took place around him. It was a calamity to see every man's head broken but his own; a dismal thing to observe his neighbors go about with their bones in bandages, yet his untouched; and his friends beat black and blue, whilst his own cuticle remained undiscolored.

"Blur-an'-agers!" exclaimed Neal one day, when half-tipsy in the fair, "am I never to get a bit of fightin'? Is there no cowardly spalpeen to stand afore Neal Malone? Be this an' be that, *I'm blue-mouldied for want of a batin'!* I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin'! Will none o' ye fight me aither for love, money, or whiskey—frind or inimy, an' bad luck to ye? I don't care a *traneen* which, only out o' pure frindship, let us have a morsel o' the rale kick-up, 'any rate. Frind or inimy, I say agin, if you regard me; sure *that* makes no differ, only let us have the fight."

This excellent heroism was all wasted; Neal could not find a single adversary. Except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets, one hand against the other, there was no chance of a fight; no person to be found sufficiently magnanimous to encounter the tailor. On the contrary, every one of his friends—or, in other words, every man in the parish—was ready to support him. He was clapped on the back, until his bones were nearly dislocated in his body; and his hand shaken, until his arm lost its cunning at the needle for half a week afterwards. This, to be sure, was a bitter busi-

ness—a state of being past endurance. Every man was his friend—no man was his enemy. A desperate position for any person to find himself in, but doubly calamitous to a martial tailor.

Many a dolorous complaint did Neal make upon the misfortune of having none to wish him ill; and what rendered this hardship doubly oppressive, was the unlucky fact that no exertions of his, however offensive, could procure him a single foe. In vain did he insult, abuse, and malign all his acquaintances. In vain did he father upon them all the rascality and villany he could think of; he lied against them with a force and originality that would have made many a modern novelist blush for want of invention—but all to no purpose. The world for once became astonishingly Christian; it paid back all his efforts to excite its resentment with the purest of charity; when Neal struck it on the one cheek, it meekly turned unto him the other. It could scarcely be expected that Neal would bear this. To have the whole world in friendship with a man is beyond doubt rather an affliction. Not to have the face of a single enemy to look upon, would decidedly be considered a deprivation of many agreeable sensations by most people, as well as by Neal Malone. Let who might sustain a loss, or experience a calamity, it was a matter of indifference to Neal. They were *only* his friends, and he troubled neither his head nor his heart about them.

Heaven help us! There is no man without his trials; and Neal, the reader perceives, was not exempt from his. What did it avail him that he carried a cudgel ready for all hostile contingencies? or knit his brows and shook his *kippeen* at the fiercest of his fighting friends? The moment he appeared, they softened into downright cordiality. His presence was the signal of peace; for, notwithstanding his unconquerable propensity to warfare, he went abroad as the genius of unanimity, though carrying in his bosom the redoubtable disposition of a warrior; just as the sun, though the source of light himself, is said to be dark enough at bottom.

It could not be expected that Neal, with whatever fortitude he might bear his other afflictions, could bear such tranquillity like a hero. To say that he bore it as one, would be to basely surrender his character; for what hero ever bore a state of tranquillity with courage? It affected his cutting out! It produced what Burton calls "a windie melancholie," which was nothing else than an accumulation of courage that had no means of escaping, if courage can without indignity be ever said to escape. He sat uneasy on his lap-board. Instead of cutting out soberly, he flourished his scissors as if he were heading a faction; he wasted much chalk by scoring his cloth in wrong places, and even caught his hot goose without a holder. These symptoms alarmed his friends, who persuaded him to go to a doctor. Neal went, to satisfy them; but he knew that no prescription could drive the courage out of him—that he was too far gone in heroism to be made a coward of by apothecary stuff. Nothing in the pharmacopœia could physic him into a pacific state. His disease was simply the want of an enemy, and an unaccountable superabundance of friendship on the part of his acquaintances. How could a doctor remedy this by a prescription? Impossible. The doctor, indeed, recommended bloodletting; but to lose blood in a peaceable manner was not only cowardly, but a bad cure for courage. Neal declined it: he would lose no blood for any man until he could not help it; which was giving the character of a hero at a single touch. *His* blood was not to be thrown away in this manner; the only lancet ever applied to his relations was the cudgel, and Neal scorned to abandon the principles of his family.

His friends finding that he reserved his blood for more heroic purposes than dastardly phlebotomy, knew not what to do with him. His perpetual exclamation was, as we have already stated, "*I'm blue-mordded for want of a botin'!*" They did everything in their power to cheer him with the hope of a drubbing; told him he lived in an excellent country for a man afflicted with his malady; and promised, if it were at all possible, to create him a private enemy or two, who, they hoped in heaven, might trounce him to some purpose.

This sustained him for a while; but as day after day passed, and no appearance of action presented itself, he could not choose but increase in courage. His soul, like a sword-blade too long in the scabbard, was beginning to get fuliginous by inactivity. He looked upon the point of his own needle, and the bright edge of his scissors, with a bitter pang, when he thought of the spirit rusting within him: he meditated fresh insults, studied new plans, and hunted out cunning devices for provoking his acquaintances to battle, until by degrees he began to confound his own brain, and to commit more grievous oversights in his business than ever. Sometimes he sent home to one person a coat, with the legs of a pair of trousers attached to it for sleeves, and despatched to another the arms of the aforesaid coat tacked together as a pair of trousers

Sometimes the coat was made to button behind instead of before, and he frequently placed the pockets in the lower part of the skirts, as if he had been in league with cutpurses.

This was a melancholy situation, and his friends pitied him accordingly.

"Don't be cast down, Neal," said they, "your friends feel for you, poor fellow."

"Divil carry my frinds," replied Neal, "sure there's not one o' yez frindly enough to be my mimy. Tare-an'-ounze! what'll I do? *I'm blue-mowldred for want of a batin'!*"

Seeing that their consolation was thrown away upon him, they resolved to leave him to his fate; which they had no sooner done than Neal had thoughts of taking to the *Skiomachia* as a last remedy. In this mood he looked with considerable antipathy at his own shadow for several nights; and it is not to be questioned, but that some hard battles would have taken place between them, were it not for the cunning of the shadow, which declined to fight him in any other position than with its back to the wall. This occasioned him to pause, for the wall was a fearful antagonist, inasmuch that it knew not when it was beaten; but there was still an alternative left. He went to the garden one clear day about noon, and hoped to have a bout with the shade, free from interruption. Both approached, apparently eager for the combat, and resolved to conquer or die, when a villanous cloud happening to intercept the light, gave the shadow an opportunity of disappearing; and Neal found himself once more without an opponent.

"It's aisy known," said Neal, "you haven't the *blood* in you, or you'd come up to the scratch like a man."

He now saw that fate was against him, and that any further hostility towards the shadow was only a tempting of Providence. He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful looking; the bluster departed from him; his body shrunk up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost deserted garment.

God knows it is difficult to form a correct opinion upon a situation so paradoxical as Neal's was. To be reduced to skin and bone by the downright friendship of the world, was, as the sagacious reader will admit, next to a miracle. We appeal to the conscience of any man who finds himself without an enemy, whether he be not a greater skeleton than the tailor; we will give him fifty guineas provided he can show a calf to his leg. We know he could not; for the tailor had none, and that was because he had not an enemy. No man in friendship with the world ever has calves to his legs. To sum up all in a paradox of our own invention, for which we claim the full credit of originality, we now assert that *more men have risen in the world by the injury of their enemies, than have risen by the kindness of their friends.* You may take this, reader, in any sense; apply it to hanging if you like, it is still immutably and immovably true.

One day Neal sat cross-legged, as tailors usually sit, in the act of pressing a pair of breeches; his hands were placed, backs up, upon the handle of his goose, and his chin rested upon the back of his hands. To judge from his sorrowful complexion one would suppose that he sat rather to be sketched as a picture of misery, or of heroism in distress, than for the industrious purpose of pressing the seams of a garment. There was a great deal of New Burlington-street pathos in his countenance; his face, like the times, was rather out of joint; "the sun was just setting, and his golden beams fell, with a saddened splendor, athwart the tailor's"—the reader may fill up the picture.

In this position sat Neal, when Mr. O'Connor, the schoolmaster, whose inexpressibles he was turning for the third time, entered the workshop. Mr. O'Connor, himself, was as finished a picture of misery as the tailor. There was a patient, subdued kind of expression in his face, which indicated a very fair portion of calamity; his eye seemed charged with affliction of the first water; on each side of his nose might be traced two dry channels which, no doubt, were full enough while the tropical rains of his countenance lasted. Altogether, to conclude from appearances, it was a dead match in affliction between him and the tailor; both seemed sad, fleshless, and unthriving.

"Misther O'Connor," said the tailor, when the schoolmaster entered, "won't you be pleased to sit down?"

Mr. O'Connor sat; and, after wiping his forehead, laid his hat upon the lap-board, put his half handkerchief in his pocket, and looked upon the tailor. The tailor, in return, looked upon Mr. O'Connor; but neither of them spoke for some minutes. Neal, in fact, appeared to be wrapped up in his own misery, and Mr. O'Connor in his; or, as we often have much gratuitous sympathy for the distresses of our friends, we question but the tailor was wrapped up in Mr. O'Connor's misery, and Mr. O'Connor in the tailor's.

Mr. O'Connor at length said—"Neal, are my inexpressibles finished?"

"I am now pressin' your inexpressibles," replied Neal; "but, be my sowl, Mr. O'Connor, it's not your inexpressibles I'm thinkin' of. I'm not the ninth part of what I was. I'd hardly make paddin' for a collar now."

"Are you able to carry a staff still, Neal?"

"I've a light hazel one that's handy," said the tailor; "but where's the use of carryin' it, whin I can get no one to fight wid. Sure I'm disgracing my relations by the life I'm leadin'. I'll go to my grave widout ever batin' a man, or bein' bate myself; that's the vexation. Divil the row ever I was able to kick up in my life; *so that I'm fairly blue-moulded for want of a batin'*. But if you have patience——"

"Patience!" said Mr. O'Connor, with a shake of the head, that was perfectly disastrous even to look at; "patience, did you say, Neal?"

"Ay," said Neal, "an', be my sowl, if you deny that I said patience, I'll break your head!"

"Ah, Neal," returned the other, "I don't deny it—for though I am teaching philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics, every day in my life, yet I'm learning patience myself both night and day. No, Neal; I have forgotten to deny anything. I have not been guilty of a contradiction, out of my own school, for the last fourteen years. I once expressed the shadow of a doubt about twelve years ago, but ever since I have abandoned even doubting. That doubt was the last expiring effort at maintaining my domestic authority—but I suffered for it."

"Well," said Neal, "if you have patience, I'll tell you what afflicts me from beginnin' to endin'."

"I *will* have patience," said Mr. O'Connor, and he accordingly heard a dismal and indignant tale from the tailor.

"Your have told me that fifty times over," said Mr. O'Connor, after hearing the story. "Your spirit is too martial for a pacific life. If you follow my advice, I will teach you how to ripple the calm current of your existence to some purpose. *Marry a wife.* For twenty-five years I have given instructions in three branches, viz.—philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics—I am also well versed in matrimony, and I declare that, upon my misery, and by the contents of all my afflictions, it is my solemn and melancholy opinion, that, if you marry a wife, you will, before three months pass over your concatenated state, not have a single complaint to make touching a superabundance of peace and tranquillity, or a love of fighting."

"Do you mean to say that any woman would make me afeard?" said the tailor, deliberately rising up and getting his cudgel.

"I'll thank you merely to go over the words agin till I thrash you widin an inch o' your life. That's all."

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, meekly, "I won't fight; I have been too often subdued ever to presume on the hope of a single victory. My spirit is long since evaporated: I am like one of your own shreds, a mere selvage. Do you not know how much my habiliments have shrunk in, even within the last five years? Hear me, Neal; and venerate my words as if they proceeded from the lips of a prophet. If you wish to taste the luxury of being subdued—if you are, as you say, *blue-moulded for want of a beating*, and sick at heart of a peaceful existence—why, MARRY A WIFE. Neal, send my breeches home with all haste, *for they are wanted*, you understand. Farewell!"

Mr. O'Connor, having thus expressed himself, departed, and Neal stood, with the cudgel in his hand, looking at the door out of which he passed, with an expression of fierceness, contempt, and reflection, strongly blended on the ruins of his once heroic visage.

Many a man has happiness within his reach if he but knew it. The tailor had been, hitherto, miserable because he pursued a wrong object. The schoolmaster, however, suggested a train of thought upon which Neal now fastened with all the ardor of a chivalrous temperament. Nay, he wondered that the family spirit should have so completely seized upon the fighting side of his heart, as to preclude all thoughts of matrimony; for he could not but remember that his relations were as ready for marriage as for fighting. To doubt this, would have been to throw a blot upon his own escutcheon. He, therefore, very prudently asked himself, to whom, if he did not marry, should he transmit his courage. He was a single man, and, dying as such, he would be the sole depository of his own valor, which, like Junius's secret, must perish with him. If he could have left it, as a legacy, to such of his friends as were most remarkable for cowardice, why, the case would be altered; but this was impossible—and he had now no other means of preserving it to posterity than by creating a posterity to inherit it. He saw, too, that the world was likely to become convulsed. Wars, as everybody knew, were certainly to break out; and would it not be an excellent opportunity for being father to a colonel, or, perhaps, a general, that might astonish the world.

The change visible in Neal, after the schoolmaster's last visit, absolutely thunderstruck all who knew him. The clothes, which he had rashly taken in to fit his

shrivelled limbs, were once more let out. The tailor expanded with a new spirit; his joints ceased to be supple, as in the days of his valor; his eye became less fiery, but more brilliant. From being martial, he got desperately gallant; but, somehow, he could not afford to act the hero and lover both at the same time. This, perhaps, would be too much to expect from a tailor. His policy was better. He resolved to bring all his available energy to bear upon the charms of whatever fair nymph he should select for the honor of matrimony; to waste his spirit in fighting would, therefore, be a deduction from the single purpose in view.

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this, or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself—both of whom we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he won gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the "snug lying in the Abbey;" and as for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan, for vanquishing an army, into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Jonson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood; for it certainly could not be expected that a man, whose spirit glowed to encounter a whole host, could, without tarnishing his dignity, if closely pressed, condescend to fight an individual. But as these remarks on courage may be felt by the reader as an invidious introduction of a subject disagreeable to him, we beg to hush it for the present and return to the tailor.

No sooner had Neal begun to feel an inclination to matrimony, than his friends knew that his principles had veered, by the change now visible in his person and deportment. They saw he had *ratted* from courage, and joined love. Heretofore his life had been all winter, darkened by storm and hurricane. The fiercer virtues had played the devil with him; every word was thunder, every look lightning; but now all that had passed away;—before, he was the *fortiter in re*, at present he was the *suaviter in modo*. His existence was perfect spring—beautifully vernal. All the amiable and softer qualities began to bud about his heart; a genial warmth was diffused over him; his soul got green within him; every day was serene; and if a cloud happened to become visible, there was a roguish rainbow astride of it, on which sat a beautiful Iris that laughed down at him, and seemed to say, "why the dickens, Neal, don't you marry a wife?"

Neal could not resist the afflatus which descended on him; an ethereal light dwelled, he thought, upon the face of nature; the color of the cloth, which he cut out from day to day, was to his enraptured eye like the color of Cupid's wings—all purple; his visions were worth their weight in gold; his dreams, a credit to the bed he slept on; and his feelings, like blind puppies, young and alive to the milk of love and kindness which they drew from his heart. Most of this delight escaped the observation of the world, for Neal, like your true lover, became shy and mysterious. It is difficult to say what he resembled; no dark lantern ever had more light shut up within itself, than Neal had in his soul, although his friends were not aware of it. They knew, indeed, that he had turned his back upon valor; but beyond this their knowledge did not extend.

Neal was shrewd enough to know that what he felt must be love;—nothing else could distend him with happiness, until his soul felt light and bladder-like, but love. As an oyster opens, when expecting the tide, so did his soul expand at the contemplation of matrimony. Labor ceased to be a trouble to him; he sang and sewed from morning to night; his hot goose no longer burned him, for his heart was as hot as his goose; the vibrations of his head, at each successive stitch, were no longer sad and melancholy. There was a buoyant shake of exultation in them which showed that his soul was placid and happy within him.

Endless honor be to Neal Malone for the originality with which he managed the tender sentiment! He did not, like your commonplace lovers, first discover a pretty girl, and afterwards become enamored of her. No such thing, he had the passion prepared beforehand—cut out and made up as it were, ready for any girl whom it might fit. This was falling in love in the abstract, and let no man condemn it without a trial; for many a long-winded argument could be urged in its defence. It is always wrong to commence business without capital, and Neal had a good stock to begin with. All we beg is, that the reader will not confound it with Platonism, which never marries; but he is at full liberty to call it Socratism, which takes unto itself a wife, and suffers accordingly.

Let no one suppose that Neal forgot the schoolmaster's kindness, or failed to be duly grateful for it. Mr. O'Connor was the first person whom he consulted touching his passion. With a cheerful soul he waited on that melancholy and gentleman-like man, and

in the very luxury of his heart told him that he was in love.

"In love, Neal!" said the schoolmaster. "May I inquire with whom?"

"Wid nobody in particular, yet," replied Neal; "but of late I'm got divilish fond o' the girls in general."

"And do you call that being in love, Neal?" said Mr. O'Connor.

"Why, what else would I call it?" returned the tailor. "Amn't I fond of them?"

"Then it must be what is termed the Universal Passion, Neal," observed Mr. O'Connor, "although it is the first time I have seen such an illustration of it as you present in your own person."

"I wish you would advise me how to act," said Neal; "I'm as happy as a prince since I began to get fond o' them, an' to think of marriage."

The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked rather miserable. Neal rubbed his hands with glee, and looked perfectly happy. The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked more miserable than before. Neal's happiness also increased on the second rubbing.

Now, to tell the secret at once, Mr. O'Connor would not have appeared so miserable, were it not for Neal's happiness; nor Neal so happy, were it not for Mr. O'Connor's misery. It was all the result of *contrast;* but this you will not understand unless you be deeply read in modern novels.

Mr. O'Connor, however, was a man of sense, who knew, upon this principle, that the longer he continued to shake his head, the more miserable he must become, and the more also would he increase Neal's happiness; but he had no intention of increasing Neal's happiness at his own expense—for, upon the same hypothesis, it would have been for Neal's interest had he remained shaking his head there, and getting miserable until the day of judgment. He consequently declined giving the third shake, for he thought that plain conversation was, after all, more significant and forcible than the most eloquent nod, however ably translated.

"Neal," said he, "could you, by stretching your imagination, contrive to rest contented with nursing your passion in solitude, and love the sex at a distance?"

"How could I nurse and mind my business?" replied the tailor. I'll never nurse so long as I'll have the wife; and as for imagination it depends upon the grain of it, whether I can stretch it or not. I don't know that I ever made a coat of it in my life."

"You don't understand me, Neal," said the schoolmaster. "In recommending marriage, I was only driving one evil out of you by introducing another. Do you think that, if you abandoned all thoughts of a wife, you would get heroic again?—that is, would you take once more to the love of fighting?"

"There is no doubt but I would," said the tailor: "If I miss the wife, I'll kick up such a dust as never was seen in the parish, an' you're the first man that I'll lick. But now that I'm in love," he continued, "sure, I ought to look out for the wife."

"Ah! Neal," said the schoolmaster, "you are tempting destiny: your temerity be, with all its melancholy consequences, upon your own head."

"Come," said the tailor, "it wasn't to hear you groaning to the tune of 'Dhrimmindhoo,' or 'The ould woman rockin' her cradle,' that I came; but to know if you could help me in makin' out the wife. That's the discoorse."

"Look at me, Neal," said the schoolmaster, solemnly; "I am at this moment, and have been any time for the last fifteen years, a living *caveto* against matrimony. I do not think that earth possesses such a luxury as a single solitary life. Neal, the monks of old were happy men: they were all fat and had double chins; and, Neal, I tell you, that all fat men are in general happy. Care cannot come at them so readily as at a thin man; before it gets through the strong outworks of flesh and blood with which they are surrounded, it becomes treacherous to its original purpose, joins the cheerful spirits it meets in the system, and dances about the heart in all the madness of mirth; just like a sincere ecclesiastic, who comes to lecture a good fellow against drinking, but who forgets his lecture over his cups, and is laid under the table with such success, that he either never comes to finish his lecture, or comes often to be laid under the table. Look at me, Neal, how wasted, fleshless, and miserable, I stand before you. You know how my garments have shrunk in, and what a solid man I was before marriage. Neal, pause, I beseech you: otherwise you stand a strong chance of becoming a nonentity like myself."

"I don't care what I become," said the tailor; "I can't think that you'd be so unrasonable as to expect that any of the Malones should pass out of the world widout either bein' bate or marrid. Have rason, Mr. O'Connor, an' if you can help me to the wife, I promise to take in your coat the next time for nothin'."

"Well, then," said Mr. O'Connor, "what would you think of the butcher's daughter, Biddy Neil? You have always had a thirst for blood, and here you may have it gratified in an innocent manner, should you ever be-

come sanguinary again. 'Tis true, Neal, she is twice your size, and possesses three times your strength; but for that very reason, Neal, marry her if you can. Large animals are placid; and heaven preserve those bachelors, whom I wish well, from a small wife: 'tis such who always wield the sceptre of domestic life, and rule their husbands with a rod of iron."

"Say no more, Mr. O'Connor," replied the tailor, "she's the very girl I'm in love wid, an' never fear, but I'll overcome her heart if it can be done by man. Now, step over the way to my house, an' we'll have a sup on the head of it. Who's that calling?"

"Ah! Neal, I know the tones—there's a shrillness in them not to be mistaken. Farewell! I must depart; you have heard the proverb, 'those who are bound must obey.' Young Jack, I presume, is squalling, and I must either nurse him, rock the cradle, or sing comic tunes for him, though heaven knows with what a disastrous heart I often sing, 'Begone dull care,' the 'Rakes of Newcastle,' or 'Peas upon a Trencher.' Neal, I say again, pause before you take this leap in the dark. Pause, Neal, I entreat you. Farewell!"

Neal, however, was gifted with the heart of an Irishman, and scorned caution as the characteristic of a coward; he had, as it appeared, abandoned all design of fighting, but the courage still adhered to him even in making love. He consequently conducted the siege of Biddy Neil's heart with a degree of skill and valor which would not have come amiss to Marshal Gerald at the siege of Antwerp. Locke or Dugald Stewart, indeed, had they been cognizant of the tailor's triumph, might have illustrated the principle on which he succeeded—as to ourselves, we can only conjecture it. Our own opinion is, that they were both animated with a congenial spirit. Biddy was the very pink of pugnacity, and could throw in a body blow, or plant a facer, with singular energy and science. Her prowess hitherto had, we confess, been displayed only within the limited range of domestic life; but should she ever find it necessary to exercise it upon a larger scale, there was no doubt whatsoever, in the opinion of her mother, brothers, and sisters, every one of whom she had successively subdued, that she must undoubtedly distinguish herself. There was certainly one difficulty which the tailor had *not* to encounter in the progress of his courtship; the field was his own; he had not a rival to dispute his claim. Neither was there any opposition given by her friends; they were, on the contrary, all anxious for the match; and when the arrangements were concluded, Neal felt his hand squeezed by them in succession, with an expression more resembling condolence than joy. Neal, however, had been bred to tailoring, and not to metaphysics; he could cut out a coat very well, but we do not say that he could trace a principle—as what tailor, except Jeremy Taylor, could?

There was nothing particular in the wedding. Mr. O'Connor was asked by Neal to be present at it: but he shook his head, and told him that he had not courage to attend it, or inclination to witness any man's sorrows but his own. He met the wedding party by accident, and was heard to exclaim with a sigh, as they flaunted past him in gay exuberance of spirits—"Ah, poor Neal! he is going like one of her father's cattle to the shambles! Woe is me for having suggested matrimony to the tailor! He will not long be under the necessity of saying that he 'is blue-moulded for want of a beating.' The butcheress will fell him like a Kerry ox, and I may have his blood to answer for, and his discomfiture to feel for, in addition to my own miseries."

On the evening of the wedding-day, about the hour of ten o'clock, Neal—whose spirits were uncommonly exalted, for his heart luxuriated within him—danced with his bride's maid; after the dance he sat beside her, and got eloquent in praise of her beauty; and it is said, too, that he whispered to her, and chucked her chin with considerable gallantry. The *tête-à-tête* continued for some time without exciting particular attention, with one exception; but *that* exception was worth a whole chapter of general rules. Mrs. Malone rose up, then sat down again, and took off a glass of the native; she got up a second time—all the wife rushed upon her heart—she approached them, and in a fit of the most exquisite sensibility, knocked the bride's maid down, and gave the tailor a kick of affecting pathos upon the inexpressibles. The whole scene was a touching one on both sides. The tailor was sent on all-fours to the floor; but Mrs. Malone took him quietly up, put him under her arm as one would a lap dog, and with stately step marched him away to the connubial apartment, in which everything remained very quiet for the rest of the night.

The next morning Mr. O'Connor presented himself to congratulate the tailor on his happiness. Neal, as his friend shook hands with him, gave the schoolmaster's fingers a slight squeeze, such as a man gives who would gently entreat your sympathy. The schoolmaster looked at him, and thought he shook his head. Of this, however, he could not be certain; for, as he shook his own during the moment of observation, he concluded

that it might be a mere mistake of the eye, or perhaps the result of a mind predisposed to be credulous on the subject of shaking heads.

We wish it were in our power to draw a veil, or curtain, or blind of some description, over the remnant of the tailor's narrative that is to follow; but as it is the duty of every faithful historian to give the secret causes of appearances which the world in general do not understand, so we think it but honest to go on, impartially and faithfully, without shrinking from the responsibility that is frequently annexed to truth.

For the first three days after matrimony, Neal felt like a man who had been translated to a new and more lively state of existence. He had expected, and flattered himself, that, the moment this event should take place, he would once more resume his heroism, and experience the pleasure of a drubbing. This determination he kept a profound secret—nor was it known until a future period, when he disclosed it to Mr. O'Connor. He intended, therefore, that marriage should be nothing more than a mere parenthesis in his life—a kind of asterisk, pointing, in a note at the bottom, to this single exception in his general conduct—a *nota bene* to the spirit of a martial man, intimating that he had been peaceful only for a while. In truth, he was, during the influence of love over him, and up to the very day of his marriage, secretly as blue-moulded as ever for want of a beating. The heroic *penchant* lay snugly latent in his heart, unchecked and unmodified. He flattered himself that he was achieving a capital imposition upon the world at large—that he was actually hoaxing mankind in general—and that such an excellent piece of knavish tranquillity had never been perpetrated before his time.

On the first week after his marriage, there chanced to be a fair in the next market-town. Neal, after breakfast, brought forward a bunch of *shillelahs*, in order to select the best; the wife inquired the purpose of the selection, and Neal declared that he was resolved to have a fight that day, if it were to be had, he said, for love or money. "The thruth is," he exclaimed, strutting with fortitude about the house, "the thruth is, that I've *done* the whole of yez—*I'm as blue-mowlded as ever for want of a batin'*."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I *will* go," said Neal, with vehemence; "I'll go if the whole parish was to go to prevint me."

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the fair!

Much ingenious speculation might be indulged in, upon this abrupt termination to the tailor's most formidable resolution, but, for our own part, we will prefer going on with the narrative, leaving the reader at liberty to solve the mystery as he pleases. In the mean time, we say this much—let those who cannot make it out, carry it to their tailor; it is a tailor's mystery, and no one has so good a right to understand it—except, perhaps, a tailor's wife.

At the period of his matrimony, Neal had become as plump and as stout as he ever was known to be in his plumpest and stoutest days. He and the schoolmaster had been very intimate about this time; but we know not how it happened that soon afterwards he felt a modest bridelike reluctance in meeting with that afflicted gentleman. As the eve of his union approached, he was in the habit, during the schoolmaster's visits to his workshop, of alluding, in rather a sarcastic tone, considering the unthriving appearance of his friend, to the increasing lustiness of his person. Nay, he has often leaped up from his lap-board, and, in the strong spirit of exultation, thrust out his leg in attestation of his assertion, slapping it, moreover, with a loud laugh of triumph, that sounded like a knell to the happiness of his emaciated acquaintance. The schoolmaster's philosophy, however, unlike his flesh, never departed from him; his usual observation was, "Neal, we are both receding from the same point; you increase in flesh, whilst I, heaven help me, am fast diminishing."

The tailor received these remarks with very boisterous mirth, whilst Mr. O'Connor simply shook his head, and looked sadly upon his limbs, now shrouded in a superfluity of garments, somewhat resembling a slender thread of water in a shallow summer stream, nearly wasted away, and surrounded by an unproportionate extent of channel.

The fourth month after the marriage arrived. Neal, one day, near its close, began to dress himself in his best apparel. Even then, when buttoning his waistcoat, he shook his head after the manner of O'Connor, and made observations upon the great extent to which it over-folded him.

Well, thought he, with a sigh—this waistcoat certainly *did* fit me to a T: but it's wonderful to think how—cloth stretches.

"Neal," said the wife, on perceiving him dressed, "where are you bound for?"

"Faith, *for life*," replied Neal, with a mitigated swagger; "and I'd as soon, if it had been the will of Provid——"

He paused.

"Where are you going?" asked the wife, a second time.

"Why," he answered, "only to the dance at Jemmy Connolly's; I'll be back early."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I'll go," said Neal, "if the whole countbry was to prevent me. Thunder an' lightnin,' woman, who am I?" he exclaimed, in a loud but rather infirm voice; "amn't I Neal Malone, that never met a *man* who'd fight him! Neal Malone, that was never beat by *man!* Why, tare-an-ounze, woman! Whoo! I'll get enraged some time, an' play the divil? Who's afeard, I say?"

"*Don't go,*" added the wife a third time, giving Neal a significant look in the face.

In about another half-hour, Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the dance!

Neal now turned himself, like many a sage in similar circumstances, to philosophy; that is to say—he began to shake his head upon principle, after the manner of the schoolmaster. He would, indeed, have preferred the bottle upon principle; but there was no getting at the bottle, except through the wife; and it so happened that by the time it reached him, there was little consolation left in it. Neal bore all in silence; for silence, his friend had often told him, was a proof of wisdom.

Soon after this, Neal, one evening, met Mr. O'Connor by chance upon a plank which crossed a river. This plank was only a foot in breadth, so that no two individuals could pass each other upon it. We cannot find words in which to express the dismay of both, on finding that they absolutely glided past one another without collision.

Both paused, and surveyed each other solemnly; but the astonishment was all on the side of Mr. O'Connor.

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, "by all the household gods, I conjure you to speak, that I may be assured you live!"

The ghost of a blush crossed the churchyard visage of the tailor.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "why the devil did you tempt me to marry a wife."

"Neal," said his friend, "answer me in the most solemn manner possible—throw into your countenance all the gravity you can assume; speak as if you were under the hands of the hangman, with the rope about your neck, for the question is, indeed, a trying one which I am about to put. Are you still 'blue-moulded for want of beating?'"

The tailor collected himself to make a reply; he put one leg out—the very leg which he used to show in triumph to his friend; but, alas, how dwindled! He opened his waistcoat, and lapped it round him, until he looked like a weasel on its hind legs. He then raised himself up on his tip toes, and, in an awful whisper, replied, "No!!! the devil a bit I'm *blue-mouldded* for want of a batin."

The schoolmaster shook his head in his own miserable manner; but, alas! he soon perceived that the tailor was as great an adept at shaking the head as himself. Nay, he saw that there was a calamitous refinement—a delicacy of shake in the tailor's vibrations, which gave to his own nod a very commonplace character.

The next day the tailor took in his clothes; and from time to time continued to adjust them to the dimensions of his shrinking person. The schoolmaster and he, whenever they could steal a moment, met and sympathized together. Mr. O'Connor, however, bore up somewhat better than Neal. The latter was subdued in heart and in spirit; thoroughly, completely, and intensely vanquished. His features became sharpened by misery, for a termagant wife is the whetstone on which all the calamities of a hen-pecked husband are painted by the devil. He no longer strutted as he was wont to do; he no longer carried a cudgel as if he wished to wage a universal battle with mankind. He was now a married man.—Sneakingly, and with a cowardly crawl did he creep along as if every step brought him nearer to the gallows. The schoolmaster's march of misery was far slower than Neal's: the latter distanced him. Before three years passed, he had shrunk up so much, that he could not walk abroad of a windy day without carrying weights in his pockets to keep him firm on the earth, which he once trod with the step of a giant. He again sought the schoolmaster, with whom indeed he associated as much as possible. Here he felt certain of receiving sympathy; nor was he disappointed. That worthy, but miserable, man and Neal, often retired beyond the hearing of their respective wives, and supported each other by every argument in their power. Often have they been heard, in the dusk of evening, singing behind a remote hedge that melancholy ditty, "Let us *both* be unhappy together;" which rose upon the twilight breeze with a cautious quaver of sorrow truly heart-rending and lugubrious.

"Neal," said Mr. O'Connor, on one of those occasions, "here is a book which I recommend to your perusal; it is called 'The Afflicted Man's Companion;' try if you cannot glean some consolation out of it."

"Faith," said Neal, "I'm for ever oblaged to you, but I don't want it. I've had 'The Afflicted Man's Companion' too long, and divil an atom of consolation I can get out of it. I have *one* o' them I tell you; but, be me sowl, I'll not undhertake *a pair* o' them. The very name's enough for me." They then separated.

The tailor's *vis vitæ* must have been power-

ful, or he would have died. In two years more his friends could not distinguish him from his own shadow; a circumstance which was of great inconvenience to him. Several grasped at the hand of the shadow instead of his; and one man was near paying it five and sixpence for making a pair of small-clothes. Neal, it is true, undeceived him with some trouble; but candidly admitted that he was not able to carry home the money. It was difficult, indeed, for the poor tailor to bear what he felt; it is true he bore it as long as he could; but at length he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of "making his own *quietus* with his bare bodkin." After many deliberations and afflictions, he ultimately made the attempt; but, alas! he found that the blood of the Malones refused to flow upon so ignominious an occasion. So *he* solved the phenomenon; although the truth was, that his blood was not "i' the vein" for 't; none was to be had. What then was to be done? He resolved to get rid of life by some process; and the next that occurred to him was hanging. In a solemn spirit he prepared a selvage, and suspended himself from the rafter of his workshop; but here another disappintment awaited him—he would not hang. Such was his want of gravity, that his own weight proved insufficient to occasion his death by mere suspension. His third attempt was at drowning, but he was too light to sink; all the elements,—all his own energies joined themselves, he thought, in a wicked conspiracy to save his life. Having thus tried every avenue to destruction, and failed in all, he felt like a man doomed to live for ever. Henceforward he shrunk and shrivelled by slow degrees, until in the course of time he became so attenuated, that the grossness of human vision could no longer reach him.

This, however, could not last always. Though still alive, he was, to all intents and purposes, imperceptible. He could now only be heard; he was reduced to a mere essence—the very echo of human existence, *vox et prœterea nihil.* It is true the schoolmaster asserted that he occasionally caught passing glimpses of him; but that was because he had been himself nearly spiritualized by affliction, and his visual ray purged in the furnace of domestic tribulation. By and by Neal's voice lessened, got fainter and more indistinct, until at length nothing but a doubtful murmur could be heard, which ultimately could scarcely be distinguished from a ringing in the ears.

Such was the awful and mysterious fate of the tailor, who, as a hero, could not of course die; he merely dissolved like an icicle, wasted into immateriality, and finally melted away beyond the perception of mortal sense. Mr. O'Connor is still living, and once more in the fulness of perfect health and strength. His wife, however, we may as well hint, has been dead more than two years.

ART MAGUIRE;

OR, THE BROKEN PLEDGE.

PREFACE.

In proposing to write a series of "Tales for the Irish People," the author feels perfectly conscious of the many difficulties by which he is surrounded, and by which he may be still met in his endeavors to accomplish that important task. In order, however, to make everything as clear and intelligible as possible, he deems it necessary, in the first place, to state what his object is in undertaking it: that object is simply to improve their physical and social condition—generally; and through the medium of vivid and striking, but unobjectionable narratives, to inculcate such principles as may enable Irishmen to think more clearly, reason more correctly, and act more earnestly upon the general duties, which, from their position in life, they are called upon to perform. With regard to those who feel apprehensive that anything calculated to injure the doctrinal convictions of the Catholic people may be suffered to creep into these Tales, the author has only to assure them—that such an object comes within the scope neither of his plan or inclinations. It is not his intention to make these productions the vehicles of Theology or Polemics; but studiously to avoid anything and everything that even approaches the sphere of clerical duty. His object, so far from that, is the inculcation of general, not peculiar, principles—principles which neither affect nor offend any creed, but which are claimed and valued by all. In this way, by making amusement the handmaiden of instruction, the author believes it possible to let into the cabin, the farm-house, and even the landlord's drawing-room, a light by which each and all of them may read many beneficial lessons—lessons that will, it is hoped, abide with them, settle down in their hearts, and by giving them a clearer sense of their respective duties, aid in improving and regenerating their condition.

To send to the poor man's fireside, through the medium of Tales that will teach his heart and purify his affections, those simple lessons which may enable him to undertands his own value—that will generate relf-respect, independence, industry, love of truth, hatred of deceit and falsehood, habits of cleanliness, order, and punctuality—together with all those lesser virtues which help to create a proper sense of personal and domestic comfort—to assist in working out these healthful purposes is the Author's anxious wish—a task in which any man may feel proud to engage.

Self-reliance, manly confidence in the effect of their own virtues, respect for the *virtues* that *ought* to adorn rank, rather than for *rank itself*, and a spurning of that vile servility which is only the hereditary remnant of bygone oppression, will be taught the people in such a way as to make them feel how far up in society a high moral condition can and ought to place them. Nor is this all;—the darker page of Irish life shall be laid open before them—in which they will be taught, by examples that they can easily understand, the fearful details of misery, destitution, banishment, and death, which the commission of a single crime may draw down, not only upon the criminal himself, but upon those innocent and beloved connections whom he actually punishes by his guilt.

It is, indeed, with fear and trembling that the Author undertakes such a great and important task as this. If he fail, however, he may well say—

"Quem si non tenuit, tamen magnis excidit ausis."

Still he is willing to hope that, through the aid of truthful fiction, operating upon the feelings of his countrymen, and on their knowledge of peasant life, he may furnish them with such a pleasing Encyclopedia of social duty—now lit up with their mirth, and again made tender with their sorrow—as will force them to look upon him as a benefactor—to forget his former errors—and to cherish his name with affection, when he himself shall be freed forever from those

cares and trials of life which have hitherto been his portion.

In the following simple narrative of "The Broken Pledge," it was his aim, without leading his readers out of the plain paths of every-day life or into the improbable creations of Romance, to detail the character of such an individual as almost every man must have often seen and noticed within the society by which he is surrounded. He trusts that the moral, as regards both husband and wife, is wholesome and good, and calculated to warn those who would follow in the footsteps of "Art Maguire."

DUBLIN, July 4, 1845.

IT has been often observed, and as frequently inculcated, through the medium of both press and pulpit, that there is scarcely any human being who, how striking soever his virtues, or how numerous his good qualities may be, does not carry in his moral constitution some particular weakness or failing, or perhaps vice, to which he is especially subject, and which may, if not properly watched and restrained, exercise an injurious and evil influence over his whole life. Neither have the admonitions of press or pulpit ended in merely laying down this obvious and undeniable truth, but, on the contrary, very properly proceeded to add, that one of the most pressing duties of man is to examine his own heart, in order to ascertain what this particular vice or failing in his case may be, in order that, when discovered, suitable means be taken to remove or overcome it.

The man whose history we are about to detail for the reader's instruction, was, especially during the latter years of his life, a touching, but melancholy illustration of this indisputable truth; in other words, he possessed the weakness or the vice, as the reader may consider it, and found, when too late, that a yielding resolution, or, to use a phrase perhaps better understood, a good intention, was but a feeble and inefficient instrument with which to attempt its subjection. Having made these few preliminary observations, as being suitable, in our opinion, to the character of the incidents which follow, we proceed at once to commence our narrative

Arthur, or, as he was more familiarly called by the people, Art Maguire, was the son of parents who felt and knew that they were descended from higher and purer blood than could be boasted of by many of the families in their neighborhood. Art's father was a small farmer, who held about ten acres of land, and having a family of six children—three sons, and as many daughters—he determined upon putting one or two of the former to a trade, so soon as they should be sufficiently grown up for that purpose. This, under his circumstances was a proper and provident resolution to make. His farm was too small to be parceled out, as is too frequently the case, into small miserable patches, upon each of which a young and inconsiderate couple are contented to sit down, with the prospect of rearing up and supporting a numerous family with wofully inadequate means; for although it is generally a matter of certainty that the families of these young persons will increase, yet it is a perfectly well-known fact that the little holding will not, and the consequence is, that families keep subdividing on the one hand, and increasing on the other, until there is no more room left for them. Poverty then ensues, and as poverty in such cases begets competition, and competition crime, so we repeat that Condy Maguire's intention, as being one calculated to avoid such a painful state of things, was a proof of his own good sense and forethought.

Arthur's brother, Frank, was a boy not particularly remarkable for any peculiar brilliancy of intellect, or any great vivacity of disposition. When at school he was never in a quarrel, nor engaged in any of those wild freaks which are sore annoyances to a village schoolmaster, and daring outrages against his authority. He was consequently a favorite not only with the master, but with all the sober, well-behaved boys of the school, and many a time has Teague Rooney, with whom he was educated, exclaimed, as he addressed him:

"Go to your sate, Frank abouchal; faith, although there are boys endowed wid more brilliancy of intellect than has fallen to your lot, yet you are the very youth who understands what is due to legitimate authority, at any rate, an' that's no small gift in itself; go to your sate, sorrow taw will go to your *substratum* this bout, for not having your lesson; for well I know it wasn't idleness that prevented you, but the natural sobriety and slowness of intellect you are gifted wid. If you are slow, however, you are sure, and I'll pledge my reputaytion aginst that of the great O'Flaherty himself, that you and your brinoge of a brother will both live to give a beautiful illustration of the celebrated race between the hare and the tortoise yet. Go to your sate wid impunity, and tell your dacent mother I was inquiring for her."

Such, indeed, was a tolerably correct view of Frank's character. He was quiet, inoffensive, laborious, and punctual; though not very social or communicative, yet he was both well-tempered and warm-hearted, point-

which could not, without considerable opportunities of knowing him, be readily perceived. Having undertaken the accomplishment of an object, he permitted no circumstance to dishearten or deter him in working out his purpose; if he said it, he did it; for his word was a sufficient guarantee that he would; his integrity was consequently respected, and his resolution, when he expressed it, was seldom disputed by his companions, who knew that in general it was inflexible. After what we have said, it is scarcely necessary to add that he was both courageous and humane.

These combinations of character frequently occur. Many a man not remarkable for those qualities of the head that impress themselves most strikingly upon the world, is nevertheless gifted with those excellent principles of the heart which, although without much show, and scarcely any noise, go to work out the most useful purposes of life. Arthur, on the contrary, was a contrast to his brother, and a strong one, too, on many points; his intellect was far superior to that of Frank's, but, on the other hand, he by no means possessed his brother's steadiness or resolution. We do not say, however, that he was remarkable for the want of either, far from it; he could form a resolution, and work it out as well as his brother, provided his course was left unobstructed: nay, more, he could overcome difficulties many and varied, provided only that he was left unassailed by one solitary temptation—that of an easy and good-humored vanity. He was conscious of his talents, and of his excellent qualities, and being exceedingly vain, nothing gave him greater gratification than to hear himself praised for possessing them—for it is a fact, that every man who is vain of any particular gift, forgets that he did not bestow that gift upon himself, and that instead of priding himself upon the possession of it, he should only be humbly thankful to the Being who endowed him with it.

Art was social, communicative, and, although possessing what might be considered internal resources more numerous, and of a far higher order than did his brother, yet, somehow, it was clear that he had not the same self-dependence that marked the other. He always wanted, as it were, something to lean upon, although in truth he did not at all require it, had he properly understood himself. The truth is, like thousands, he did not begin to perceive, or check in time, those early tendencies that lead a heart naturally indolent, but warm and generous, to the habit of relying first, in small things, upon external sources and objects, instead of seeking and finding within itself those materials for manly independence, with which every heart is supplied, were its possessor only aware of the fact, and properly instructed how to use them.

Art's enjoyments, for instance, were always of a social nature, and never either solitary or useful in their tendencies: of this character was every thing he engaged in. He would not make a ship of water flaggoor by himself, nor sail it by himself—he would not spin a top, nor trundle a hoop without a companion—if sent upon a message, or to dig a basket of potatoes in the field, he would rather purchase the society of a companion with all the toys or playthings he possessed than do either alone. His very lessons he would not get unless his brother Frank got his along with him. The reader may thus perceive that he acquired no early habit of self-restraint, no principle of either labor or enjoyment within himself, and of course could acquire none at all of self-reliance. A social disposition in our amusements is not only proper, but natural, for we believe it is pretty generally known, that he who altogether prefers such amusements is found to be deficient in the best and most generous principles of our nature. Every thing, however, has its limits and its exceptions. Art, if sent to do a day's work alone, would either abandon it entirely, and bear the brunt of his father's anger, or he would, as we have said, purchase the companionship of some neighbor's son or child, for, provided he had *any one* to whom he could talk, he cared not, and having thus succeeded, he would finish it triumphantly.

In due time, however, his great prevailing weakness, vanity, became well known to his family, who, already aware of his peculiar aversion to any kind of employment that was not social, immediately seized upon it, and instead of taking rational steps to remove it, they nursed it into stronger life by pandering to it as a convenient means of regulating, checking, or stimulating the whole habits of his life. His family were not aware of the moral consequences which they were likely to produce by conduct such as this, nor of the pains they were ignorantly taking to lay the foundation of his future misfortune and misery.

"Art, my good boy, will you take your spade and clane out the remaindher o' that drain, between the Hannigans and us," said his father.

"Well, will Frank come?"

"Sure you know he can't; isn't he weedin' that bit of *blanther* in Crackton's park, an' afther that sure he has to cut scraws on the Pirl-hill for the new barn."

"Well, I'll help him if he helps me; isn't that fair? Let us join."

"Hut, get out o' that, avourneen; go yourself; do what you're bid, Art."

"Is it by myself? murdher alive, father, don't ax me; I'll give him my new *Cammon* if he comes."

"Throth you won't; the sorra hand I'd ever wish to see the same *Cammon* in but your own; faix, it's you that can handle it in style. Well now, Art, well becomes myself but I thought I could play a *Cammon* wid the face o' clay wanst in my time, but may I never sin if ever I could match *you* at it; oh, sorra taste o' your *Common* you must part wid; sure I'd rather scower the drain myself."

"Bedad I *won't* part wid it then."

"I'd rather, I tell you, scower it myself—an' I will, too. Sure if I renew the ould cough an me I'll thry the *Casharawan*,* that did me so much good the last time."

"Well, that's purty! Ha, ha, ha! you to go! Oh, ay, indeed—as if I'd stand by an' let you. Not so bad as that comes to, either—no. Is the spade an' shovel in the shed?"

"To be sure they are. Throth, Art, you're worth the whole o' them—the sorra lie in it. Well, go, avillish."

Thus was this fine boy's weakness played upon by those who, it is true, were not at all conscious of the injury they were inflicting upon him at the time. He was certainly the pride of the family, and even while they humored and increased this his predominant and most dangerous foible, we are bound to say that they gratified their own affection as much as they did his vanity.

His father's family consisted, as we have said, of three sons and three daughters. The latter were the elder, and in point of age Art, as we have said, was the youngest of them all. The education that he and his brothers received was such as the time and the neglected state of the country afforded them. They could all read and write tolerably well, and knew something of arithmetic. This was a proof that their education had not been neglected. And why should it? Were they not the descendants of the great Maguires of Fermanagh? Why, the very consciousness of their blood was felt as a proud and unanswerable argument against ignorance. The best education, therefore, that could be procured by persons in their humble sphere of life, they received. The eldest brother, whose name was Brian, did not, as is too frequently the case with the eldest sons of small farmers, receive so *liberal* a portion of instruction as Frank or Art. This resulted from the condition and necessities of his father, who could not spare him from his farm—and, indeed, it cost the worthy man many a sore heart. At all events, time advanced, and the two younger brothers were taken from school with a view of being apprenticed to some useful trade. The character of each was pretty well in accordance with their respective dispositions. Frank had no enemies, yet was he by no means so popular as Art, who had many. The one possessed nothing to excite envy, and never gave offence; the other, by the very superiority of his natural powers, exultingly paraded, as they were, at the expense of dulness or unsuccessful rivalry, created many vindictive maligners, who let no opportunity pass of giving him behind his back the harsh word which they durst not give him to his face. In spite of all this, his acknowledged superiority, his generosity, his candor, and utter ignorance or hatred of the low chicaneries of youthful cunning, joined to his open, intrepid, and manly character, conspired to render him popular in an extraordinary degree. Nay, his very failings added to this, and when the battle of his character was fought, all the traditionary errors of moral life were quoted in his favor.

"Ay, ay, the boy has his faults, and who has not; I'd be glad to know? If he's lively, it's bether to be that, than a *mosey*, any day. His brother Frank is a good boy, but sure divil a squig of spunk or spirits is in him, an', my dear, you know the ould proverb, that a standin' pool always stinks, while the runnin' strame is sweet and clear to the bottom. If he's proud, he has a *right* to be proud, and why shouldn't he, seein' that it's well known he could take up more larnin' than half the school."

"Well, but poor Frank's a harmless boy, and never gave offence to mortual, which, by the same token, is more than can be said of Art the lad."

"Very well, we know all that; and maybe it 'ud be bether for himself if he had a sharper spice of the *divil* in him—but sure the poor boy hasn't the brain for it. Offence! oh, the dickens may seize the offence poor Frank will give to man or woman, barrin' he mends his manners, and gets a little life into him—sure he was a year and a day in the Five Common Rules, an' three blessed weeks gettin' the Multiplication Table."

Such, in general, was the estimate formed of their respective characters, by those who, of course, had an opportunity of knowing them best. Whether the latter were right or wrong will appear in the sequel, but in the meantime we must protest, even in this early stage of our narrative, against those

* Dandelion.

popular exhibitions of mistaken sympathy, which in early life—the most dangerous period too—are felt and expressed for those who, in association with weak points of character, give strong indications of talent. This mistaken generosity is pernicious to the individual, inasmuch as it confirms him in the very errors which he should correct, and in the process of youthful reasoning, which is most selfish, induces him not only to doubt the whisperings of his own conscience, but to substitute in their stead the promptings of the silliest vanity.

Having thus given a rapid sketch of these two brothers in their schoolboy life, we now come to that period at which their father thought proper to apprentice them. The choice of the trade he left to their own natural judgment, and as Frank was the eldest, he was allowed to choose first. He immediately selected that of a carpenter, as being clean, respectable, and within-doors; and, as he added—

"Where the wages is good—and then I'm tould that one can work afther hours, if they wish."

"Very well," said the father, "now let us hear, Art; come, alanna, what are you on for?"

"I'll not take any trade," replied Art.

"Not take any trade, Art! why, my goodness, sure you knew all along that you war for a trade. Don't you know when you and Frank grow up, and, of course, must take the world on your heads, that it isn't this strip of a farm that you can depend on."

"That's what I think of," said Frank; "one's not to begin the world wid empty pockets, or, any way, widout some ground to put one's foot on."

"The world!" rejoined Art; "why, what the sorra puts thoughts o' the world into *your* head, Frank? Isn't it time enough for you or me to think o' the world these ten years to come?"

"Ay," replied Frank, "but when we come to join it isn't the time to begin to think of it; don't you know what the ould saying says—*ha nha la na quiha la na scuillaba*—it isn't on the windy day that you are to look for your scollops." *

"An' what 'ud prevent you, Art, from goin' to larn a trade?" asked his father.

"I'd rather stay with *you*," replied the affectionate boy; "I don't like to leave you nor the family, to be goin' among strangers."

The unexpected and touching nature of his motive, so different from what was expected, went immediately to his father's heart. He looked at his fine boy, and was silent for a minute, after which he wiped the moisture from his eyes. Art, on seeing his father affected, became so himself, and added—

"That's my only raison, father, for not goin'; I wouldn't like to lave you an' them, if I could help it."

"Well, acushla," replied the father, while his eyes beamed on him with tenderness and affection, "sure we wouldn't ax you to go, if we could any way avoid it—it's for your own good we do it. Don't refuse to go, Art—sure for my sake you won't?"

"I will go, then," he replied; "I'll go for your sake, but I'll miss you all."

"An' we'll miss you, ahagur. God bless you, Art dear, it's jist like you. Ay, will we in throth miss you; but, then, think what a brave fine thing it'll be for you to have a grip of a dacent independent trade, that'll keep your feet out o' the dirt while you live."

"I will go," repeated Art, "but as for the trade, I'll have none but Frank's. I'll be a carpenter, for then he and I can be *together*."

In addition to the affectionate motive which Art had mentioned to his father—and which was a true one—as occasioning his reluctance to learn a trade, there was another, equally strong and equally tender. In the immediate neighborhood there lived a family named Murray, between whom and the Maguires there subsisted a very kindly intimacy. Jemmy Murray was in fact one of the wealthiest men in that part of the parish, as wealth then was considered—that is to say, he farmed about forty acres, which he held at a moderate rent, and as he was both industrious and frugal, it was only a matter of consequence that he and his were well to do in the world. It is not likely, however, that even a passing acquaintance would ever have taken place between them, were it not for the consideration of the blood which was known to flow in the veins of the Fermanagh Maguires. Murray was a good deal touched with purse-pride—the most offensive and contemptible description of pride in the world—and would never have suffered an intimacy, were it not for the reason I have alleged. It is true he was not a man of such stainless integrity as Condy Maguire, because it was pretty well known that in the course of his life, while accumulating money, he was said to have stooped to practices that were, to say the least of them, highly discreditable. For instance, he always held over his meal, until there came what is unfortunately both too well known and too well

* The proverb inculcates forethought and provision. Scollop is an osier sharpened at both ends, by which the thatch of a house is fastened down to the roof. Of a windy day the thatch alone would be utterly useless, if there were no scollops to keep it firm.

felt in Ireland,—a dear year—a year of hunger, starvation, and famine. For the same reason he held over his hay, and indeed on passing his haggard you were certain to perceive three or four immense stacks, bleached by the sun and rain of two or three seasons into a tawny yellow. Go into his large kitchen or storehouse, and you saw three or four immense deal chests filled with meal, which was reserved for a season of scarcity—for, proud as Farmer Murray was, he did not disdain to fatten upon human misery. Between these two families there was, as we have said, an intimacy. It was wealth and worldly goods on the one side; integrity and old blood on the other. Be this as it may, Farmer Murray had a daughter, Margaret, the youngest of four, who was much about the age of Arthur Maguire. Margaret was a girl whom it was almost impossible to know and not to love. Though then but seventeen, her figure was full, rich, and beautifully formed. Her abundant hair was black and glossy as ebony, and her skin, which threw a lustre like ivory itself, had—not the whiteness of snow—but a whiteness a thousand times more natural—a whiteness that was fresh, radiant, and spotless. She was arch and full of spirits, but her humor—for she possessed it in abundance—was so artless, joyous, and innocent, that the heart was taken with it before one had time for reflection. Added, however, to this charming vivacity of temperament were many admirable virtues, and a fund of deep and fervent feeling, which, even at that early period of her life, had made her name beloved by every one in the parish, especially the poor and destitute. The fact is, she was her father's favorite daughter, and he could deny her nothing. The admirable girl was conscious of this, but instead of availing herself of his affection for her in a way that many—nay, we may say, most—would have done, for purposes of dress or vanity, she became an interceding angel for the poor and destitute; and closely as Murray loved money, yet it is due to him to say, that, on these occasions, she was generally successful. Indeed, he was so far from being insensible to his daughter's noble virtues, that he felt pride in reflecting that she possessed them, and gave aid ten times from that feeling for once that he did from a more exalted one. Such was Margaret Murray, and such, we are happy to say—for we know it—are thousands of the peasant girls of our country.

It was not to be wondered at, then, that in addition to the reluctance which a heart naturally affectionate, like Art's, should feel on leaving his relations for the first time, he should experience much secret sorrow at being deprived of the society of this sweet and winning girl.

Matters now, however, were soon arranged, and the time, nay, the very day for their departure was appointed. Art, though deeply smitten with the charms of Margaret Murray, had never yet ventured to breathe to her a syllable of love, being deterred naturally enough by the distance in point of wealth which existed between the families. Not that this alone, perhaps, would have prevented him from declaring his affection for her; but, young as he was, he had not been left unimpressed by his father's hereditary sense of the decent pride, strict honesty, and independent spirit, which should always mark the conduct and feelings of any one descended from the great Fermanagh Maguires. He might, therefore, probably have spoken, but that his pride dreaded a repulse, and *that* he could not bear to contemplate. This, joined to the natural diffidence of youth, sufficiently accounts for his silence.

There lived, at the period of which we write, which is not a thousand years ago, at a place called "the Corner House," a celebrated carpenter named Jack M'Carroll. He was unquestionably a first-rate mechanic, kept a large establishment, and had ample and extensive business. To him had Art and Frank been apprenticed, and, indeed, a better selection could not have been made, for Jack was not only a good workman himself, but an excellent employer, and an honest man. An arrangement had been entered into with a neighboring farmer regarding their board and lodging, so that every thing was settled very much to the satisfaction of all parties.

When the day of their departure had at length arrived, Art felt his affections strongly divided, but without being diminished, between Margaret Murray and his family; while Frank, who was calm and thoughtful, addressed himself to the task of getting ready such luggage as they had been provided with.

"Frank," said Art, "don't you think we ought to go and bid farewell to a few of our nearest neighbors before we lave home?"

"Where's the use of that?" asked Frank; "not a bit, Art; the best plan is jist to bid our own people farewell, and slip away without noise or nonsense."

"You may act as you plaise, Frank," replied the other; "as for me, I'll call on Jemmy Hanlon and Tom Connolly, at all events; but hould," said he, abruptly, "ought I to do that? Isn't it their business to come to us?"

"It is," replied Frank, "and so they

would too, but that they think we won't start till Thursday; for you know we didn't intend to go till then."

"Well," said Art, "that's a horse of another color: I *will* call on them. Wouldn't they think it heartless of us to go off widout seein' them? An' besides, Frank, why should we steal away like thieves that had the hue and cry at their heels? No, faith, as sure as we go at all, we'll go openly, an' like men that have nothing to be afraid of."

"Very well," replied his brother, "have it your own way, so far as *you're* consarned, as for me, I look upon it all as mere nonsense."

It is seldom that honest and manly affection fails to meet its reward, be the period soon or late. Had Art been guided by Frank's apparent indifference—who, however, acted in this matter solely for the sake of sparing his brother's feelings—he would have missed the opportunity of being a party to an incident which influenced his future life in all he ever afterwards enjoyed and suffered. He had gone, as he said, to bid farewell to his neighbors, and was on his return home in order to take his departure, when whom should he meet on her way to her father's house, after having called at *his* father's "to see the girls," as she said, with a slight emphasis upon the word *girls*, but Margaret Murray.

As was natural, and as they had often done before under similar circumstances, each paused on meeting, but somehow on this occasion there was visible on both sides more restraint than either had ever yet shown. At length, the preliminary chat having ceased, a silence ensued, which, after a little time, was broken by Margaret, who, Art could perceive, blushed deeply as she spoke.

"So, Art, you and Frank are goin' to lave us."

"It's not with my own consint *I'm* goin', Margaret," he replied. As he uttered the words he looked at her; their eyes met, but neither could stand the glance of the other; they were instantly withdrawn.

"I'll not forget my friends, at all events," said Art; "at least, there's some o' them I won't, nor wouldn't either, if I was to get a million o' money for doin' so."

Margaret's face and neck, on hearing this, were in one glow of crimson, and she kept her eyes still on the ground, but made no reply. At length she raised them, and their glances met again; in that glance the consciousness of his meaning was read by both, the secret was disclosed, and their love told.

The place where they stood was in one of those exquisitely wild but beautiful green country lanes that are mostly enclosed on each side by thorn hedges, and have their sides bespangled with a profusion of delicate and fragrant wild flowers, while the pathway, from the unfrequency of feet, is generally covered with short daisy-gemmed grass, with the exception of a trodden line in the middle that is made solely by foot-passengers. Such was the sweet spot in which they stood at the moment the last glance took place between them.

At length Margaret spoke, but why was it that her voice was such music to him *now?* Musical and sweet it always was, and he had heard it a thousand times before, but why, we ask, was it now so delicious to his ear, so ecstatic to his heart? Ah, it was that sweet, entrancing little charm which trembled up from her young and beating heart, through its softest intonations; this low tremor it was that confirmed the tale which the divine glance of that dark, but soft and mellow eye, had just told him. But to proceed, at length she spoke—

"Arthur," said the innocent girl, unconscious that she was about to do an act for which many will condemn her, "before you go, and I know I will not have an opportunity of seein' you again, will you accept of a keepsake from me?"

"Will I? oh, Margaret, Margaret!"—he gazed at her, but could not proceed, his heart was too full.

"Take this," said she, "and keep it for *my* sake."

He took it out of her hand, he seized the hand itself, another glance, and they sank into each other's arms, each trembling with an excess of happiness. Margaret wept. This gush of rapture relieved and lightened their young and innocent hearts, and Margaret having withdrawn herself from his arms, they could now speak more freely. It is not our intention, however, to detail their conversation, which may easily be conjectured by our readers. On looking at the keepsake, Art found that it was a tress of her rich and raven hair, which, we may add here, he tied about his heart that day, and on that heart, or rather the dust of that heart, it lies on this.

It was fortunate for Art that he followed his brother's judgment in selecting the same trade. Frank, we have said, notwithstanding his coldness of manner, was by no means deficient in feeling or affection; he possessed, however, the power of suppressing their external manifestations, a circumstance which not unfrequently occasioned it to happen that want of feeling was often imputed to him without any just cause. At all events, he was a guide, a monitor, and a friend to

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AT LENGTH MARGARET SPOKE, BUT WHY WAS IT THAT HER VOICE WAS SUCH MUSIC TO HIM NOW?

—*A-t Maguire*, p. 994.

his brother, whom he most sincerely and affectionately loved; he kindly pointed out to him his errors, matured his judgment by sound practical advice: where it was necessary, he gave him the spur, and on other occasions held him in. Art was extremely well-tempered, as was Frank also, so that it was impossible any two brothers could agree better, or live in more harmony than they did. In truth, he had almost succeeded in opening Art's eyes to the weak points in his character, especially to the greatest, and most dangerous of all—his vanity, or insatiable appetite for praise. They had not been long in M'Carroll's establishment when the young man's foibles were soon seen through, and of course began to be played upon; Frank, however, like a guardian angel, was always at hand to advise or defend him, as the case might be, and as both, in a physical contest, were able and willing to fight their own battles, we need not say that in a short time their fellow-workmen ceased to play off their pranks upon either of them. Everything forthwith passed very smoothly; Art's love for Margaret Murray was like an apple of gold in his heart, a secret treasure of which the world knew nothing; they saw each other at least once a month, when their vows were renewed, and, surely, we need not say, that their affection on each subsequent interview only became more tender and enduring.

The period of Frank's and Art's apprenticeship had now nearly expired, and it is not too much to say that their conduct reflected the highest credit upon themselves. Three or four times, we believe, Art had been seduced, in the absence of his brother, by the influence of bad company, to indulge in drink, even to intoxication. This, during the greater part of a whole apprenticeship, considering his temperament, and the almost daily temptations by which he was beset, must be admitted on the whole to be a very moderate amount of error in that respect. On the morning after his last transgression, however, apprehending very naturally a strong remonstrance from his brother, he addressed him as follows, in anticipation of what he supposed Frank was about to say:—

"Now, Frank, I know you're goin' to scould me, and what is more, I know I disarve all you could say to me; but there's one thing you *don't* know, an' that is what I suffer for lettin' myself be made a fool of last night. After the advices you have so often given me, and after what my father so often tould us to think of ourselves, and after the solemn promises I made to you—and that *I broke*, I feel as if I was nothin' more or less than a disgrace to the name."

"Art," said the other, "I'm glad to hear you speak as you do; for it's a proof that repentance is in your heart. I suppose I needn't say that it's your intention not to be caught be these fellows again."

"By the sacred—"

"Whisht," said Frank, clapping his hand upon his mouth; "there's no use at all in rash oaths, Art. If your mind is made up honestly and firmly in the sight of God—and dependin' upon his assistance, that is enough—and a great deal betther, too, than a rash oath made in a sudden fit of repentance—ay, before you're properly recovered from your liquor. Now say no more, only promise me you won't do the like again."

"Frank, listen to me—by all the—"

"Hould, Art," replied Frank, stopping him again; "I tell you once more, this rash swearin' is a bad sign—I'll hear no rash oaths; but listen you to me; if your mind *is* made up against drinkin' this way again, jist look me calmly and steadily in the face, and answer me simply by yes or no. Now take your time, an' don't be in a hurry—be cool—be calm—reflect upon what you're about to say; and whether it's your solemn and serious intention to abide by it. My question 'ill be very short and very simple; your answer, as I said, will be merely *yes* or *no*. Will you ever allow these fellows to make you drunk again? Yes or no, an' not another word."

"No."

"That will do," said Frank; "now give me your hand, and a single word upon what has passed you will never hear from me."

In large manufactories, and in workshops similar to that in which the two brothers were now serving their apprenticeship, almost every one knows that the drunken and profligate entertain an unaccountable antipathy against the moral and the sober. Art's last fit of intoxication was not only a triumph over himself, but, what was still more, a triumph over his brother, who had so often prevented him from falling into their snares and joining in their brutal excesses. It so happened, however, that about this precise period, Art had, unfortunately, contracted an intimacy with one of the class I speak of, an adroit fellow with an oily tongue, vast powers of flattery, and still greater powers of bearing liquor—for Frank could observe, that notwithstanding all their potations, he never on any occasion observed him affected by drink, a circumstance which raised him in his estimation, because he considered that he was rather an obliging, civil young fellow, who complied so far as to give these men his society, but yet had sufficient firmness to resist the temptations to drink beyond the

bounds of moderation. The upshot of all this was, that Frank, not entertaining any suspicion particularly injurious to Harte, for such was his name, permitted his brother to associate with him much more frequently than he would have done, had he even guessed at his real character.

One day, about a month after the conversation which we have just detailed between the two brothers, the following conversation took place among that class of the mechanics whom we shall term the *profligates*:—

"So he made a solemn promise, Harte, to *Drywig*"—this was a nickname they had for Frank—"that he'd never smell liquor again."

"A most solemnious promise," said Harte ironically; "a most solemn and solemnious promise; an' only that I know he's not a Methodist, I could a'most mistake him for Paddy M'Mahon, the locality preacher, when he took me—"

"Paddy M'Mahon!" exclaimed Skinadre, the first speaker, a little thin fellow, with white hair and red ferret eyes; "why, who the divil ever heard of a Methodist Praicher of the name of Paddy M'Mahon?"

"It's aisy known," observed a fellow named, or rather nicknamed, Jack Slanty, in consequence of a deformity in his leg, that gave him the appearance of leaning or slanting to the one side; "it's aisy known, Skinadre, that you're not long in this part of the country, or you'd not ax who Paddy M'Mahon is."

"Come, Slanty, never mind Paddy M'Mahon," said another of them; "he received the gift of grace in the shape of a purty Methodist wife and a good fortune; ay, an' a sweet love-faist he had of it; he dropped the Padereens over Solomon's Bridge, and tuck to the evenin' meetins—that's enough for you to know; and now, Harte, about Maguire?"

"Why," said Harte, "if I'm not allowed to edge in a word, I had betther cut."

"A most solemn promise, you say?"

"A most solemn and solemnious promise, that was what I said; never again by night or day, wet or dry, high or low, in or out, up or down, here or there, to—to—get himself snifflicated wid any liquorary fluid whatsomever, be the same more or less, good, bad, or indifferent, hot or could, thick or thin, black or white—"

"Have done, Harte; quit your cursed snifftherin', an' spake like a Christian; do you think you can manage to circumsniffle him agin?"

"Ay," said Harte, "or any man that ever trod on neat's leather—barrin' *one*."

"And who is that one?"

"That one, sir—that one—do you ax me who that one is?"

"Have you no ears? To be sure I do."

"Then, Skinadre, I'll tell you—I'll tell you, sarra,"—we ought to add here, that Harte was a first-rate mimic, and was now *doing* a drunken man,—"I'll tell you, sarra—that person was Nelson on the top of the monument in Sackville street—no—no—I'm wrong; I could make poor ould Horace drunk any time, an' often did—an' many a tum-tumble he got off the monument at night, and the divil's own throuble I had in gettin' him up on it before mornin', bekaise you all know he'd be cashiered, or, any way, brought to coort martial for leavin' his po-po-post."

"Well, if Nelson's not the man, who is?"

"*Drywig's* his name," replied Harte; "you all know one *Drywig*, don't you?"

"Quit your cursed stuff, Harte," said a new speaker, named Garvey; "if you think you can dose him, say so, and if not, let us have no more talk about it."

"Faith, an' it'll be a nice card to play," replied Harte, resuming his natural voice; "but at all events, if you will all drop into Garvey's lodgins and mine, to-morrow evenin', you may find him there; but don't blame me if I fail."

"No one's goin' to blame you," said Slanty, "an' the devil's own pity it is that that blasted Drywig of a brother of his keeps him in leadin' strings the way he does."

"The way I'll do is this: I'll ask him up to look at the pattern of my new waistcoat, an' wanst I get him in, all I have to do is to lay it on thick."

"I doubt that," said another, who had joined them; "when he came here first, and for a long time after, soapin' him might do; but I tell you his eye's open—it's no go—he's wide awake now."

"Shut your orifice," said Harte; "lave the thing to me; 'twas I did it before, although he doesn't think so, an' it's I that will do it again, although he doesn't think so. Haven't I been for the last mortal month guardin' him against yez, you villains?"

"To-morrow evenin'?"

"Ay, to-morrow evenin'; an' if we don't give him a *gaudiogue* that'll make him dance the *circumbendibus* widout music—never believe that my name's any thing else than Tom Thin, that got thick upon spring wather. Hello! there's the bell, boys, so mind what I tould yez; we'll give him a farewell benefit, if it was only for the sake of poor Drywig. Ah, poor Drywig! how will he live widout him? Ochone, ochone! ha, ha, ha!"

Without at all suspecting the trap that had been set for him, Art attended his business as usual, till towards evening, when Harte took an opportunity, when he got him for a few minutes by himself, of speaking to him

apparently in a careless and indifferent way.

"Art, that's a nate patthern in your waistcoat; but any how, I dunna how it is that *you* contrive to have every thing about you decenter an' jinteeler than another." This, by the way, was true, both of him and his brother.

"Tut, it's but middlin'," said Art; "it's now but a has-been:—when it was *at* itself it wasn't so bad."

"Begad, it was lovely wanst; now, how do you account, Art, for bein' supairior to us in all in—in every thing, I may say; ay, begad, in every thing, and in all things, for that's a point every one allows."

"Nonsense, Syl" (his name was Sylvester), "don't be comin' it soft over me; how am I betther than any other?"

"Why, you're betther made, in the first place, than e'er a man among us; in the next place, you're a betther workman;"—both these were true—"an', in the third place, you're the best lookin' of the whole pack; an' now deny these if you can:—eh, ha, ha, ha—my lad, I have you!"

An involuntary smile might be observed on Art's face at the last observation, which also was true.

"Syl," he replied, "behave yourself; what are you at now? I know you."

"Know me!" exclaimed Syl; "why what do you know of me? Nothing that's bad I hope, any way."

"None of your palaver, at all events," replied Art; "have you got any tobaccy about you?"

"Sorra taste," replied Harte, "nor had since mornin'."

"Well, I have then," said Art, pulling out a piece, and throwing it to him with the air of a superior; "warm your gums wid that, for altho' I seldom take a blast myself, I don't forget them that do."

"Ah, begorra," said Harte, in an undertone that was designed to be heard, "there's something in the ould blood still; thank you, Art, faix it's yourself that hasn't your heart in a trifle, nor ever had. I bought a waistcoat on Saturday last from Paddy M'Gartland, but I only tuck it on the condition of your likin' it."

"Me! ha, ha, ha, well, sure enough, Syl, you're the quarest fellow alive; why, man, isn't it yourself you have to plaise, not me."

"No matther for that, I'm not goin' to put my judgment in comparishment wid yours, at any rate; an' Paddy M'Gartland himself said, 'Syl, my boy, you know what you're about; if this patthern pluises Art Maguire, it'll plaise anybody; see what it is,' says he, 'to have the fine high ould blood in one's veins.' Begad he did; will you come up this evenin' about seven o'clock, now, like a good fellow, an' pass your opinion for me? Divil a dacent stitch I have, an' I want either it, or another, made up before the ball night."*

"Well, upon my soundhers, Syl, I did not think you were such a fool; of coorse I'll pass my opinion on it—about seven o'clock, you say."

"About seven—thank you, Art; an' now listen;—sure the boys intind to play off some prank upon you afore you lave us."

"On me," replied the other, reddening; "very well, Syl, let them do so; I can bear a joke, or give a blow, as well as another; so divil may care, such as they give, such as they'll get—only this, let there be no attempt to make me drink whiskey, or else there may be harder hittin' than some o' them 'ud like, an' I think they ought to know that by this time."

"By jing, they surely ought; well, but can you spell mum?"

"M-u-m."

"Ha, ha, ha, take care of yourself, an' don't forget seven."

"Never fear."

"Frank," said Art, "I'm goin' up to Syl Harte's lodgin's to pass my opinion on the patthern of a waistcoat for him."

"Very well," said Frank, "of coorse."

"I'll not stop long."

"As long or short as you like, Art, my boy."

"I hope, Frank, you don't imagine that there's any danger of drink?"

"Who, me—why should I, afther what passed? Didn't you give me your word, and isn't your name Maguire? Not I."

Art had seen, and approved of the pattern, and was chatting with Syl, when a knock came to the room door in which they sat; Syl rose, and opening the door, immediately closed it after him, and began in a low voice to remonstrate with some persons outside. At length Art could hear the subject of debate pretty well—

"Sorra foot yez will put inside the room this evenin', above all evenin's in the year."

"Why, sure we know *he* won't drink. I wish to goodness we knew he had been here; we wouldn't ax him to drink, bekase we know he wouldn't."

"No matther for that, sorrow foot yez'll put acrass the thrashel this evenin'; now, I'll tell you what, Skinadre, I wouldn't this

* Country dances, or balls, in which the young men pay from ten to fifteen pence for whiskey "to trate the ladies." We hope they will be abolished.

blessed minute, for all I've earned these six months, that ye came this evenin';—I have my raisons for it; Art Maguire is a boy that we have no right to compare ourselves wid—you all know that."

"We all know it, an' there's nobody denyin' it; we haven't the blood in our veins that he has, an' blood will show itself anywhere."

"Well then, boys, for his sake—an' I know you'd do any day for *his* sake what you wouldn't, nor what you oughtn't, for *mine*—for his sake, I say, go off wid yez, and bring your liquor somewhere else, or sure wait till to-morrow evenin'."

"Out of respect for Art Maguire we'll go; an' divil another boy in the province we'd pay that respect to; good-evenin', Syl!"

"Aisy, boys," said Art, coming to the door, "don't let me frighten you—come in—I'd be very sorry to be the means of spoilin' sport, although I can't drink myself; that wouldn't be generous—come in."

"Augh," said Skinadre, "by the livin' it's in him, an' I always knew it was—the rale drop."

"Boys," said Harte, "go off wid yez out o' this, I say; divil a foot you'll come in."

"Arra go to—Jimmaiky; who cares about you, Syl, when we have Art's liberty? Sure we didn't know the thing ourselves half an hour ago."

"Come, Syl, man alive," said Art, "let the poor fellows enjoy their liquor, an', as I can't join yez, I'll take my hat an' be off."

"I knew it, an' bad luck to yez, how yez 'ud drive him away," said Syl, quite angry.

"Faix, if we disturb *you*, Art, we're off—that 'ud be too bad; yes, Syl, you *were* right, it was very thoughtless of us: Art, we ax your pardon, sorra one of us meant you any offence in life—come, boys."

Art's generosity was thus fairly challenged, and he was not to be outdone—

"Aisy, boys," said he; "sit down; I'll not go, if that'll plaise yez; sure you'll neither eat me nor dhrink me."

"Well, there's jist one word you said, Slanty, that makes *me* submit to it," observed Harte, "an' that is, that it was *accident* your comin' at all;" he here looked significantly at Art, as if to remind him of their previous conversation on that day, and as he did it, his face gradually assumed a complacent expression, as much as to say, it's now clear that *this* cannot be the trap they designed for you, otherwise it wouldn't be *accidental*. Art understood him, and returned a look which satisfied the other that he did so.

As they warmed in their liquor, or pretended to get warm, many sly attempts to entrap him were made, every one of which was openly and indignantly opposed by Harte, who would not suffer them to offer him a drop.

It is not our intention to dwell upon these matters: at present it is sufficient to say, that after a considerable part of the evening had been spent, Harte rose up, and called upon them all to fill their glasses—

"And," he added, "as this is a toast that ought always to bring a full glass *to* the mouth, and an empty one *from* it, I must take the liberty of axin Art himself to fill a bumper."

The latter looked at him with a good deal of real surprise, as the others did with that which was of a very different description.

"Skinadre," proceeded Harte, "will you hand over the cowld wather, for a bumper it must be, if it was vitriol." He then filled Art's glass with water, and proceeded—"Stand up, boys, and be proud, as you have a right to be; here's the health of Frank Maguire, and the ould blood of Ireland!—hip, hip, hurra!"

"Aisy, boys," said Art, whose heart was fired by this unexpected compliment, paid to a brother whom he loved so well, and who, indeed, so well, deserved his love; "aisy, boys," he proceeded, "hand me the whiskey; if it was to be my last, I'll never drink my brother's health in cowld wather."

"Throth an' you will this time," said Harte, "undher this roof spirits won't crass your lips, an' you know for why."

"I know but one thing," replied Art, "that as you said yourself, if it was vitriol, I'd dhrink it for the best brother that ever lived; I only promised him that I wouldn't get dhrunk, an' sure, drinkin' a glass o' whiskey, or three either, wouldn't make me dhrunk—so hand it here."

"Well, Art," said Harte, "there's one man you can't blame for this, and that is Syl Harte."

"No, Syl, never—but now, boys, I am ready."

"Frank Maguire's health! hip, hip, hurra!"

Thus was a fine, generous-minded, and affectionate young man—who possessed all the candor and absence of suspicion which characterize truth—tempted and triumphed over, partly through the very warmth of his own affections, by a set of low, cunning profligates, who felt only anxious to drag him down from the moral superiority which they felt he possessed. That he was vain, and fond of praise, they knew, and our readers may also perceive that it was that unfortunate vanity which gave them the first advantage over him, by bringing him, through its influence, among them. Late that night

he was carried home on a door, in a state of unconscious intoxication.

It is utterly beyond our power to describe the harrowing state of his sensations on awakening the next morning. Abasement, repentance, remorse, all combined as they were within him, fall far short of what he felt; he was degraded in his own eyes, deprived of self-respect, and stripped of every claim to the confidence of his brother, as he was to the well-known character for integrity which had been until then inseparable from the name. That, however, which pressed upon him with the most intense bitterness was the appalling reflection that he could no longer depend upon himself, nor put any trust in his own resolutions. Of what use was he in the world without a will of his own, and the power of abiding by its decisions? None; yet what was to be done? He could not live out of the world, and wherever he went, its temptations would beset him. Then there was his beloved Margaret Murray! was he to make her the wife of a common drunkard? or did she suspect, when she pledged herself to him, that she was giving away her heart and affections to a poor unmanly sot, who had not sense or firmness to keep himself sober? He felt in a state between distraction and despair, and putting his hands over his face, he wept bitterly. To complete the picture, his veins still throbbed with the dry fever that follows intoxication, his stomach was in a state of deadly sickness and loathing, and his head felt exactly as if it would burst or fly asunder.

Alas! had his natural character been properly understood and judiciously managed; had he been early taught to understand and to control his own obvious errors; had the necessity of self-reliance, firmness, and independence been taught him; had his principles not been enfeebled by the foolish praise of his family, nor his vanity inflated by their senseless appeals to it—it is possible, nay, almost certain, that he would, even at this stage of his life, have been completely free from the failings which are beginning even now to undermine the whole strength of his moral constitution.

Frank's interview with him on this occasion was short but significant—

"Art," said he, "you know I never was a man of many words; and I'm not goin' to turn over a new lafe now. To scould you is not my intention—nor to listen to your promises. All I have to say is, that *you have broken your word*, and *disgraced your name*. As for me, I can put neither confidence nor trust in you any longer; neither will I."

A single tear was visible on his cheek as he passed out of the room; and when he did, Art's violent sobs were quite audible. Indeed, if truth must be told, Frank's distress was nearly equal to his brother's. What, however, was to be done? He was too ill to attend his business, a circumstance which only heightened his distress; for he knew that difficult as was the task of encountering his master, and those who would only enjoy his remorse, still even that was less difficult to be borne than the scourge of his own reflections. At length a thought occurred, which appeared to give him some relief; that thought he felt was all that now remained to him, for as it was clear that he could no longer depend on himself, it was necessary that he should find something else on which to depend. He accordingly sent an intimation to his master that he wished to have a few minutes' conversation with him, if he could spare time; M'Carroll accordingly came, and found him in a state which excited the worthy man's compassion.

"Well, Art," said he, "what is it you wish to speak to me about? I hear you were drunk last night. Now I thought you had more sense than to let these fellows put you into such a pickle. I have a fine, well-conducted set of men in general; but there is among them a hardened, hackneyed crew, who, because they are good workmen, don't care a curse about either you or me, or anybody else. They're always sure of employment, if not here, at least elsewheve, or, indeed, anywhere."

"But it wasn't their fault," replied Art, "it was altogether my own; they were opposed to my drinkin' at all, especially as they knew that I promised Frank never to get drunk agin. It was when Syl Harte proposed Frank's health, that I drank the whiskey in spite o' them."

"Syl Harte," said his master with a smile, "ay, I was thinkin' so; well, no matter, Art, have strength and resolution not to do the like again."

"But that's the curse, sir," replied the young man, "I have neither the one nor the other, and it's on that account I sent for you."

"How is that, Art?"

"Why," said the other, "I am goin' to bind my self—I am goin' to swear against it, and so to make short work of it, and for fraid any one might prevent me"—he blessed himself, and proceeded—"I now, in the presence of God, swear upon this blessed manwil * that a drop of spirituous drink, or liquor of any kind, won't cross my lips for the next seven years, barrin' it may be

* Manual.

necessary as medicine;" he then kissed the book three times, blessed himself again, and sat down considerably relieved.

"Now," he added, "you may tell them what I've done; that's seven years' freedom, thank God; for I wouldn't be the slave of whiskey—the greatest of tyrants—for the wealth of Europe."

"No, but the worst of it is, Art," replied his master, who was an exceedingly shrewd man, "that whiskey makes a man his own tyrant and his own slave, both at the same time, and that's more than the greatest tyrant that ever lived did yet. As for yourself, you're not fit to work any this day, so I think you ought to take a stretch across the country, and walk off the consequence of your debauch with these fellows last night."

Art now felt confidence and relief; he had obtained the very precise aid of which he stood in need. The danger was now over, and a prop placed under his own feeble resolution, on which he could depend with safety; here there could be no tampering with temptation; the matter was clear, explicit, and decisive: so far all was right, and, as we have said, his conscience felt relieved of a weighty burden.

His brother, on hearing it from his own lips, said little, yet that little was not to discourage him; he rather approved than otherwise, but avoided expressing any *very* decided opinion on it, one way or the other.

"It's a pity," said he, "that want of common resolution should drive a man to take an oath; if you had tried your own strength a little farther, Art, who knows but you might a' gained a victory without it, and that would be more creditable and manly than swearin'; still, the temptation to drink is great to some people, and this prevents all possibility of fallin' into it."

Art, who, never having dealt in any thing disingenuous himself, was slow to credit duplicity in others, did not once suspect that the *profligates* had played him off this trick, rather to annoy the brother than himself. It was, after all, nothing but the discreditable triumph of cunning and debased minds, over the inexperience, or vanity, if you will, of one, who, whatever his foibles might be, would himself scorn to take an ungenerous advantage of confidence reposed in him in consequence of his good opinion and friendly feeling.

The period of their apprenticeship, however, elapsed, and the day at length arrived for their departure from the Corner House. Their master, and, we may add, their friend, solicited them to stop with him still as journeymen; but, as each had a different object in view, they declined it. Art proposed to set up for himself, for it was indeed but natural that one whose affections had been now so long engaged, should wish, with as little delay as possible, to see himself possessed of a home to which he might bring his betrothed wife. Frank had not trusted to chance, or relied merely upon vague projects, like his brother; for, some time previous to the close of his apprenticeship, he had been quietly negotiating the formation of a partnership with a carpenter who wanted a steady man at the helm. The man had capital himself, and was clever enough in his way, but then he was illiterate, and utterly without method in conducting his affairs; Frank was therefore the identical description of person he stood in need of, and, as the integrity of his family was well known—that integrity which they felt so anxious to preserve without speck—there was of course little obstruction in the way of their coming to terms.

On the morning of the day on which they left his establishment, M'Carroll came into the workshop while they were about bidding farewell to their companions, with whom they had lived—abating the three or four pranks that were played off upon Art—on good and friendly terms, and seeing that they were about to take their departure, he addressed them as follows:—

"I need not say," he proceeded, "that I regret you are leaving me; which I do, for, without meaning any disrespect to those present, I am bound to acknowledge that two better workmen, or two honester young men, were never in my employment. Art, indeed is unsurpassed, considering his time, and that he is only closing his apprenticeship: 'tis true, he has had good opportunities—opportunities which, I am happy to say, he has never neglected. I am in the habit, as you both know, of addressing a few words of advice to my young men at the close of their apprenticeships, and when they are entering upon the world as you are now. I will therefore lay down a few simple rules for your guidance, and, perhaps, by following them, you will find yourselves neither the worse nor the poorer men.

"Let the first principle then of your life, both as mechanics and men, be truth—truth in all you think, in all you say, and in all you do; if this should fail to procure you the approbation of the world, it will not fail to procure you your own, and, what is better, that of God. Let your next principle be industry—honest, fair, legitimate industry, to which you ought to annex punctuality—for industry without punctuality is but half a virtue. Let your third great principle be so-

briety—strict and undeviating sobriety; a mechanic without sobriety, so far from being a benefit or an ornament to society, as he ought to be, is a curse and a disgrace to it; within the limits of sobriety all the rational enjoyments of life are comprised, and without them are to be found all those which desolate society with crime, indigence, sickness, and death. In maintaining sobriety in the world, and especially among persons of your own class, you will certainly have much to contend with; remember that firmness of character, when acting upon right feeling and good sense, will enable you to maintain and work out every virtuous and laudable purpose which you propose to effect. Do not, therefore, suffer yourselves to be shamed from sobriety, or, indeed, from any other moral duty, by the force of ridicule; neither, on the other hand, must you be seduced into it by flattery, or the transient gratification of social enjoyment. I have, in fact, little further to add; you are now about to become members of society, and to assume more distinctly the duties which it imposes on you. Discharge them all faithfully—do not break your words, but keep your promises, and respect yourselves. Remember that self-respect is a very different thing from pride, or an empty overweening vanity—self-respect is, in fact, altogether incompatible with them, as they are with it; like opposite qualities, they cannot abide in the same individual. Let me impress it on you, that these are the principles by which you must honorably succeed in life, if you *do* succeed; while by neglecting them, you must assuredly fail. Tis true, knavery and dishonesty are often successful, but it is by the exercise of fraudulent practices, which I am certain you will never think of carrying into the business of life—I consequently dismiss this point altogether, as unsuitable to either of you. I have only to add, now, that I hope most sincerely you will observe the few simple truths I have laid down to you; and I trust, that ere many years pass, I may live to see you both respectable, useful, and independent members of society. Farewell, and may you be all we wish you!"

Whether this little code of useful doctrine was equally observed by both, will appear in the course of our narrative.

About a month or so before the departure of Frank and Art from the Corner House, Jemmy Murray and another man were one day in the beginning of May strolling through one of his pasture-fields. His companion was a thin, hard-visaged little fellow, with a triangular face, and dry bristly hair, very much the color of, and nearly as prickly as, a withered furze bush; both, indeed, were congenial spirits, for it is only necessary to say, that he of the furze bush was another of those charitable and generous individuals whose great delight consisted, like his friend Murray, in watching the seasons, and speculating upon the failure of the crops. He had the reputation of being wealthy, and in fact, was so; indeed, of the two, those who had reason to know, considered that he held the weightier purse; his name was Cooney Finigan, and the object of his visit to Murray—their conversation, however, will sufficiently develop that. Both, we should observe, appeared to be exceedingly blank and solemn; Cooney's hard face, as he cast his eye about him, would have made one imagine that he had just buried the last of his family, and Murray looked as if he had a son about to be hanged. The whole cause of this was simply that a finer season, nor one giving ampler promise of abundance, had not come within the memory of man.

"Ah!" said Murray, with a sigh, "look, Cooney, at the distressin' growth of grass that's there—a foot high if it's an inch! If God hasn't sed it, there will be the largest and heaviest crops that ever was seen in the country; heigho!"

"Well, but one can't have good luck always," replied Cooney; "only it's the wondherful forwardness of the whate that's distressin' *me*."

"An' do you think that I'm sufferin' nothin' on that account?" asked his companion; "only *you* haven't three big stacks of hay waitin' for a failure, as *I* have."

"That's bekase I have no meadow on my farm," replied Cooney; "otherwise I would be in the hay trade as well as yourself."

"Well, God help us, Cooney! every one has their misfortunes as well as you and I; sure enough, it's a bitther business to see low every thing's thrivin'—hay, oats, and whate! why they'll be for a song: may I never get a bad shillin', but the poor 'ill be paid for takin' them! that's the bitther pass things will come to; *macrone oh!* but it's a black lookout!"

"An' this rain, too," said Cooney, "so soft, and even, and small, and warm, that it's playin' the very devil. Nothin' could stand it. Why it wd make a rotten twig grow if it was put into the ground."

"Divil a one o' me would like to make the thrial," said Murray, "for 'fraid I might have the misfortune to succeed. Death alive! Only think of my four arks of meal, an' my three stacks of hay, an' divil a pile to come out of them for another twelve months!"

"It's bad, too bad, I allow," said the other; "still let us not despair, man alive; who knows but the saison may change for

the worse yet. Whish!" he exclaimed, slapping the side of his thigh, "hould up your head, Jemmy, I have thought of it; I have thought of it."

"You have thought of what, Cooney?"

"Why, death alive, man, sure there's plenty of time, God be praised for it, for the —murdher, why didn't we think of it before? ha, ha, ha!"

"For the what, man? don't keep us longin' for it."

"Why for the pratie crops to fail still; sure it's only the beginning o' May now, and who knows but we might have the happiness to see a right good general failure of the praties still? Eh? ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my sounds, Cooney, you have taken a good deal of weight off of me. Faith we have the lookout of a bad potato crop yet, sure enough. How is the wind? Don't you think you feel a little dry bitin' in it, as if it came from the aist?"

"Why, then, in regard of the dead calm that's in it, I can't exactly say—but, let me see—you're right, divil a doubt of it; faith it is, sure enough; bravo, Jemmy, who knows but all may go wrong wid the crops yet."

"At all events, let us have a glass on the head of it, and we'll drink to the failure of the potato craps, and God prosper the aist wind, for it's the best for you an' me, Cooney, that's goin'. Come up to the house above, and we'll have a glass on the head of it."

The fastidious reader may doubt whether my two men, no matter how griping or rapacious, could prevail upon themselves to express to each other sentiments so openly inimical to all human sympathy. In holding this dialogue, however, the men were only thinking aloud, and giving utterance to the wishes which every inhuman knave of their kind feels. In compliance, however, with the objections which may be brought against the probability of the above dialogue, we will now give the one which did actually occur, and then appeal to our readers whether the first is not much more in keeping with the character of the speakers—which ought always to be a writer's great object—than the second. Now, the reader already knows that each of these men had three or four large arks of meal laid past until the arrival of a failure in the crops and a season of famine, and that Murray had three large stacks of hay in the hope of a similar failure in the meadow crop.

"Good-morrow, Jemmy."

"Good-morrow kindly, Cooney; isn't this a fine saison, the Lord be praised!"

"A glorious saison, blessed be His name! I don't think ever I remimber a finer promise of the craps."

"Throth, nor I, the meadows is a miracle to look at."

"Divil a thing else—but the whate, an' oats, an' early potatoes, beat anything ever was seen."

"Throth, the poor will have them for a song, Jemmy."

"Ay, or for less, Cooney; they'll be paid for takin' them."

"It's enough to raise one's heart, Jemmy, just to think of it."

"Why then it is that, an', for the same raison, come up to the house above, and we'll have a sup on the head of it; sure, it's no harm to drink success to the craps, and may God prevent a failure, any how."

"Divil a bit."

Now, we simply ask the reader which dialogue is in the more appropriate keeping with the characters of honest, candid Jemmy and Cooney?

"And now," proceeded Cooney, "regardin' this match between your youngest daughter Margaret, and my son Toal."

"Why, as for myself," replied Murray, "sorra much of objection I have aginst it, barrin' his figure; if he was about a foot and a half higher, and a little betther made—God pardon me, an' blessed be the maker—there would, at all events, be less difficulty in the business, especially with Peggy herself."

"But couldn't *you* bring her about?"

"I did my endayvors, Cooney; you may take my word I did."

"Well, an' is she not softenin' at all?"

"Upon my sounds, Cooney, I cannot say she is. If I could only get her to spake one sairious word on the subject, I might have some chance; but I cannot, Cooney; I think both you an' little Toal had betther give it up. I doubt there's no chance."

"Faith an' the more will be her loss. I tell you, Jemmy, that he'd outdo either you or me as a mead man. What more would you want?"

"He's cute enough, I know that."

"I tell you you don't know the half of it. It's the man that can make the money for her that you want."

"But aginst that, you know, it's Peggy an' not me that's to marry him. Now, you know that women often—though not always, I grant—wish to have something in the appearance of their husband that they needn't be ashamed to look at."

"That's the only objection that can be brought against him. He's the boy can make the money; I'm a fool to him. I'll tell you what, Jemmy Murray, may I never go home, but he'd skin a flint. Did you hear anything? Now!"

Murray, who appeared to be getting somewhat tired of this topic, replied rather hastily—

"Why, Cooney Finnigan, if he could skin the devil himself and ait him afterwards, she wouldn't have him. She has refused some of the best looking young men in the parish, widout either rhyme or raison, an' I'm sure she's not goin' to take your *leprechaun* of a son, that you might run a five-gallon keg between his knees. Sure, bad luck to the thing his legs resemble but a pair of raipin' hooks, wid their backs outwards. Let us pass this subject, and come in till we drink a glass together."

"And so you call my son a *leprechaun*, and he has legs like raipin' hooks!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Come in, man alive; never mind little Toal."

"Like raipin' hooks! I'll tell you what, Jemmy, I say now in sincerity, that there *is* every prospect of a plentiful sayson; and that there may, I pray God this day; meadows an' all—O above all, the meadows, for *I'm* not in the hay business myself."

"So," said Murray, laughing, "you would cut off your nose to vex your face."

"I would any day, even if should suffer myself by it; and now good-bye, Jemmy Murray, to the dioul I pitch the whole thing! Rapin' hooks!"

And as he spoke, off went the furious little extortioner, irretrievably offended.

The subject of Margaret's marriage, however, was on that precise period one on which her father and friends had felt and expressed much concern. Many proposals had been made for her hand during Art's apprenticeship; but each and all not only without success, but without either hope or encouragement. Her family were surprised and grieved at this, and the more so, because they could not divine the cause of it. Upon the subject of her attachment to Maguire, she not only preserved an inviolable silence herself, but exacted a solemn promise from her lover that he should not disclose it to any human being. Her motive, she said, for keeping their affection and engagement to each other secret, was to avoid being harassed at home by her friends and family, who, being once aware of the relation in which she stood towards Art, would naturally give her little peace. She knew very well that her relations would not consent to such a union, and, in point of mere prudence and forethought, her conduct was right, for she certainly avoided much intemperate remonstrance, as afterwards proved to be the case when she mentioned it. Her father on this occasion having amused them at home by relating the tift which had taken place between Cooney Finnigan and himself, which was received with abundant mirth by them all, especially by Margaret, seriously introduced the subject of her marriage, and of a recent proposal which had been made to her.

"You are the only unmarried girl we have left now," he said, "and surely you ought neither to be too proud nor too saucy to refuse such a match as Mark Hanratty—a young man in as thrivin' a business as there is in all Ballykeerin; hasn't he a good shop, good business, and a good back of friends in the country that will stand to him, an' only see how he has thruv these last couple o' years. What's come over you at all? or do you ever intend to marry? you have refused every one for so far widout either rhyme or raison. Why, Peggy, what father's timper could stand this work?"

"Ha, ha, ha! like raipin' hooks, father—an' so the little red rogue couldn't bear that? well, at all events, the comparison's a good one—sorra better; ha, ha, ha—reapin' hooks!"

"Is that the answer you have for me?"

"Answer!" said Margaret, feigning surprise, "what about?"

"About Mark Hanratty."

"Well, but sure if he's fond of me, he'll have no objection to wait."

"Ay, but if he does wait, will you have him?"

"I didn't promise that, and, at any rate, I'd not like to be a shopkeeper's wife."

"Why not?"

"Why, he'd be puttin' me behind the counter, and you know I'd be too handsome for that; sure, there's Thogue Nugent that got the handsome wife from Dublin, and of a fair, or market-day, for one that goes in to buy anything, there goes ten in to look at her. Throth, I think he ought to put her in the windy at once, just to save trouble, and give the people room."

"Ha, ha, ha! well, you're the dickens of a girl, sure enough; but come, *avourneen*, don't be makin' me laugh now, but tell me what answer I'm to give Mark."

"Tell him to go to Dublin, like Thogue; he lives in the upper part of the town, and Thogue in the lower, and then there will be a beauty in each end of it."

"Suppose I take it into my head to lose my temper, Peggy, maybe I'd make you spake then?"

"Well, will you give me a peck o' mail for widow Dolan?"

"No, divil a dust."

"Sure I'll pay you—ha, ha, ha!"

"Sure you'll pay me! *marrone*, but it's often you've said that afore, and divil a cross

o' your coin ever we seen yet; faith, it's you that's heavily in my debt, when I think of all ever you promised to pay me."

"Very well, then; no meal, no answer."

"And will you give me an answer if I give you the meal?"

"Honor bright, didn't I say it."

"Go an' get it yourself then, an' see now, don't do as you always do, take double what you're allowed."

Margaret, in direct violation of this paternal injunction, did most unquestionably take near twice the stipulated quantity for the widow, and, in order that there might be no countermand on the part of her father, as sometimes happened, she sent it off with one of the servants by a back way, so that he had no opportunity of seeing how far her charity had carried her beyond the spirit and letter of her instructions.

"Well," said he, when she returned, "now for the answer; and before you give it, think of the comfort you'll have with him—how fine and nicely furnished his house is—he has carpets upon the rooms, ay, an' upon my sounds, on the very stairs itself! faix it's you that will be in state. Now, *acushla*, let us hear your answer."

"It's very short, father; *I won't have him.*"

"Won't have him! and in the name of all that's unbiddable and undutiful, who will you have, if one may ax that, or do you intend to have any one at all, or not?"

"Let me see," she said, putting the side of her forefinger to her lips, "what day is this? Thursday. Well, then, on this day month, father, I'll tell my mother who I'll have, or, at any rate, who I'd wish to have; but, in the mean time, nobody need ask me anything further about it till then, for I won't give any other information on the subject."

The father looked very seriously into the fire for a considerable time, and was silent; he then drew his breath lengthily, tapped the table a little with his fingers, and exclaimed—

"A month! well, the time will pass, and, as we must wait, why we must, that's all."

Matters lay in this state until the third day before the expiration of the appointed time, when Margaret, having received from Art secret intelligence of his return, hastened to a spot agreed upon between them, that they might consult each other upon what ought to be done under circumstances so critical.

After the usual preface to such tender discussions, Art listened with a good deal of anxiety, but without the slightest doubt of her firmness and attachment, to an account of the promise she had given her father.

"Well, but, Margaret darlin'," said he, "what will happen if they refuse?"

"Surely, you know it is too late for them to refuse *now;* an't we as good as married—didn't we pass the Hand Promise—isn't our troth plighted?"

"I know that, but suppose they should still refuse, then what's to be done? what are you and I to do?"

"I must lave that to you, Art" she replied archly.

"And it couldn't be in better hands, Margaret; if they refuse their consent, there's nothing for it but a regular *runaway*, and that will settle it."

"You must think I'm very fond of you," she added playfully, "and I suppose you do, too."

"Margaret," said Art, and his face became instantly overshadowed with seriousness and care, "the day may come when I'll feel how necessary you will be to guide and support me."

She looked quickly into his eyes, and saw that his mind appeared disturbed and gloomy.

"My dear Art," she asked, "what is the meaning of your words, and why is there such sadness in your face?"

"There ought not to be sadness in it," he said, "when I'm sure of you—you will be my guardian angel may be yet."

"Art, have you any particular meanin' in what you say?"

"I'll tell you all," said he, "when we are married."

Margaret was generous-minded, and, as the reader may yet acknowledge, heroic; there was all the boldness and bravery of innocence about her, and she could scarcely help attributing Art's last words to some fact connected with his feelings, or, perhaps, to circumstances which his generosity prevented him from disclosing. A thought struck her—

"Art," said she, "the sooner this is settled the better; as it is, if you'll be guided by me, we won't let the sun set upon it; walk up with me to my father's house, come in, and in the name of God, we'll leave nothing unknown to him. He is a hard man, but he has a heart, and he is better a thousand times than he is reported. I know it."

"Come," said Art, "let us go; he may be richer, but there's the blood, and the honesty, and good name of the Maguires against his wealth—"

A gentle pressure on his arm, when he mentioned the word *wealth*, and he was silent.

"My darlin' Margaret," said he, "oh how unworthy I am of you!"

"Now," said she, "lave me to manage

this business my own way. Your good sense will tell you when to spake; but whatever my father says, trate him with respect—lave the rest to me."

On entering, they found Murray and his wife in the little parlor—the former smoking his pipe, and the latter darning a pair of stockings.

"Father," said Margaret, "Art Maguire convoyed me home; but, indeed, I must say, I was forced to ask him."

"Art Maguire. Why, then, upon my sounds, Art, I'm glad to see you. An' how are you, man alive? an' how is Frank, eh? As grave as a jidge, as he always was—ha, ha, ha! Take a chair, Art, and be sittin'. Peggy, *gluntha me*, remimber, you must have Art at your weddin'. It's now widin three days of the time I'm to know who he is; and upon my sounds, I'm like a hen on a hot griddle till I hear it."

"You're not within three days, father."

"But I say I am, accordin' to your own countin'."

"You're not within three hours, father;"—her face glowed, and her whole system became vivified with singular and startling energy as she spoke:—"no, you are not within three hours, father; not within three minutes, my dear father; for there stands the man," she said, pointing to Art. She gave three or four loud hysterical sobs, and then stood calm, looking not upon her father, but upon her lover; as much as to say, Is this love, or is it not?

Her mother, who was a quiet, inoffensive creature, without any principle or opinion whatsoever at variance with those of her husband, rose upon hearing this announcement; but so ambiguous were her motions, that we question whether the most sagacious prophet of all antiquity could anticipate from them the slightest possible clue to her opinion. The husband, in fact, had not yet spoken, and until he had, the poor woman did not know her own mind. Under any circumstances, it was difficult exactly to comprehend her meaning. In fact, she could not speak three words of common English, having probably never made the experiment a dozen times in her life. Murray was struck for some time mute.

"And is this the young man," said he, at length, "that has been the mains of preventin' you from being so well married often and often before now?"

"No, indeed, father," she replied, "he was not the occasion of that; but I was. I am betrothed to him, as he is to me, for five years."

"And," said her father, "my consent to that marriage you will never have; if you marry him, marry him, but you will marry him without my blessin'."

"Jemmy Murray," said Art, whose pride of family was fast rising, "who am I, and who are you?"

Margaret put her hand to his mouth, and said in a low voice—

"Art, if you love me, leave it to my management."

"Ho, Jemmy," said the mother, addressing her husband, "only put your ears to this! *Ho, dher manim*, this is that skamin' piece of *feasthealagh** they call *grah*.† Ho, by my sowl, it shows what moseys they is to think that—what's this you call it?—low-lov-loaf, or whatsomever the devil it is, has to do wid makin' a young couple man and wife. Didn't I hate the ground you stud on when I was married upon you? but I had the *airighid*. Ho, faix, I had the shiners."

"Divil a word o' lie in that, Madjey, asthore. You had the money, an' I got it, and wern't we as happy, or ten times happier, than if we had married for love?"

"To be sartin we am; an' isn't we more unhappier now, nor if we had got married for loaf, glory be to godness!"

"Father," said Margaret, anxious to put an end to this ludicrous debate, "this is the only man I will ever marry"

"And by Him that made me," said her father, "you will never have my consent to that marriage, nor my blessin'."

"Art," said she, "not one word. Here, in the presence of my father and mother, and in the presence of God himself, I say I will be your wife, and only yours."

"And," said her father, "see whether a blessin' will attend a marriage where a child goes against the will of her parents."

"I'm of age now to think and act for myself, father; an' you know this is the first thing I ever disobeyed you in, an' I hope it 'ill be the last. Am I goin' to marry one that's discreditable to have connected with our family? So far from that, it is the credit that is comin' to us. Is a respectable young man, without spot or stain on his name, with the good-will of all that know him, and a good trade—is such a person, father, so *very* high above us? Is one who has the blood of the great Fermanagh Maguires in his veins not good enough for your daughter, because you happen to have a few bits of metal that he has not? Father, you *will* give us your consent an' your blessin' too; but remember that whether you do, or whether you don't, I'll not break my vow; I'll marry him."

"Margaret," said the father, in a calm,

* Nonsense. † Love.

collected voice, "put both consent and blessin' out of the question; you will never have either from me."

"Ho *dhiver a thora heena*," exclaimed the mother, "I'm the boy for one that will see the buckle crassed against them, or I'd die every day this twelve months upon the top and tail o' Knockmany, through wind an' weather. You darlin' scoundrel," she proceeded, addressing Art, in what she intended to be violent abuse—"God condemn your sowl to happiness, is I or am my husband to be whillebelewin' on your loaf? Eh, answer us that, if you're not able, like a man, as you is?"

Margaret, whose humor and sense of the ludicrous were exceedingly strong, having seldom heard her mother so excited before, gave one arch look at Art, who, on the contrary, felt perfectly confounded at the woman's language and in that look there was a kind of humorous entreaty that he would depart. She nodded towards the door, and Art, having shook hands with her, said—

"Good-by, Jemmy Murray, I hope you'll change your mind still; your daughter never could get any one that loves her as I do, or that could treat her with more tendherness and affection."

"Be off, you darlin' vagabone," said Mrs. Murray, "the heavens be your bed, you villain, why don't you stay where you is, an' not be malivogin an undacent family this way."

"Art Maguire," replied Murray, "you heard my intention, and I'll *never* change it." Art then withdrew.

Our readers may now anticipate the consequences of the preceding conversation. Murray and his wife having persisted in their refusal to sanction Margaret's marriage with Maguire, every argument and influence having been resorted to in vain, Margaret and he made what is termed a runaway match of it, that is, a rustic elopement, in which the young couple go usually to the house of some friend, under the protection of whose wife the female remains until her marriage, when the husband brings her home.

And now they commence life. No sooner were they united, than Art, feeling what was due to her who had made such and so many sacrifices for him, put his shoulder to the wheel with energy and vigor. Such aid as his father could give him, he did give; that which stood him most in stead, however, was the high character and unsullied reputation of his own family. Margaret's conduct, which was looked upon as a proof of great spirit and independence, rendered her, if possible, still better loved by the people than before. But, as we said, there was every confidence placed in Art, and the strongest hopes of his future success and prosperity in life expressed by all who knew him; and this was reasonable. Here was a young man of excellent conduct, a first-rate workman, steady, industrious, quiet, and, above all things, sober; for the three or four infractions of sobriety that took place during his apprenticeship, had they even been generally known, would have been reputed as nothing; the truth is, that both he and Margaret commenced life, if not with a heavy purse, at least with each a light heart. He immediately took a house in Ballykeerin, and, as it happened that a man of his own trade, named Davis, died about the same time of lockjaw, occasioned by a chisel wound in the ball of the thumb, as a natural consequence, Art came in for a considerable portion of his business; so true is it, that one man's misfortune is another man's making. His father did all he could for him, and Margaret's sisters also gave them some assistance, so that, ere the expiration of a year, they found themselves better off than they had reason to expect, and, what crowned their happiness—for they were happy—was the appearance of a lovely boy, whom, after his father, they called Arthur. Their hearts had not much now to crave after—happiness was theirs, and health; and, to make the picture still more complete, prosperity, as the legitimate reward of Art's industry and close attention to business, was beginning to dawn upon them.

One morning, a few months after this time, as she sat with their lovely babe in her arms, the little rogue playing with the tangles of her raven hair, Art addressed her in the fulness of as affectionate a heart as ever beat in a human bosom:—

"Well, Mag," said he, "are you sorry for not marryin' Mark Hanratty?"

She looked at him, and then at their beautiful babe, which was his image, and her lip quivered for a moment; she then smiled, and kissing the infant, left a tear upon its face.

He started, "My God, Margaret," said he, "what is this?"

"If that happy tear," she replied, "is a proof of it, I am."

Art stooped, and kissing her tenderly, said—"May God make me, and keep me worthy of you, my darling wife!"

"Still, Art," she continued, "there is one slight drawback upon my happiness, and that is, when it comes into my mind that in marryin' you, I didn't get a parent's blessin'; it sometimes makes my mind sad, and I can't help feelin' so."

"I could wish you had got it myself," replied her husband, "but you know it can't be remedied now."

"At all events," she said, "let us live so as that we may desarve it; it was my first and last offence towards my father and mother."

"And it's very few could say as much, Mag, dear; but don't think of it, sure, may be, he may come about yet."

"I can hardly hope that," she replied, "after the priest failin'."

"Well, but," replied her husband, taking up the child in his arms, "who knows what this little man may do for us—who knows, some day, but we'll send a little messenger to his grandfather for a blessin' for his mammy that he won't have the heart to refuse."

This opened a gleam of satisfaction in her mind. She and her husband having once more kissed the little fellow, exchanged glances of affection, and he withdrew to his workshop.

Every week and month henceforth added to their comfort. Art advanced in life, in respectability, and independence; he was, indeed, a pattern to all tradesmen who wish to maintain in the world such a character as enforces esteem and praise; his industry was incessant, he was ever engaged in something calculated to advance himself; up early and down late was his constant practice—no man could exceed him in punctuality—his word was sacred—whatever he said was done; and so general were his habits of industry, integrity, and extreme good conduct appreciated, that he was mentioned as a fresh instance of the high character sustained by all who had the old blood of the Fermanagh Maguires in their veins. In this way he proceeded, happy in the affections of his admirable wife—happy in two lovely children—happy in his circumstances—in short, every way happy, when, to still add to that happiness, on the night of the very day that closed the term of his oath against liquor—that closed the seventh year—his wife presented him with their third child, and second daughter.

In Ireland there is generally a very festive spirit prevalent during christenings, weddings, or other social meetings of a similar nature; and so strongly is this spirit felt, that it is—or was, I should rather say—not at all an unusual thing for a man, when taking an oath against liquor, to except christenings or weddings, and very frequently funerals, as well as Christmas and Easter. Every one acquainted with the country knows this, and no one need be surprised at the delight with which Art Maguire hailed this agreeable coincidence. Art, we have said before, was naturally social, and, although he did most religiously observe his oath, yet, since the truth must be told, we are bound to admit that, on many and many an occasion, he did also most unquestionably regret the restraint that he had placed upon himself with regard to liquor. Whenever his friends were met together, whether at fair, or market, wedding, christening, or during the usual festivals, it is certain that a glass of punch or whiskey never crossed his nose that he did not feel a secret hankering after it, and would often have snuffed in the odor, or licked his lips at it, were it not that he would have considered the act as a kind of misprision of perjury. Now, however, that he was free, and about to have a christening in his house, it was at least only reasonable that he should indulge in a glass, if only for the sake of drinking the health of "the young lady." His brother Frank happened to be in town that evening, and Art prevailed on him to stop for the night.

"You must stand for the young *colleen*, Frank," said he, "and who do you think is to join you?"

"Why, how could I guess?" replied Frank.

"The sorra other but little Toal Finnigan, that thought to take Margaret from me, you remimber."

"I *remimber* he wanted to marry her, and I know that he's the most revengeful and ill-minded little scoundrel on the face of the earth; if ever there was a devil in a human bein', there's one in that misshapen but sugary little vagabone. His father was bad enough when he was alive, and worse than he ought to be, may God forgive him now, but this spiteful skinflint, that's a curse to the poor of the country, as he is their hatred, what could tempt you to ax *him* to stand for any child of yours?"

"He may be what he likes, Frank, but all I can say is, that I found him civil and obligin', an' you know the devil's not so black as he's painted."

"I know no such thing, Art," replied the other; "for that matter, he may be a great deal blacker; but still I'd advise you to have nothing to say to Toal—he's a bad graft, egg and bird; but what civility did he ever show you?"

"Why, he—he's a devilish pleasant little fellow, any way, so he is; throth it's he that spakes well of you, at any rate; if he was ten times worse than he is, he has a tongue in his head that will gain him friends."

"I see, Art," said Frank, laughing, "he has been layin' it thick an' sweet on you. My hand to you, there's not so sweet-tongued a knave in the province; but mind, I put you on your guard—he's never pure honey all

out, unless where there's bitther hatred and revenge at the bottom of it—that's well known, so be advised and keep him at a distance; have nothin' to do or to say to him, and, as to havin' him for a godfather, why I hardly think the child could thrive that he'd stand for."

"It's too late for that now," replied Art, "for I axed him betther than three weeks agone."

"An' did he consint?"

"He did, to be sure."

"Well, then, keep your word to him, of coorse; but, as soon as the christenin's over, drop him like a hot potato."

"Why, thin, that's hard enough, Frank, so long as I find the crathur civil."

"Ay, but, Art, don't I tell you that it's his civility you should be afeard of; throth, the same civility ought to get him kicked a dozen times a day."

"Faix and," said Art, "kicked or not, here he comes; whisht! don't be oncivil to the little bachelor at any rate."

"Oncivil, why should I? the little extortionin' vagabone never injured or fleeced me; but, before he puts his nose into the house, let me tell you wanst more, Art, that he never gets sweet upon any one that he hasn't in hatred for them at the bottom; that's his carracther."

"I know it is," said Art, "but, until I find it to be true, I'll take the ginerous side, an' won't believe it; he's a screw, I know, an' a skinflint, an'—whisht! here he is."

"Toal Finnigan, how are you?" said Art; "I was goin' to say how is every tether length of you, only that I think it would be impossible to get a tether short enough to measure you."

"Ha, ha, ha, that's right good—divil a man livin' makes me laugh so much as—why then, Frank Maguire too!—throth, Frank, I'm proud to see you well—an' how are you, man? and—well, in throth I am happy to see you lookin' so well, and in good health; an' whisper, Frank, it's your own fau't that I'm not inquirin' for the wife and childre."

"An' I can return the compliment, Toal; it's a shame for both of us to be bachelors at this time o' day."

"Ah," said the little fellow, "I wasn't Frank Maguire, one of the best lookin' boys in the barony, an' the most respected, an' why not? Well, divil a thing afther all like the ould blood, an' if I wanted a pure dhrop of that same, maybe I don't know where to go to look for it—maybe I don't, I say!"

"It's Toal's fault that he wasn't married many a year ago," said Art; "he refused more wives, Frank, than e'er a boy of his years from this to Jinglety coech—divil a lie in it; sure he'll tell you himself."

Now, as Toal is to appear occasionally, and to be alluded to from time to time in this narrative, we shall give the reader a short sketch or outline of his physical appearance and moral character. In three words, then, he had all his father's vices multiplied tenfold, and not one of his good qualities, such as they were; his hair was of that nondescript color which partakes at once of the red, the fair, and the auburn; it was a bad dirty dun, but harmonized with his complexion to a miracle. That complexion, indeed, was no common one; as we said, it was one of those which, no matter how frequently it might have been scrubbed, always presented the undeniable evidences of dirt so thoroughly ingrained into the pores of the skin, that no process could remove it, short of flaying him alive. His vile, dingy dun bristles stood out in all directions from his head, which was so shaped as to defy admeasurement; the little rascal's body was equally ill-made, and as for his limbs, we have already described them, as reaping-hooks of flesh and blood, terminated by a pair of lark-heeled feet, as flat as smoothing-irons. Now, be it known, that notwithstanding these disadvantages, little Toal looked upon himself as an Adonis upon a small scale, and did certainly believe that scarcely any female on whom he threw his faseinating eye could resist being enamored of him. This, of course, having become generally known, was taken advantage of, and many a merry country girl amused both herself and others at his expense, while he imagined her to be perfectly serious.

"Then how did you escape at all," said Frank—"you that the girls are so fond of?"

"You may well ax," said Toal; "but at any rate, it's the divil entirely to have them *too* fond of you. There's raison in every thing, but wanst a woman takes a strong fancy to the cut of your face, you're done for, until you get rid of her. Throth I suffered as much persecution that way as would make a good batch o' marthyrs. However, what can one do?"

"It's a hard case, Toal," said Art; "an' I b'lieve you're as badly off, if not worse, now than ever."

"In that respect," replied Toal, "I'm ladin' the life of a murdherer. I can't set my face out but there's a pursuit after me—chased an' hunted like a bag fox; devil a lie I'm tellin' you."

"But do you intend to marry still, Toal?" asked Frank; "bekaise if you don't, it would be only raisonable for you to make it generally known that your mind's made up to die a bachelor."

"I wouldn't bring the penalty an' expenses of a wife an' family on me, for the handsomest woman livin'," said Toal. "Oh no; the Lord in mercy forbid that! Amin, I pray."

"But," said Art, "is it fair play to the girls not to let that be generally known, Toal?"

"Hut," replied the other, "let them pick it out of their larnin', the thieves. Sure they parsecuted me to sich a degree, that they desarve no mercy at my hands. So, Art," he proceeded, "you've got another mouth to feed! Oh, the Lord pity you! If you go on this way, what 'ill become of you at last?"

"Don't you know," replied Art, "that God always fits the back to the burden, and that he never sends a mouth but he sends something to fill it."

The little extortioner shrugged his shoulders, and raising his eyebrows, turned up his eyes—as much as to say, What a pretty notion of life you have with such opinions as these!

"Upon my word, Toal," said Art, "the young lady we've got home to us is a beauty; at all events, her godfathers need not be ashamed of her."

"If she's like her own father or mother," replied Toal, once more resuming the sugar-candy style, "she can't be anything else than a beauty. It's well known that sich a couple never stood undher the roof of Aughindrummon Chapel, nor walked the street of Ballykeerin."

Frank winked at Art, who, instead of returning the wink, as he ought to have done, shut both his eyes, and then looked at Toal with an expression of great compassion—as if he wished to say, Poor fellow, I don't think he can be so bad-hearted as the world gives him credit for.

"Come, Toal," he replied, laughing, "none of your bother now. Ay was there, many a finer couple under the same roof, and on the same street; so no palaver, my man. But are you prepared to stand for the *girsha?* You know it's nearly a month since I axed you?"

"To be sure I am; but who's the midwife?"

"Ould Kate Sharpe; as lucky a woman as ever came about one's house."

"Throth, then, I'm sorry for that," said Toal, "for she's a woman I don't like; an' I now say beforehand, that devil a *traneen* she'll be the betther of me, Art."

"Settle that," replied Art, "between you; at all events, be ready on Sunday next—the christenin's fixed for it."

After some farther chat, Toal, who, we should have informed our readers, had removed from his father's old residence into Ballykeerin, took his departure, quite proud at the notion of being a godfather at all; for in truth it was the first occasion on which he ever had an opportunity of arriving at that honor.

Art was a strictly conscientious man; so much so, indeed, that he never defrauded a human being to the value of a farthing; and as for truth, it was the standard principle of his whole life. Honesty, truth, and sobriety are, indeed, the three great virtues upon which all that is honorable, prosperous, and happy is founded. Art's conscientious scruples were so strong, that although in point of fact the term of his oath had expired at twelve o'clock in the forenoon, he would not permit himself to taste a drop of spirits until after twelve at night.

"It's best," said he to his brother, "to be on the safe side at all events: a few hours is neither one way nor the other. We haven't now more than a quarther to go, and then for a tight drop to wet my whistle, an' dhrink the little *girsha's* health an' her mother's. Throth I've put in a good apprenticehip to sobriety, anyhow. Come, Madjey," he added, addressing the servant-maid, "put down the kettle till we have a little jorum of our own; Frank here and myself; and all of yez."

"Very little jorum will go far wid me, you know, Art," replied his brother; "an' if you take my advice, you'll not go beyond bounds yourself either."

"Throth, Frank, an' I'll not take either yours nor any other body's, until little Kate's christened. I think that afther a fast of seven years I'm entitled to a stretch."

"Well, well," said his brother; "I see you're on for it; but as you said yourself a while ago, it's best to be on the safe side, you know."

"Why, dang it, Frank, sure you don't imagine I'm goin' to drink the town dhry; there's raison in everything."

At length the kettle was boiled, and the punch made; Art took his tumbler in hand, and rose up; he looked at it, then glanced at his brother, who observed that he got pale and agitated.

"What ails you?" said he; "is there any thing wrong wid you?"

"I'm thinkin'," replied Art, "of what I suffered wanst by it; an' besides, it's so long since I tasted it, that somehow I jist feel for all the world as if the oath was scarcely off of me yet, or as if I was doin' what's not right."

"That's mere weakness," said Frank; "but still, if you have any scruple, don't drink it; bekaise the truth is, Art, you couldn't have

a scruple that will do you more good than one against liquor."

"Well, I'll only take this tumbler an' another to-night; and then we'll go to bed, plase goodness."

His agitation then passed away, and he drank a portion of the liquor.

"I'm thinkin', Art," said Frank, "that it wouldn't be aisy to find two men that has a bettther right to be thankful to God for the good fortune we've both had, than yourself and me. The Lord has been good to me, for I'm thrivin' to my heart's content, and savin' money every day."

"And glory be to his holy name," said Art, looking with a strong sense of religious feeling upward, "so am I; and if we both hould to this, we'll die rich, plaise goodness. I have saved up very well, too; and here I sit this night as happy a man as is in Europe. The world's flowin' on me, an' I want for nothin'; I have good health, a clear conscience, and everything that a man in my condition of life can stand in need of, or wish for; glory be to God for it all!"

"Amen," said Frank; "glory be to his name for it!"

"But, Frank," said Art, "there's one thing that I often wonder at, an' indeed so does every one a'most."

"What is that, Art?"

"Why, that you don't think o' marryin'. Sure you have good means to keep a wife and rear a family now; an' of coorse we all wonder that you don't."

"Indeed, to tell you the truth, Art, I don't know myself what's the raison of it—the only wife I think of is my business; but any way, if you was to see the patthern of married life there is undher the roof wid me, you'd not be much in consate wid marriage yourself, if you war a bachelor."

"Why," inquired the other, "don't they agree?"

"Ay do they, so well that they get sometimes into very close an' lovin' grips togather; if ever there was a scald alive she's one o' them, an' him that was wanst so careless and aisey-tempered, she has now made him as bad as herself—has trained him regularly until he has a tongue that would face a ridgment. Tut, sure divil a week that they don't flake one another, an' half my time's taken up reddin' them."

"Did you ever happen to get the reddin' blow? eh? ha, ha, ha!"

"No, not yet; but the truth is, Art, that an ill-tongued wife has driven many a husband to ruin, an' only that I'm there to pay attention to the business, he'd be a poor drunken beggarman long ago, an' all owin' to her vile temper."

"Does she dhrink?"

"No, sorra drop—this wickedness all comes natural to her; she wouldn't be aisy out of hot wather, and poor Jack's parboiled in it every day in the year."

"Well, it's I that have got the treasure, Frank; from the day that I first saw her face till the minute we're spakin' in, I never knew her temper to turn—always the same sweet word, the same flow of spirits, and the same light laugh; her love an' affection for me an' the childher there couldn't be language found for. Come, throth we'll drink her health in another tumbler, and a speedy uprise to her, asthore machree that she is, an' when I think of how she set every one of her people at defiance, and took her lot wid myself so nobly, my heart burns wid love for her, ay, I feel my very heart burnin' widin me."

Two tumblers were again mixed, and Margaret's health was drunk.

"Here's her health," said Art, "may God grant her long life and happiness!"

"Amen!" responded Frank, "an' may He grant that she'll never know a sorrowful heart!"

Art laid down his tumbler, and covered his eyes with his hands for a minute or two.

"I'm not ashamed, Frank," said he, "I'm not a bit ashamed of these tears—she deserves them—where is her aiqui? oh, where is her aiqui? It's she herself that has the tear for the distresses of her fellow-creatures, an' the ready hand to relieve them; may the Almighty shower down his blessins on her!"

"Them tears do you credit," replied Frank, "and although I always thought well of you, Art, and liked you betther than any other in the family, although I didn't say much about it, still, I tell you, I think bettther of you this minute than I ever did in my life."

"There's only one thing in the wide world that's throublin' her," said Art, "an' that is, that she hadn't her parents' blessin' when she married me, nor since—for ould Murray's as stiff-necked as a mule, an' the more he's driven to do a thing the less he'll do it."

"In that case," observed Frank, "the best plan is to let him alone; maybe when it's not axed for he'll give it."

"I wish he would," said Art, "for Margaret's sake; it would take away a good deal of uneasiness from her mind."

The conversation afterwards took several turns, and embraced a variety of topics, till the second tumbler was finished.

"Now," said Art, "as there's but the two of us, and in regard of the occasion that's in it, throth we'll jist take one more a piece."

"No," replied Frank, "I never go beyant two, and you said you wouldn't."

"Hut, man, divil a matther for that; sure there's only ourselves two, as I said, an' where's the harm? Throth, it's a long time since I felt myself so comfortable, an' besides, it's not every night we have you wid us. Come, Frank, one more in honor of the occasion."

"Another drop won't cross my lips this night," returned his brother, firmly, "so you needn't be mixin' it."

"Sorra foot you'll go to bed to-night till you take another; there, now it's mixed, so you know you *must* take it now."

"Not a drop."

"Well, for the sake of poor little Kate, that you're to stand for; come, Frank, death alive, man!"

"Would my drinkin' it do Kate any good?"

"Hut, man alive, sure if one was to lay down the law that way upon every thing, they might as well be out of the world at wanst; come, Frank."

"No, Art, I said I wouldn't, and I won't break my word."

"But, sure, that's only a trifle; take the liquor; the sorra betther tumbler of punch ever was made: it's Barney Scaddhan's whiskey."*

"An' if Barney Scaddhan keeps good whiskey, is that any rason why I should break my word, or would you have me get dhrunk because his liquor's betther than another man's?"

"Well, for the sake of poor Margaret, then, an' she so fond o' you; sure many a time she tould me that sorra brother-in-law ever she had she likes so well, an' I know it's truth; that I may never handle a plane but it is; dang it, Frank, don't be so stiff."

"I never was stiff, Art, but I always was, and always will be, firm, when I know I'm in the right; as I said about the child, what good would my drinkin' that tumbler of punch do Margaret? None in life; it would do her no good, and it would do myself harm. Sure, we *did* drink her health."

"An' is that your respect for her?" said Art, in a huff, "if that's it, why—"

"There's not a man livin' respects her more highly, or knows her worth betther than I do," replied Frank, interrupting him, "but I simply ax you, Art, what mark of true respect would the fact of my drinkin' that tumbler of punch be to her? The world's full of these foolish errors, and bad ould customs, and the sooner they're laid aside, an' proper ones put in their place, the betther."

"Oh, very well, Frank, the sorra one o' me will ask you to take it agin; I only say, that if I was in your house, as you are in mine, I wouldn't break squares about a beggarly tumbler of punch."

"So much the worse, Art, I would rather you would; there, now, you have taken your third tumbler, yet you said when we sat down that you'd confine yourself to two; is that keepin' your word? I know you may call breakin' it now a trifle, but I tell you, that when a man begins to break his word in trifles, he'll soon go on to greater things, and maybe end without much regardin' it in any thing."

"You don't mane to say, Frank, or to hint, that ever I'd come to sich a state as that I wouldn't regard my word."

"I do not; but even if I did, by followin' up this coorse you'd put yourself in the right way of comin' to it."

"Throth, I'll not let this other one be lost either," he added, drawing over to him the tumbler which he had filled for his brother; "I've an addition to my family—the child an' mother doin' bravely, an' didn't taste a dhrop these seven long years; here's your health, at all events, Frank, an' may the Lord put it into your heart to marry a wife, an' be as happy as I am. Here, Madgey, come here, I say; take that whiskey an' sugar, an' mix yourselves a jorum; it's far in the night, but no matther for that—an' see, before you mix it, go an' bring my own darlin' Art, till he dhrinks his mother's health."

"Why now, Art," began his brother, "is it possible that you can have the conscience to taich the poor boy sich a cursed habit so soon? What are you about this minute but trainin' him up to what may be his own destruction yet?"

"Come now, Frank, none of your moralizin';" the truth is, that the punch was beginning rapidly to affect his head; "none of your moralizin', throth it's a preacher you ought to be, or a lawyer, to lay down the law. Here, Madgey, bring him to me; that's my son, that there isn't the like of in Ballykeerin, any way. Eh, Frank, it's ashamed of him I ought to be, isn't it? Kiss me, Art, and then kiss your uncle Frank, the best uncle that ever broke the world's bread is the same Frank—that's a good boy, Art; come now, drink your darlin' mother's health in this glass of brave punch; my mother's health, say, long life an' happiness to her! that's a man, toss it off at wanst, bravo; arra, Frank, didn't he do that manly? the Lord love him, where 'ud you get sich a fine swaddy as he is of his age? Oh, Frank, what 'ud become of

* Scaddhan, a herring, a humorous nickname bestowed upon him, because he made the foundation of his fortune by selling herrings.

me if anything happened that boy? it's a mad-house would hould me soon. May the Lord in heaven save and guard him from all evil and danger!"

Frank saw that it was useless to remonstrate with him at such a moment, for the truth is, intoxication was setting in fast, and all his influence over him was gone.

"Here, Atty, before you go to bed agin, jist a weeshy sup more to drink your little sisther's health; sure Kate Sharpe brought you home a little sisther, Atty."

"The boy's head will not be able to stand so much," said Frank; "you will make him tipsy."

"Divil a tipsy; sure it's only a mere *drainen*."

He then made the little fellow drink the baby's health, after which he was despatched to bed.

"Throth, it's in for a penny in for a pound wid myself. I know, Frank, that—that there's something or other wrong wid my head, or at any rate wid my eyes; for everything, somehow, is movin'. Is everything movin', Frank?"

"You think so," said Frank, "because you're fast getting tipsy—if you arn't tipsy all out."

"Well, then, if I'm tip—tipsy, divil a bit the worse I can be by another tumbler. Come, Frank, here's the ould blood of Ireland—the Maguires of Fermanagh! And now, Frank, I tell you, it would more become you to drink that toast, than to be sittin' there like an oracle, as you are: for upon my sowl, you're nearly as bad. But, Frank."

"Well, Art."

"Isn't little Toal Finnigan a civil little fellow—that is—if he was well made. 'There never stood,' says he, 'sich a couple in the chapel of—of Aughindrumon, nor there never walked sich a couple up or down the street of Ballykeerin—that's the chat,' says he: an' whisper, Frank, ne—neither did there. Whe—where is Margaret's aiquil, I'd—I'd like to know? an' as for me, I'll measure myself across the shoulldhers aginst e'er a—a man, woman, or child in—in the parish. Co—come here, now, Frank, till I me—measure the small o' my leg ag—aginst yours; or if—if that makes you afeard, I'll measure the—the ball of my leg aginst the ball of yours. There's a wrist, Frank; look at that? jist look at it."

"I see it; it is a powerful wrist."

"But feel it."

"Tut, Art, sure I see it."

"D—n it, man, jist feel it—feel the breadth of—of that bone. Augh—that's the—the wrist; so anyhow, here's little Toal Finnigan's health, an' I don't care what they say, I like little Toal, an' I will like little Toal; bekaise—aise if—if he was the divil, as—as they say he is, in disguise—ha, ha, ha! he has a civil tongue in his head."

He then commenced and launched out into the most extravagant praises of himself, his wife, his children; and from these he passed to the ould blood of Ireland, and the Fermanagh Maguires.

"Where," he said, "whe—where is there in the country, or anywhere else, a family that has sich blood as ours in their veins? Very well; an' aren't we proud of it, as we have a right to be? Where's the Maguire that would do a mane or shabby act? tha—that's what I'd like to know. Isn't the word of a Maguire looked upon as aiquil to—to an—another man's oath; an' where's the man of them that was—as ever known to break it? Eh Frank? No; stead—ed—steady's the word wid the Maguires, and honor bright."

Frank was about to remind him that he had in his own person given a proof that night that a Maguire could break his word, and commit a disreputable action besides; but as he saw it was useless, he judiciously declined then making any observation whatsoever upon it.

After a good deal of entreaty, Frank succeeded in prevailing on him to go to bed; in which, however, he failed, until Art had inflicted on him three woful songs, each immensely long, and sung in that peculiarly fascinating drawl, which is always produced by intoxication. At length, and when the night was more than half spent, he assisted him to bed—a task of very considerable difficulty, were it not that it was relieved by his receiving from the tipsy man several admirable precepts, and an abundance of excellent advice, touching his conduct in the world; not forgetting religion, on which he dwelt with a maudlin solemnity of manner, that was, or would have been to strangers, extremely ludicrous. Frank, however, could not look upon it with levity. He understood his brother's character and foibles too well, and feared that notwithstanding his many admirable qualities, his vanity and want of firmness, or, in other words, of self-dependence, might overbalance them all.

The next morning his brother Frank was obliged to leave betimes, and consequently had no opportunity of advising or remonstrating with him. On rising, he felt sick and feverish, and incapable of going into his workshop. The accession made to his family being known, several of his neighbors came in to inquire after the health of his wife and infant; and as Art, when left to his own

guidance, had never been remarkable for keeping a secret, he made no scruple of telling them that he had got drunk the night before, and was, of course, quite out of order that morning. Among the rest, the first to come in was little Toal Finnigan, who, in addition to his other virtues, possessed a hardness of head—by which we mean a capacity for bearing drink—that no liquor, or no quantity of liquor, could overcome.

"Well," said Toal, "sure it's very reasonable that you should be out of order; after bein' seven years from it, it doesn't come so natural to you as it would do. Howandiver, you know that there's but the one cure for it—a hair of the same dog that bit you; and if you're afeared to take the same hair by yourself, why I'll take a tuft of it wid you, an' we'll dhrink the wife's health—my ould sweetheart—and the little sthranger's."

"Throth I believe you're right," said Art, "in regard to the cure; so in the name of goodness we'll have a *gauliogue* to begin the day wid, an' set the hair straight on us."

During that day, Art was neither drunk nor sober, but halfway between the two states. He went to his workshop about two o'clock; but his journeymen and apprentices could smell the strong whiskey off him, and perceive an occasional thickness of pronunciation in his speech, which a good deal surprised them. When evening came, however, his neighbors, whom he had asked in, did not neglect to attend; the bottle was again produced, and poor Art, the principle of restraint having now been removed, re-enacted much the same scene as on the preceding night, with this exception only, that he was now encouraged instead of being checked or reproved.

There were now only three days to elapse until the following Sabbath, on which day the child was to be baptized; one of them, that is, the one following his first intoxication with Frank, was lost to him, for, as we have said, though not precisely drunk, he was not in a condition to work, nor properly to give directions. The next he felt himself in much the same state, but with still less of regret.

"The truth is," said he, "I won't be rightly able to do any thing till afther this christenin', so that I may set down the remaindher o' the week as lost; well, sure that won't break me at any rate. It's long since I lost a week before, and we must only make up for it; afther the christenin' I'll work double tides."

This was all very plausible reasoning, but very fallacious notwithstanding; indeed, it is this description of logic which conceals the full extent of a man's errors from himself, and which has sent thousands forward on their career to ruin. Had Art, for instance, been guided by his steady and excellent brother, or, what would have been better still, by his own good sense and firmness, he would have got up the next morning in health, with an easy mind, and a clear conscience, and been able to resume his work as usual. Instead of that, the night's debauch produced its natural consequences, feverishness and indisposition, which, by the aid of a bad proverb, and worse company, were removed by the very cause which produced them. The second night's debauch lost the following day, and then, forsooth, the week was nearly gone, and it wasn't worth while to change the system, as if it was ever too soon to mend, or as if even a single day's work were not a matter of importance to a mechanic. Let any man who feels himself reasoning as Art Maguire did, rest assured that there is an evil principle within him, which, unless he strangle it by prompt firmness, and a strong conviction of moral duty, will ultimately be his destruction.

There was once a lake, surrounded by very beautiful scenery, to which its waters gave a fine and picturesque effect. This lake was situated on an elevated part of the country, and a little below it, facing the west, was a precipice, which terminated a lovely valley, that gradually expanded until it was lost in the rich campaign country below. From this lake there was no outlet of water whatsoever, but its shores at the same time were rich and green, having been all along devoted to pasture. Now, it so happened that a boy, whose daily occupation was to tend his master's sheep, went one day when the winds were strong, to the edge of the lake, on the side to which they blew, and began to amuse himself by making a small channel in the soft earth with his naked foot. This small identation was gradually made larger and larger by the waters—whenever the wind blew strongly in that direction—until, in the course of time, it changed into a deep chasm, which wore away the earth that intervened between the lake and the precipice. The result may be easily guessed. When the last portion of the earth gave way, the waters of the lake precipitated themselves upon the beautiful and peaceful glen, carrying death and destruction in their course, and leaving nothing but a dark unsightly morass behind them. So is it with the mind of man. When he gives the first slight assent to a wrong tendency, or a vicious resolution, he resembles the shepherd's boy, who, unconscious of the consequences that followed, made the first small channel in the earth with his naked foot. The vice or the passion will

enlarge itself by degrees until all power of resistance is removed, and the heart becomes a victim to the impetuosity of an evil principle to which no assent of the will ever should have been given.

Art, as we have said, lost the week, and then came Sunday for the christening. On that day, of conrse, an extra cup was but naturd, especially as it would put an end to his indulgence on the one hand, and his idleness on the other. Monday morning would enable him to open a new leaf, and as it was the last day—that is, Sunday was—why, dang it, he would take a good honest jorum. Frank, who had a greater regard for Art's character than it appeared Art himself had, spoke to him privately on the morning of the christening, as to the necessity and decency of keeping himself sober on that day; but, alas! during this friendly admonition he could perceive, that early as it was, his brother was not exactly in a state of perfect sobriety. His remonstrances were very unpalatable to Art, and as a consciousness of his conduct, added to the nervousness produced by drink, had both combined to produce irritability of temper, he addressed himself more harshly to his brother than he had ever done in his life before. Frank, for the sake of peace, gave up the task, although he saw clearly enough that the christening was likely to terminate, at least so far as Art was concerned, in nothing less than a drunken debauch. This, indeed, was true. Little Toal, who drank more liquor than any two among them, and Frank himself, were the only sober persons present, all the rest having successfully imitated the example set them by Art, who was carried to bed at an early hour in the evening. This was but an indifferent preparation for his resolution to commence work on Monday morning, as the event proved. When the morning came, he was incapable of work; a racking pain in the head, and sickness of stomach, were the comfortable assurances of his inability. Here was another day lost; but finding that *it also* was irretrievably gone, he thought it would be no great harm to try the old cure—a hair of the dog—as before, and it did not take much force of reasoning to persuade himself to that course. In this manner he went on, losing day after day, until another week was lost. At length he found himself in his workshop, considerably wrecked and debilitated, striving with tremulous and unsteady hands to compensate for his lost time; it was now, however, too late—the evil habit had been contracted—the citadel had been taken—the waters had been poisoned at their source—the small track with the naked foot had been made. From this time forward he did little but make resolutions to-day, which he broke to-morrow; in the course of some time he began to drink with his own workmen, and even admitted his apprentices to their potations. Toal Finnigan, and about six or eight dissolute and drunken fellows, inhabitants of Ballykeerin, were his constant companions, and never had they a drinking bout that he was not sent for: sometimes they would meet in his own workshop, which was turned into a tap-room, and there drink the better part of the day. Of course the workmen could not be forgotten in their potations, and, as a natural consequence, all work was suspended, business at a stand, time lost, and morals corrupted.

His companions now availed themselves of his foibles, which they drew out into more distinct relief. Joined to an overweening desire to hear himself praised, was another weakness, which proved to be very beneficial to his companions; this was a swaggering and consequential determination, when tipsy, to pay the whole reckoning, and to treat every one he knew.

He was a Maguire—he was a gentleman—had the old blood in his veins, and that he might never handle a plane, if any man present should pay a shilling, so long as he was to the fore. This was an argument in which he always had the best of it; his companions taking care, even if he happened to forget it, that some chance word or hint should bring it to his memory.

"Here, Barney Scaddhan—Barney, I say, what's the reckonin', you sinner? Now, Art Maguire, divil a penny of *this* you'll pay for—you're too gineroos, an' have the heart of a prince."

"And kind family for him to have the heart of a prince, sure we all know what the Fermanagh Maguires wor; of coorse we won't let *him* pay."

"Toal Finnigan, do you want me to rise my hand to you? I tell you that a single man here won't pay a penny o' reckonin', while I'm to the good; and, to make short work of it, by the contints o' the book, I'll strike the first of ye that'll attempt it. Now!"

"Faix, an' I for one," said Toal, "won't come undher your fist; it's little whiskey ever I'd drink if I did."

"Well, well," the others would exclaim, "that ends it; howendiver, never mind, Art, I'll engage we'll have our revenge on you for that—the next meetin' you won't carry it all your own way; we'll be as stiff as you'll be stout, my boy, although you beat us out of it now."

"Augh," another would say, in a whisper especially designed for him, "by the livin'

farmer there never was one, even of the Maguires, like him, an' that's no lie."

Art would then pay the reckoning with the air of a nobleman, or, if he happened to be without money, he would order it to be scored to him, for as yet his credit was good.

It is wonderful to reflect how vanity blinds common sense, and turns all the power of reason and judgment to nothing. Art was so thoroughly infatuated by his own vanity, that he was utterly incapable of seeing through the gross and selfish flattery with which they plied him. Nay, when praising him, or when *sticking him in* for drink, as it is termed, they have often laughed in his very face, so conscious were they that it could be done with impunity.

This course of life could not fail to produce suitable consequences to his health, his reputation, and his business. His customers began to find now that the man whose word had never been doubted, and whose punctuality was proverbial, became so careless and negligent in attending to his orders, that it was quite useless to rely upon his promises, and, as a very natural consequence, they began to drop off one after another, until he found to his cost that a great number of his best and most respectable supporters ceased to employ him.

When his workmen, too, saw that he had got into tippling and irregular habits, and that his eye was not, as in the days of his industry, over them, they naturally became careless and negligent, as did the apprentices also. Nor was this all; the very individuals who had been formerly remarkable for steadiness, industry, and sobriety—for Art would then keep no other—were now, many of them, corrupted by his own example, and addicted to idleness and drink. This placed him in a very difficult position; for how, we ask, could he remonstrate with them so long as he himself transgressed more flagrantly than they did? For this reason he was often forced to connive at outbreaks of drunkenness and gross cases of neglect, which no *sober* man would suffer in those whom he employed.

"Take care of your business, and your business will take care of you," is a good and a wholesome proverb, that cannot be too strongly impressed on the minds of the working classes. Art began to feel surprised that his business was declining, but as yet his good sense was strong enough to point out to him the cause of it. His mind now became disturbed, for while he felt conscious that his own neglect and habits of dissipation occasioned it, he also felt that he was but a child in the strong grasp of his own propensities. This was anything but a consoling reflection, and so long as it lasted he was gloomy, morbid, and peevish; his excellent wife was the first to remark this, and, indeed, was the first that had occasion to remark it, for even in this stage of his life, the man who had never spoken to her, or turned his eye upon her, but with tenderness and affection, now began, especially when influenced by drink, to give manifestations of temper that grieved her to the heart. Abroad, however, he was the same good-humored fellow as ever, with a few rare exceptions—when he got quarrelsome and fought with his companions. His workmen all were perfectly aware of his accessibility to flattery, and some of them were not slow to avail themselves of it: these were the idle and unscrupulous, who, as they resembled himself, left nothing unsaid or undone to maintain his good opinion, and they succeeded. His business now declined so much, that he was obliged to dismiss some of them, and, as if he had been fated to ruin, the honest and independent, who scorned to flatter his weaknesses, were the very persons put out of his employment, because their conduct was a silent censure upon his habits, and the men he retained were those whom he himself had made drunken and profligate by his example; so true is it that a drunkard is his own enemy in a thousand ways.

Here, then, is our old friend Art falling fast away from the proverbial integrity of his family—his circumstances are rapidly declining—his business running to a point—his reputation sullied, and his temper becoming sharp and vehement; these are strong indications of mismanagement, neglect, and folly, or, in one word, of a propensity to drink.

About a year and a half has now elapsed, and Art, in spite of several most determined resolutions to reform, is getting still worse in every respect. It is not to be supposed, however, that during this period he has not had visitations of strong feeling—of repentance—remorse—or that love of drink had so easy a victory over him as one would imagine. No such thing. These internal struggles sometimes affected him even unto agony, and he has frequently wept bitter tears on finding himself the victim of this terrible habit. He had not, however, the courage to look into his own condition with a firm eye, or to examine the state of either his heart or his circumstances with the resolution of a man who knows that he must suffer pain by the inspection. Art could not bear the pain of such an examination, and, in order to avoid feeling it, he had recourse to the oblivion of drink; not reflecting that the adoption of every such remedy for care re-

semblies the wisdom of the man, who, when raging under the tortures of thirst, attempted to allay them by drinking sea-water. Drink relieved him for a moment, but he soon found that in his case the remedy was only another name for the disease.

It is not necessary to assure our readers that during Art's unhappy progress hitherto, his admirable brother Frank felt wrung to the heart by his conduct. All that good advice, urged with good feeling and good sense, could do, was tried on him, but to no purpose; he ultimately lost his temper on being reasoned with, and flew into a passion with Frank, whom he abused for interfering, as he called it, in business which did not belong to him. Notwithstanding this bluster, however, there was no man whom he feared so much; in fact, he dreaded his very appearance, and would go any distance out of his way rather than come in contact with him. He felt Frank's moral ascendency too keenly, and was too bitterly sensible of the neglect with which he had treated his affectionate and friendly admonitions, to meet him with composure. Indeed, we must say, that, independently of his brother Frank, he was not left to his own impulses, without many a friendly and sincere advice. The man had been so highly respected—his name was so stainless—his conduct so good, so blameless; he stood forth such an admirable pattern of industry, punctuality, and sobriety, that his departure from all these virtues occasioned general regret and sorrow. Every friend hoped that he would pay attention to *his* advice, and every friend tried it, but, unfortunately, every friend failed. Art, now beyond the reach of reproof, acted as every man like him acts; he avoided those who, because they felt an interest in his welfare, took the friendly liberty of attempting to rescue him, and consequently associated only with those who drank with him, flattered him, skulked upon him, and laughed at him.

One friend, however, he had, who, above all others, first in place and in importence, we cannot overlook—that friend was his admirable and affectionate wife. Oh, in what language can we adequately describe her natural and simple eloquence, her sweetness of disposition, her tenderness, her delicacy of reproof, and her earnest struggles to win back her husband from the habits which were destroying him! And in the beginning she was often successful for a time, and many a tear of transient repentance has she occasioned him to shed, when she succeeded in touching his heart, and stirring his affection for her and for their children.

In circumstances similar to Art's, however, we first feel our own errors, we then feel grateful to those who have the honesty to reprove us for them: by and by, on finding that we are advancing on the wrong path, we begin to disrelish the advice, as being only an unnecessary infliction of pain; having got so far as to disrelish the advice, we soon begin to disrelish the adviser; and ultimately, we become so thoroughly wedded to our own selfish vices, as to hate every one who would take us out of their trammels.

When Art found that the world, as he said, was going against him, instead of rallying, as he might, and ought to have done, he began to abuse the world, and attribute to *it* all the misfortunes which he himself, and not the world, had occasioned him. The world, in fact, is nothing to any man but the reflex of himself; if you treat yourself well, and put yourself out of the power of the world, the world will treat you well, and respect you; but if you neglect yourself, do not at all be surprised that the world and your friends will neglect you also. So far the world acts with great justice and propriety, and takes its cue from your own conduct; you cannot, therefore, blame the world without first blaming yourself.

Two years had now elapsed, and Art's business was nearly gone; he had been obliged to discharge the drunken fellows we spoke of, but not until they had assisted in a great measure to complete his ruin. Two years of dissipation, neglect of business, and drunkenness, were quite sufficient to make Art feel that it is a much easier thing to fall into poverty and contempt, than to work a poor man's way, from early struggle and the tug of life, to ease and independence.

His establishment was now all but closed; the two apprentices had scarcely anything to do, and, indeed, generally amused themselves in the workshop by playing Spoil Five—a fact which was discovered by Art himself, who came on them unexpectedly one day when tipsy; but, as he happened to be in an extremely good humor, he sat down and took a hand along with them. This was a new element of enjoyment to him, and instead of reproving them for their dishonest conduct, he suffered himself to be drawn into the habit of gambling, and so strongly did this grow upon him, that from henceforth he refused to participate in any drinking bout unless the parties were to play for the liquor. For this he had now neither temper nor coolness; while drinking upon the ordinary plan with his companions, he almost uniformly paid the reckoning from sheer vanity; or, in other words, because they managed him; but now that it depended upon what he considered to be *skill*, nothing ever put him so completely out of tem-

per as to be put in for it. This low gambling became a passion with him; but it was a passion that proved to be the fruitful cause of fights and quarrels without end. Being seldom either cool or sober, he was a mere dupe in the hands of his companions; but whether by fair play or foul, the moment he perceived that the game had gone against him, that moment he generally charged his opponents with dishonesty and fraud, and then commenced a fight. Many a time has he gone home, beaten and bruised, and black, and cut, and every way disfigured in these vile and blackguard contests; but so inveterately had this passion for card-playing—that is, gambling for liquor—worked itself upon him, that he could not suffer a single day to pass without indulging in it. Defeat of any kind was a thing he could never think of; but for a Maguire—one of the great Fermanagh Maguires—to be beaten at a rascally game of Spoil Five, was not to be endured; the matter was impossible, unless by foul play, and as there was only one method of treating those who could stoop to the practice of foul play, why he seldom lost any time in adopting it. This was to apply the fist, and as he had generally three or four against him, and as, in most instances, he was in a state of intoxication, it usually happened that he received most punishment.

Up to this moment we have not presented Art to our readers in any other light than that of an ordinary drunkard, seen tipsy and staggering in the streets, or singing as he frequently was, or fighting, or playing cards in the public-houses. Heretofore he was not before the world, and in everybody's eye; but he had now become so common a sight in the town of Ballykeerin, that his drunkenness was no longer a matter of surprise to its inhabitants. At the present stage of his life he could not bear to see his brother Frank; and his own Margaret, although unchanged and loving as ever, was no longer to him the Margaret that she had been. He felt how much he had despised her advice, neglected her comfort, and forgotten the duties which both God and nature had imposed upon him, with respect to her and their children. These feelings coming upon him during short intervals of reflection, almost drove him mad, and he has often come home to her and them in a frightful and terrible consciousness that he had committed some great crime, and that she and their children were involved in its consequences.

"Margaret," he would say, "Margaret, what is it I've done aginst you and the childre? I have done some great crime aginst you all, for surely if I didn't, you wouldn't look as you do—Margaret, asthore, where is the color that was in your cheeks? and my own Art here—that always pacifies me when nobody else can—even Art doesn't look what he used to be."

"Well, sure he will, Art, dear," she would reply; "now will you let me help you to bed? it's late; it's near three o'clock; Oh Art, dear, if you were——"

"I won't go to bed—I'll stop here where I am, wid my head on the table, till mornin'. Now do you know—come here, Margaret—let me hear you—do you know, and are you sensible of the man you're married to?"

"To be sure I am."

"No, I tell you; I say you are not. There is but one person in the house that knows that."

"You're right, Art darlin'—you're right. Come here, Atty; go to your father; you know what to say, avick"

"Well, Art," he would continue, "do *you* know who your father is?"

"Ay do I; he's one of THE GREAT FERMANAGH MAGUIRES—the greatest family in the kingdom. Isn't *that* it?"

"That's it, Atty darlin'—come an' kiss me for that; yes, I'm one of *the great Fermanagh Maguires*. Isn't that a glorious thing, Atty?"

"Now, Art, darlin', will you let me help you to bed—think of the hour it is."

"I won't go, I tell you. I'll sit here wid my head on the table all night. Come here, Atty. Atty, it's wondherful how I love you—above all creatures livin' do I love you. Sure I never refuse to do any thing for you, Atty; do I now?"

"Well, then, will you come to bed for me?"

"To be sure I will, at wanst;" and the unhappy man instantly rose and staggered into his bed-room, aided and supported by his wife and child; for the latter lent whatever little assistance he could give to his drunken father, whom he tenderly loved.

His shop, however, is now closed, the apprentices are gone, and the last miserable source of their support no longer exists. Poverty now sets in, and want and destitution. He parts with his tools; but not for the purpose of meeting the demands of his wife and children at home; no; but for drink—drink—drink—drink. He is now in such a state that he cannot, dares not, reflect, and consequently, drink is more necessary to him than ever. His mind, however, is likely soon to be free from the pain of thinking; for it is becoming gradually debauched and brutified—is sinking, in fact, to the lowest and most pitiable state of degradation. It was then,

indeed, that he felt how the world deals with a man who leaves himself depending on it.

His friends had now all abandoned him; decent people avoided him—he had fallen long ago below pity, and was now an object of contempt. His family at home were destitute; every day brought hunger—positive, absolute want of food wherewith to support nature. His clothes were reduced to tatters; so were those of his wife and children. His frame, once so strong and athletic, was now wasted away to half its wonted size; his hands were thin, tremulous, and fleshless; his face pale and emaciated; and his eye dead and stupid. He was now nearly alone in the world. Low and profligate as were his drunken companions, yet *even they* shunned him; and so contemptuously did they treat him, now that he was no longer able to pay his way, or enable the scoundrels to swill at his expense, that whenever he happened to enter Barney Scaddhan's tap, while they were in it, they immediately expelled him without ceremony, or Barney did it for them. He now hated home; there was nothing there for him, but cold, naked, shivering destitution. The furniture had gone by degrees for liquor; tables, chairs, kitchen utensils, bed and bedding, with the exception of a miserable blanket for Margaret and the child, had all been disposed of for about one-tenth part of their value. Alas, what a change is this from comfort, industry, independence, and respectability, to famine, wretchedness, and the utmost degradation! Even Margaret, whose noble heart beat so often in sympathy with the distresses of the poor, has scarcely any one now who will feel sympathy with her own. Not that she was utterly abandoned by all. Many a time have the neighbors, in a stealthy way, brought a little relief in the shape of food, to her and her children. Sorry are we to say, however, that there were in the town of Ballykeerin, persons whom she had herself formerly relieved, and with whom the world went well since, who now shut their eyes against her misery, and refused to assist her. Her lot, indeed, was now a bitter one, and required all her patience, all her fortitude to enable her to bear up under it. Her husband was sunk down to a pitiable pitch, his mind consisting, as it were, only of two elements, stupidity and ill-temper. Up until the disposal of all the furniture, he had never raised his hand to her, or gone beyond verbal abuse; now, however, his temper became violent and brutal. All sense of shame—every pretext for decency—all notions of self-respect, were gone, and nothing was left to sustain or check him. He could not look in upon himself and find one spark of decent pride, or a single principle left that contained the germ of his redemption. He now gave himself over as utterly lost, and consequently felt no scruple to stoop to any act, no matter how mean or contemptible. In the midst of all this degradation, however, there was one recollection which he never gave up; but alas, to what different and shameless purposes did he now prostitute it! That which had been in his better days a principle of just pride, a spur to industry, an impulse to honor, and a safeguard to integrity, had now become the catchword of a mendicant—the cant or slang, as it were, of an impostor. He was not ashamed to beg in its name—to ask for whiskey in its name—and to sink, in its name, to the most sordid supplications.

"Will you stand the price of a glass? I'm Art Maguire; *one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh!* Think of the blood of the Maguires, and stand a glass. Barney Scaddhan won't trust me now; although many a pound and penny of good money I left him."

"Ay," the person accosted would reply, "an' so sign's on you; you would be a different man to-day, had you visited Barney Scaddhan's seldomer, or kept out of it altogether."

"It's not a sarmon I want; will you stand the price of a glass?"

"Not a drop."

"Go to blazes, then, if you won't. I'm a better man than ever you wor, an' have better blood in my veins. The great Fermanagh Maguires forever!"

But, hold—we must do the unfortunate man justice. Amidst all this degradation, and crime, and wretchedness, there yet shone undimmed one solitary virtue. This was an abstract but powerful affection for his children, especially for his eldest son; now a fine boy about eight or nine. In his worst and most outrageous moods—when all other influence failed—when the voice of his own Margaret, whom he once loved—oh how well! fell heedless upon his ears—when neither Frank, nor friend, nor neighbor could manage nor soothe him—let but the finger of his boy touch him, or a tone of his voice fall upon his ear, and he placed himself in his hands, and did whatever the child wished him.

One evening about this time, Margaret was sitting upon a small hassock of straw, that had been made for little Art, when he began to walk. It was winter, and there was no fire; a neighbor, however, had out of charity lent her a few dipped rushes, that they might not be in utter darkness. One of these was stuck against the wall, for they had no candlestick; and oh, what a pitiable

and melancholy spectacle did its dim and feeble light present! There she sat, the young, virtuous, charitable, and lovely Margaret of the early portion of our narrative, surrounded by her almost naked children—herself with such thin and scanty covering as would wring any heart but to know it. Where now was her beauty? Where her mirth, cheerfulness, and all her lightness of heart? Where? Let her ask that husband who once loved her so well, but who loved his own vile excesses and headlong propensities better. There, however, she sat, with a tattered cap on, through the rents of which her raven hair, once so beautiful and glossy, came out in matted elf-locks, and hung down about her thin and wasted neck. Her face was pale and ghastly as death; her eyes were without fire—full of languor—full of sorrow; and alas, beneath one of them, was too visible, by its discoloration, the foul mark of her husband's brutality. To this had their love, their tenderness, their affection come; and by what? Alas! by the curse of liquor—the demon of drunkenness—and want of manly resolution. She sat, as we have said, upon the little hassock, while shivering on her bosom was a sickly-looking child, about a year old, to whom she was vainly endeavoring to communicate some of her own natural warmth. The others, three in number, were grouped together for the same reason; for poor little Atty—who, though so very young, was his mother's only support, and hope, and consolation—sat with an arm about each, in order, as well as he could, to keep off the cold—the night being stormy and bitter. Margaret sat rocking herself to and fro, as those do who indulge in sorrow, and crooning for her infant the sweet old air of "*Tha ma cullha's na dhuska me*," or "I am asleep and don't waken me!"—a tender but melancholy air, which had something peculiarly touching in it on the occasion in question.

"Ah," she said, "I am asleep and don't waken me; if it wasn't for *your sakes*, darlins, it's I that long to be in that sleep that we will never waken from; but sure, lost in misery as we are, what could yez do without me still?"

"What do you mane, mammy?" said Atty; "sure doesn't everybody that goes to sleep waken out of it?"

"No, darlin'; there's a sleep that nobody wakens from."

"Dat quare sleep, mammy," said a little one. "Oh, but me's could, mammy; will we eva have blankets?"

The question, though simple, opened up the cheerless, the terrible future to her view. She closed her eyes, put her hands on them, as if she strove to shut it out, and shivered as much at the apprehension of what was before her, as with the chilly blasts that swept through the windowless house.

"I hope so, dear," she replied; "for God is good."

"And will he get us blankets, mammy?"

"Yes, darlin', I hope so."

"Me id rady he'd get us sometin' to ait fust, mammy: I'm starvin' wid hungry;" and the poor child began to cry for food.

The disconsolate mother was now assailed by the clamorous outcries of nature's first want, that of food. She surveyed her beloved little brood in the feeble light, and saw in all its horror the fearful impress of famine stamped upon their emaciated features, and strangely lighting up their little heavy eyes. She wrung her hands, and looking up silently to heaven, wept aloud for some minutes.

"Childre," she said at length, "have patience, poor things, an' you'll soon get something to eat. I sent over Nanny Hart to my sisther's, an' when she comes back ye'll get something;—so have patience, darlins, till then."

"But, mother," continued little Atty, who could not understand her allusion to the sleep from which there is no awakening; "what kind of sleep is it that people never waken from?"

"The sleep that's in the grave, Atty, dear; death is the sleep I mean."

"An' would you wish to die, mother?"

"Only for your sake, Atty, and for the sake of the other darlins, if it was the will of God, I would; and," she added, with a feeling of indescribable anguish, "what have I now to live for but to see you all about me in misery and sorrow!"

The tears as she spoke ran silently, but bitterly, down her cheeks.

"When I think of what your poor lost father was," she added, "when we wor happy, and when he was good, and when I think of what he is now—oh, my God, my God," she sobbed out, "my manly young husband, what curse has come over you that has brought you down to this! Curse! oh, *fareer gair*, it's a curse that's too well known in the country—it's the curse that laves many an industrious man's house as ours is this bitther night—it's the curse that takes away good name and comfort, and *honesty* (*that's* the only thing it has left us)—that takes away the strength of both body and mind—that banishes decency and shame—that laves many a widow and orphan to the marcy of an unfeelin' world—that fills the jail and the madhouse—that brings many a man an' woman to a disgraceful death—an' that tempts

us to the commission of every evil;—that curse, darlins, is whiskey—drinkin' whiskey—an' it is drinkin' whiskey that has left us as we are, and that has ruined your father, and destroyed him forever."

"Well, but there's no other curse over us, mother?"

The mother paused a moment—

"No, darlin'," she replied; "not a curse—but my father and mother both died, and did not give me their blessin'; but now, Atty, don't ask me anything more about that, bekase I can't tell you." This she added from a feeling of delicacy to her unhappy husband, whom, through all his faults and vices, she constantly held up to her children as an object of respect, affection, and obedience.

Again the little ones were getting importunate for food, and their cries were enough to touch any heart, much less that of a tender and loving mother. Margaret herself felt that some unusual delay must have occurred, or the messenger she sent to her sister must have long since returned; just then a foot was heard outside the door, and there was an impatient cessation of the cries, in the hope that it was the return of Nanny Hart—the door opened, and Toal Finnigan entered this wretched abode of sorrow and destitution.

There was something peculiarly hateful about this man, but in the eyes of Margaret there was something intensely so. She knew right well that he had been the worst and most demoralizing companion her husband ever associated with, and she had, besides, every reason to believe that, were it not for his evil influence over the vain and wretched man, he might have overcome his fatal propensity to tipple. She had often told Art this; but little Toal's tongue was too sweet, when aided by his dupe's vanity. Many a time had she observed a devilish leer of satanic triumph in the misshapen little scoundrel's eye, when bringing home her husband in a state of beastly intoxication, and for this reason, independently of her knowledge of his vile and heartless disposition, and infamous character, she detested him. After entering, he looked about him, and even with the faint light of the rush she could mark that his unnatural and revolting features were lit up with a hellish triumph.

"Well, Margaret Murray," said he, "I believe you are now nearly as badly off as you can be; your husband's past hope, and you are as low as a human bein' ever was. I'm now satisfied; you refused to marry me—you made a May-game of me—a hughin' stock of me, and *your* father tould *my* father that I had legs like reapin' hooks! Now, from the day you refused to marry me, I swore I'd never die till I'd have my revinge, and I have it; who has the laugh now, Margaret Murray?"

"You say," she replied calmly, "that I am as low as a human bein' can be, but that's false, Toal Finnigan, for I thank God I have committed no crime, and my name is pure and good, which is more than any one can say for you; begone from my place."

"I will," he replied, "but before I go jist let me tell you, that I have the satisfaction to know that, if I'm not much mistaken, it was I that was the principal means of leavin' you as you are, and your respectable husband as he is; so my blessin' be wid you, an that's more than your father left you. Raipin' hooks, indeed!"

The little vile Brownie then disappeared.

Margaret, the moment he was gone, immediately turned round, and going to her knees, leaned, with her half-cold infant still in her arms, against a creaking chair, and prayed with as much earnestness as a distracted heart permitted her. The little ones, at her desire, also knelt, and in a few minutes afterwards, when her drunken husband came home, he found his miserable family, grouped as they were in their misery, worshipping God in their own simple and touching manner. His entrance disturbed them, for Margaret knew she must go through the usual ordeal to which his nightly return was certain to expose her.

"I want something to ait," said he.

"Art, dear," she replied—and this was the worst word she ever uttered against him—"Art, dear, I have nothing for you till by an' by; but I will then."

"Have you any money?"

"Money, Art! oh, where would I get it? If I had money I wouldn't be without something for you to eat, or the childre here that tasted nothin' since airly this mornin'."

"Ah, you're a cursed useless wife," he replied, "you brought nothin' but bad luck to me an' them; but how could you bring anything else, when you didn't get your father's blessin'."

"But, Art, don't you remember," she said meekly in reply, "you surely can't forget for whose sake I lost it."

"Well, he's fizzin' now, the hard-hearted ould scoundrel, for keepin' it from you; he forgot who you wor married to, the extortin' ould vagabone—to one of the great Fermanagh Maguires, an' he not fit to wipe their shoes. The curse o' heaven upon you an' him, wherever he is! It was an unlucky day to me I ever seen the face of one of you—here, Atty, I've some money; some strange fellow at the inn below stood to me for the price of a naggin, an' that blasted Barney

Scaddhan wouldn't let me in, bekase, he said, I was a disgrace to his house, the scoundrel."

"The same house was a black sight to you, Art."

"Here, Atty, go off and get me a naggin."

"Wouldn't it be better for you to get something to eat, than to drink it, Art."

"None of your prate, I say, go off an' bring me a naggin o' whiskey, an' don't let the grass grow under your feet."

The children, whenever he came home, were awed into silence, but although they durst not speak, there was an impatient voracity visible in their poor features, and now wolfish little eyes, that was a terrible thing to witness. Art took the money, and went away to bring his father the whiskey.

"What's the reason," said he, kindling into sudden fury, "that you didn't provide something for me to eat? Eh? What's the reason?" and he approached her in a menacing attitude. "You're a lazy, worthless vagabone. Why didn't you get me something to ait, I say? I can't stand this—I'm famished."

"I sent to my sister's," she replied, laying down the child; for she feared that if he struck her and knocked her down, with the child in her arms, it might be injured, probably killed, by the fall; "when the messenger comes back from my sister's——"

"D—n yourself and your sister," he replied, striking her a blow at the same time upon the temple. She fell, and in an instant her face was deluged with blood.

"Ay, lie there," he continued, "the loss of the blood will cool you. Hould your tongues, you devils, or I'll throw yez out of the house," he exclaimed to the children, who burst into an uproar of grief on seeing their "mammy," as they called her, lying bleeding and insensible. "That's to teach her not to have something for me to ait. Ay," he proceeded, with a hideous laugh—"ha, ha, ha! I'm a fine fellow—ain't I? There she lies now, and yet she was wanst Margaret Murray!—my own Margaret—that left them all for myself; but sure if she did, wasn't I one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh? Get up, Margaret; here, I'll help you up, if the divil was in you!"

He raised her as he spoke, and perceived that consciousness was returning. The first thing she did was to put up her hand to her temple, where she felt the warm blood. She gave him one look of profound sorrow.

"Oh, Art dear," she exclaimed, "Art dear—" her voice failed her, but the tears flowed in torrents down her cheeks.

"Margaret," said he, "you needn't spake to me that way. You know any how I'm damned—damned—lol de rol lol—tol de rol lol! ha, ha, ha! I have no hope either here or hereafther—divil a morsel of hope. Isn't that comfortable? eh?—ha, ha, ha"—another hideous laugh. "Well, no matter; we'll dhrink it out, at all events. Where's Atty, wid the whiskey? Oh, here he is! That's a good boy, Atty."

"Oh, mammy darlin'," exclaimed the child, on seeing the blood streaming from her temple—"mammy darlin', what happened you?"

"I fell, Atty dear," she replied, "and was cut."

"That's a lie, Atty; it was I, your fine chip of a father, that struck her. Here's her health, at all events! I'll make one dhrink of it; hoch! they may talk as they like, but I'll stick to Captain Whiskey."

"Father," said the child, "will you come over and lie down upon the straw, for *your own me*, for *your own Atty;* and then you'll fall into a sound sleep?"

"I will, Atty, for *you*—for *you*—I will, Atty; but mind, I wouldn't do it for e'er another livin'."

One day wid Captain Whiskey I wrastled a fall,
But, faix, I was no match for the Captain at all,
Though the landlady's measures they wor damnably small—
But I'll thry him to morrow when I'm sober.

"Come," said the child, "lie down here on the straw; my poor mammy says we'll get clane straw to-morrow; and we'll be grand then."

His father, who was now getting nearly helpless, went over and threw himself upon some straw—thin and scanty and cold it was—or rather, in stooping to throw himself on it he fell with what they call in the country a *sose;* that is, he fell down in a state of utter helplessness; his joints feeble and weak, and all his strength utterly prostrated. Margaret, who in the meantime was striving to stop the effusion of blood from her temple, by the application of cobwebs, of which there was no scarcity in the house, now went over, and loosening his cravat, she got together some old rags, of which she formed, as well as she could, a pillow to support his head, in order to avoid the danger of his being suffocated.

"Poor Art," she exclaimed, "if you knew what you did, you would cut that hand off you sooner than raise it to your own Margaret, as you used to call me. It is pity that I feel for you, Art dear, but no anger; an' God, who sees my heart, knows that."

Now that he was settled, and her own temple bound up, the children once more

commenced their cry of famine; for nothing can suspend the stern cravings of hunger, especially when fanged by the bitter consciousness that there is no food to be had. Just then, however, the girl returned from her sister's, loaded with oatmeal—a circumstance which changed the cry of famine into one of joy.

But now, what was to be done for fire, there was none in the house.

"Here is half-a-crown," said the girl, "that she sent you; but she put her hands acrass, and swore by the five crasses, that unless you left Art at wanst, they'd never give you a rap farden's worth of assistance agin, if you and they wor to die jin the streets."

"Leave him!" said Margaret; "oh never! When I took him, I took him for bettther an' for worse, and I'm not goin' to neglect my duty to him now, because he's down. All the world has desarted him, but I'll never desart him. Whatever may happen, Art dear—poor, lost Art—whatever may happen, I'll live with you, beg with you, die with you; anything but desart you."

She then, after wiping the tears which accompanied her words, sent out the girl, who bought some turf and milk, in order to provide a meal of wholesome food for the craving children.

"Now," said she to the girl, "what is to be done? for if poor Art sees this meal in the morning, he will sell the best part of it to get whiskey; for I need scarcely tell you," she added, striving to palliate his conduct, "that he cannot do without it, however he might contrive to do without his breakfast."

But, indeed, this was true. So thoroughly was he steeped in drunkenness—in the low, frequent, and insatiable appetite for whiskey—that, like tobacco or snuff, it became an essential portion of his life—a necessary evil, without which he could scarcely exist. At all events, the poor children had one comfortable meal, which made them happy; the little stock that remained was stowed away in some nook or other, where Art was not likely to find it; the girl went home, and we were about to say that the rest of this miserable family went to bed; but, alas! they had no bed to go to, with the exception of a little straw, and a thin single blanket to cover them.

If Margaret's conduct during these severe and terrible trials was not noble and heroic, we know not what could be called so. The affection which she exhibited towards her husband overcame everything. When Art had got about half way in his mad and profligate career, her friends offered to support her, if she would take refuge with them and abandon him; but the admirable woman received the proposal as an insult; and the reply she gave is much the same as the reader has heard from her lips, with reference to the girl's message from her sister.

Subsequently, they offered to take her and the children; but this also she indignantly rejected. She could not leave him, she said, at the very time when it was so necessary that her hands should be about him. What might be the fate of such a man if he had none to take care of him? No, this almost unexampled woman, rather than desert him in such circumstances, voluntarily partook in all the wretchedness, destitution, and incredible misery which his conduct inflicted on her, and did so patiently, and without a murmur.

In a few days after the night we have described, a man covered with rags, without shoe, or stocking, or shirt, having on an old hat, through the broken crown of which his hair, wefted with bits of straw, stood out, his face shrunk and pale, his beard long and filthy, and his eyes rayless and stupid—a man of this description, we say, with one child in his arms, and two more accompanying him, might be seen begging through the streets of Ballykeerin; yes, and often in such a state of drunkenness as made it frightful to witness his staggering gait, lest he might tumble over upon the infant, or let it fall out of his arms. This man was Art Maguire; to such a destiny had he come, or rather had he brought himself at last; Art Maguire—one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh!

But where is she—the attached, the indomitable in love—the patient, the much enduring, the uncomplaining? Alas! she is at length separated from him and them; her throbbing veins are hot and rife with fever—her aching head is filled with images of despair and horror—she is calling for her husband—her young and manly husband—and says she will not be parted from him—she is also calling for her children, and demands to have them. The love of the mother and of the wife is now furious; but, thank God, the fury that stimulates it is that of disease, and not of insanity. The trials and privations which could not overcome her noble heart, overcame her physical frame, and on the day succeeding that woful night she was seized with a heavy fever, and through the interference of some respectable inhabitants of the town, was conveyed to the fever hospital, where she now lies in a state of delirium.

And Frank Maguire—the firm, the industrious, and independent—where is he? Unable to bear the shame of his brother's degradation, he gave up his partnership, and

went to America, where he now is; but not without having left in the hands of a friend something for his unfortunate brother to remember him by; and it was this timely aid which for the last three quarters of a year has been the sole means of keeping life in his brother's family.

Thus have we followed Art Maguire from his youth up to the present stage of his life, attempting, as well as we could, to lay open to our readers his good principles and his bad, together with the errors and ignorances of those who had the first formation of his character—we mean his parents and family. We have endeavored to trace, with as strict an adherence to truth and nature as possible, the first struggles of a heart naturally generous and good, with the evil habit which beset him, as well as with the weaknesses by which that habit was set to work upon his temperament. Whether we have done this so clearly and naturally as to bring home conviction of its truth to such of our readers as may resemble him in the materials which formed his moral constitution, and consequently, to hold him up as an example to be avoided, it is not for ourselves to say. If our readers think so, or rather feel so, then we shall rest satisfied of having performed our task as we ought.

Our task, however, is not accomplished. It is true, we have accompanied him with pain and pity to penury, rags, and beggary—unreformed, unrepenting, hardened, shameless, desperate. Do our readers now suppose that there is anything in the man, or any principle external to him, capable of regenerating and elevating a heart so utterly lost as his?

But hush! what is this? How dark the moral clouds that have been hanging over the country for a period far beyond the memory of man! how black that dismal canopy which is only lit by fires that carry and shed around them disease, famine, crime, madness, bloodshed, and death. How hot, sultry, and enervating to the whole constitution of man, physically and mentally, is the atmosphere we have been breathing so long! The miasma of the swamp, the simoom of the desert, the merciless sirocco, are healthful when compared to such an atmosphere. And, hark! what formidable being is that who, with black expanded wings, flies about from place to place, and from person to person, with a cup of fire in his hands, which he applies to their eager lips? And what spell or charm lies in that burning cup, which, no sooner do they taste than they shout, clap their hands with exultation, and cry out, "We are happy! we are happy!" Hark; he proclaims himself, and shouteth still louder than they do; but they stop their ears, and will not listen; they shut their eyes and will not see. What sayeth he? "I am the Angel of Intemperance, Discord, and Destruction, who oppose myself to God and all his laws to man, and all that has been made for his good; my delight is in misery and unhappiness, in crime, desolation, ruin, murder, and death in a thousand shapes of vice and destitution. Such I am, such I shall be, for behold, my dominion shall last forever!"

But hush again! Look towards the south! What faint but beautiful light is it, which, fairer than that of the morning, gradually breaketh upon that dark sky? See how gently, but how steadily, its lustre enlarges and expands! It is not the light of the sun, nor of the moon, nor of the stars, neither is it the morning twilight, which heralds the approach of day; no, but it is the serene effulgence which precedes and accompanies a messenger from God, who is sent to bear a new principle of happiness to man! This principle is itself an angelic spirit, and lo! how the sky brightens, and the darkness flees away like a guilty thing before it! Behold it on the verge of the horizon, which is now glowing with the rosy hues of heaven—it advances, it proclaims its mission:—hark!

"I am the Angel of Temperance, of Industry, of Peace! who oppose myself to the Spirit of Evil and all his laws—I am the friend of man, and conduct him to the true enjoyment of all that has been made for his good. My mission is to banish misery, unhappiness, and crime, to save mankind from desolation, ruin, murder, and death, in a thousand shapes of vice and destitution."

And now see how he advances in beauty and power, attended by knowledge, health, and truth, while the harmonies of domestic life, of civil concord, and social duty, accompany him, and make music in his path. But where is the angel of intemperance, discord, and destruction? Hideous monster, behold him! No longer great nor terrible, he flies, or rather totters, from before his serene opponent—he shudders—he stutters and hiccups in his howlings—his limbs are tremulous—his hands shake as if with palsy—his eye is lustreless and bloodshot, and his ghastly countenance the exponent of death. He flies, but not unaccompanied; along with him are crime, poverty, hunger, idleness; his music the groan of the murderer, the clanking of the madman's chain, filled up by the report of the suicide's pistol, and the horrible yell of despair! And now he and his evil spirits are gone, the moral atmosphere is bright and unclouded, and the Angel of Temperance, Industry, and Peace goes abroad throughout the land, fulfilling his beneficent

mission, and diffusing his own virtues into the hearts of a regenerated people!

Leaving allegory, however, to the poets, it is impossible that, treating of the subject which we have selected, we could, without seeming to undervalue it, neglect to say a few words upon the most extraordinary moral phenomenon, which, apart from the miraculous, the world ever saw; we allude to the wonderful Temperance Movement, as it is called, which, under the guiding hand of the Almighty, owes its visible power and progress to the zeal and incredible exertions of one pious and humble man—the Very Rev. Theobald Matthew, of Cork. When we consider the general, the proverbial character, which our countrymen have, during centuries, borne for love of drink, and their undeniable habits of intemperance, we cannot but feel that the change which has taken place is, indeed, surprising, to say the least of it. But, in addition to this, when we also consider the natural temperament of the Irishman—his social disposition—his wit, his humor, and his affection—all of which are lit up by liquor—when we just reflect upon the exhilaration of spirits produced by it—when we think upon the poverty, the distress, and the misery which too generally constitute his wretched lot, and which it will enable him, for a moment, to forget—and when we remember that all his bargains were made over it—that he courted his sweetheart over it—got married over it—wept for his dead over it—and generally fought his enemy of another faction, or the Orangeman of another creed, when under its influence;—when we pause over all these considerations, we can see how many temptations our countrymen had to overcome in renouncing it as they did: and we cannot help looking at it as a moral miracle, utterly without parallel in the history of man.

Now we are willing to give all possible credit, and praise, and honor to Father Matthew; but we do not hesitate to say, that even he would have failed in being, as he is, the great visible exponent of this admirable principle, unless there had been other kindred principles in the Irishman's heart, which recognized and clung to it. In other words it is unquestionable, that had the religious and moral feelings of the Irish people been neglected, the principle of temperance would never have taken such deep root in the heart of the nation as it has done. Nay, it *could* not; for does not every man of common sense know, that good moral principles seldom grow in a bad moral soil, until it is cultivated for their reception. It is, therefore, certainly a proof that the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland had not neglected the religious principles of the people. It may, I know, and it has been called a superstitious contagion; but however that may be, so long as we have such contagions among us, we will readily pardon the superstition. Let superstition always assume a shape of such beneficence and virture to man, and we shall not quarrel with her for retaining the name. Such a contagion could never be found among any people in whom there did not exist predisposing qualities, ready to embrace and nurture the good which came with it.

Our argument, we know, may be met by saying that its chief influence was exerted on those whose habits of dissipation, immorality, and irreligion kept them aloof from the religious instruction of the priest. But to those who know the Irish heart, it is not necessary to say that many a man addicted to drink is far from being free from the impressions of religion, or uninfluenced by many a generous and noble virtue. Neither does it follow that every such man has been neglected by his priest, or left unadmonished of the consequences which attended his evil habit. But how did it happen, according to that argument, that it was this very class of persons—the habitual, or the frequent, or the occasional drunkard—that *first* welcomed the spirit of temperance, and availed themselves of its blessings? If there had not been the buried seeds of neglected instruction lying in their hearts, it is very improbable that they would have welcomed and embraced the principle as they did. On the other hand, it is much more likely that they would have fled from, and avoided a spirit which deprived them of the gratification of their ruling and darling passion. Evil and good, we know, do not so readily associate.

Be this, however, as it may, we have only to state, in continuation of our narrative, that at the period of Art Maguire's most lamentable degradation, and while his admirable but unhappy wife was stretched upon the burning bed of fever, the far low sounds of the Temperance Movement were heard, and the pale but pure dawn of its distant light seen at Ballykeerin. That a singular and novel spirit accompanied it, is certain; and that it went about touching and healing with all the power of an angel, is a matter not of history, but of direct knowledge and immediate recollection. Nothing, indeed, was ever witnessed in any country similar to it. Wherever it went, joy, acclamation, ecstasy accompanied it; together with a sense of moral liberty, of perfect freedom from the restraint, as it were, of some familiar devil, that had kept its victims in its damnable bondage. Those who had sunk exhausted before the terrible Moloch of Intemperance, and given

themselves over for lost, could now perceive that there was an ally at hand, that was able to bring them succor, and drag them back from degradation and despair, to peace and independence, from contempt and infamy, to respect and praise. Nor was this all. It was not merely into the heart of the sot and drunkard that it carried a refreshing consciousness of joy and deliverance, but into all those hearts which his criminal indulgence had filled with heaviness and sorrow. It had, to be sure, its dark side to some—ay, to thousands. Those who lived by the vices—the low indulgences and the ruinous excesses—of their fellow-creatures—trembled and became aghast at its approach. The vulgar and dishonest publican, who sold a *bona fide* poison under a false name; the low tavern-keeper; the proprietor of the dram-shop; of the night-house; and the shebeen—all were struck with terror and dismay. Their occupation was doomed to go. No more in the dishonest avarice of gain where they to coax and jest with the foolish tradesman, until they confirmed him in the depraved habit, and led him on, at his own expense, and their profit, step by step, until the naked and shivering sot, now utterly ruined, was kicked out, like Art Maguire, to make room for those who were to tread in his steps, and share his fate.

No more was the purity and inexperience of youth to be corrupted by evil society, artfully introduced for the sordid purpose of making him spend his money, at the expense of health, honesty, and good name.

No more was the decent wife of the spendthrift tradesman, when forced by stern necessity, and the cries of her children, to seek her husband in the public house, of a Saturday night, anxious as she was to secure what was left unspent of his week's wages, in order to procure to-morrow's food—no more was she to be wheedled into the bar, to get the landlord's or the landlady's treat, in order that the outworks of temperance, and the principles of industry, perhaps of virtue, might be gradually broken down, for the selfish and diabolical purpose of enabling her drunken husband to spend a double share of his hardly-earned pittance.

Nor more was the male servant, in whom every confidence was placed, to be lured into these vile dens of infamy, that he might be fleeced or his money, tutored into debauchery or dishonesty, or thrown into the society of thieves and robbers, that he might become an accomplice in their crimes, and enable them to rob his employer with safety. No more was the female servant, on the other hand, to be made familiar with tippling, or corrupted by evil company, until she became a worthless and degraded creature, driven out of society, without reputation or means of subsistence, and forced to sink to that last loathsome alternative of profligacy which sends her, after a short and wicked course, to the jeering experiments of the dissecting-room.

Oh, no; those wretches who lived by depravity, debauchery, and corruption, were alarmed almost into distraction by the approach of temperance, for they knew it would cut off the sources of their iniquitous gains, and strip them of the vile means of propagating dishonesty and vice, by which they lived. But even this wretched class were not without instances of great disinterestedness and virtue; several of them closed their debasing establishments, forfeited their ill-gotten means of living, and trusting to honesty and legitimate industry, voluntarily assumed the badge of temperance, and joined its peaceful and triumphant standard!

Previous to this time, however, and, indeed, long before the joyful sounds of its advancing motion were heard from afar, it is not to be taken for granted that the drunkards of the parish of Ballykeerin were left to the headlong impulses of their own evil propensities. Before Art Maguire had fallen from his integrity and good name, there had not been a more regular attendant at mass, or at his Easter and Christmas duties, in the whole parish; in this respect he was a pattern, as Father Costelloe, the priest, often said, to all who were anxious to lead a decent and creditable life, forgetting their duty neither to God nor man. A consciousness of his fall, however, made him ashamed in the beginning to appear at mass, until he should decidedly reform, which he proposed and resolved to do, or thought he resolved, from week to week, and from day to day. How he wrought out these resolutions our readers know too well; every day and every week only made him worse and worse, until by degrees all thought of God, or prayer, or priest, abandoned him, and he was left to swelter in misery among the very dregs of his prevailing vice, hardened and obdurate. Many an admonition has he received from Father Costelloe, especially before he become hopeless, and many a time, when acknowledging his own inability to follow up his purposes of amendment, has he been told by that good and Christian man, that he must have recourse to better and higher means of support, and remember that God will not withhold his grace from those who ask it sincerely and aright. Art, however, could not do so, for although he had transient awakenings of conscience, that were acute while they lasted, yet he could not look up to God

with a thorough and heartfelt resolution of permanent reformation. The love of liquor, and the disinclination to give it up, still lurked in his heart, and prevented him from setting about his amendment in earnest. If they had not, he would have taken a second oath, as his brother Frank often advised him to do, but without effect. He still hoped to be able to practise moderation, and drink within bounds, and consequently persuaded himself that total abstinence was not necessary in his case. At length Father Costelloe, like all those who were deeply anxious for his reformation, was looked upon as an unwelcome adviser, whose Christian exhortations to a better course of life were anything but agreeable, because he spoke truth; and so strong did this feeling grow in him, that in his worst moments he would rather sink into the earth than meet him: nay, a glimpse of him at any distance was sure to make the unfortunate man hide himself in some hole or corner until the other had passed, and all danger of coming under his reproof was over.

Art was still begging with his children, when, after a long and dangerous illness, it pleased God to restore his wife to him and them. So much pity, and interest, and respect did she excite during her convalescence—for it was impossible that her virtues, even in the lowest depths of her misery, could be altogether unknown—that the heads of the hospital humanely proposed to give her some kind of situation in it, as soon as she should regain sufficient strength to undertake its duties. The mother's love, however, still prompted her to rejoin her children, feeling as she did, and as she said, how doubly necessary now her care and attention to them must be. She at length yielded to their remonstrances, when they assured her that to return in her present weak condition to her cold and desolate house, and the utter want of all comfort which was to be found in it, might, and, in all probability, would, be fatal to her; and that by thus exposing herself too soon to the consequences of cold and destitution, she might leave her children motherless. This argument prevailed, but in the meantime she stipulated that her children and her husband, if the latter were in a state of sufficient sobriety, should be permitted occasionally to see her, that she might inquire into their situation, and know how they lived. This was acceded to, and, by the aid of care and nourishing food, she soon found herself beginning to regain her strength.

In the meantime the Temperance movement was rapidly and triumphantly approaching. In a town about fifteen miles distant there was a meeting advertised to be held, at which the great apostle himself was to administer the pledge; Father Costelloe announced it from the altar, and earnestly recommended his parishioners to attend, and enrol themselves under the blessed banner of Temperance, the sober man as well as the drunkard.

"It may be said," he observed, "that sober men have no necessity for taking the pledge; and if one were certain that every sober man was to remain sober during his whole life, there would not, indeed, be a necessity for sober men to take it; but, alas! my friends, you know how subject we are to those snares, and pitfalls, and temptations of life by which our paths are continually beset. Who can say to-day that he may not transgress the bounds of temperance before this day week? Your condition in life is surrounded by inducements to drink. You scarcely buy or sell a domestic animal in fair or market, that you are not tempted to drink; you cannot attend a neighbor's funeral that you are not tempted to drink—'tis the same at the wedding and the christening, and in almost all the transactions of your lives. How then can you answer for yourselves, especially when your spirits may happen to be elevated, and your hearts glad? Oh! it is then, my friends, that the tempter approaches you, and probably implants in your unguarded hearts the germ of that accursed habit which has destroyed millions. How often have you heard it said of many men, even within the range of your own knowledge, 'Ah, he was an industrious, well-conducted, and respectable man—*until he took to drink!*' Does not the prevalence of such a vile habit, and the fact that so many sober men fall away from that virtue, render the words that I have just uttered a melancholy proverb in the country? 'Ah, there he is—in rags and misery; yet he was an industrious, well-conducted, and respectable man once, that is—*before he took to drink!* Prevention, my dear friends, is always better than cure, and in binding yourselves by this most salutary obligation, you know not how much calamity and suffering—how much general misery—how much disgrace and crime you may avoid. And, besides, are we not to look beyond *this* world? Is a crime which so greatly depraves the heart, and deadens its power of receiving the wholesome impressions of religion and truth, not one which involves our future happiness or misery? Ah, my dear brethren, it is indeed a great and a cross popular error to say that sober men should not take this pledge. I hope I have satisfied you that it is a duty they owe themselves to take it, so long as they feel that they are frail creatures, and liable to sin and error; and not only them-

selves, but their children, their friends, and all who might be affected, either for better or worse, by their example.

"There is another argument, however, which I cannot overlook, while dwelling upon this important subject. We know that the drunkard, if God should, through the instrumentality of this great and glorious movement, put the wish for amendment into his heart, still feels checked and deterred by a sense of shame; because, the truth is, if none attended these meetings but such men, that very fact alone would prove a great obstruction in the way of their reformation. Many, too many, are drunkards; but every man is not an open drunkard, and hundreds, nay, thousands, would say, 'By attending these meetings of drunken men, I acknowledge myself to be a drunkard also;' hence they will probably decline going through shame, and consequently miss the opportunity of retrieving themselves. Now, I say, my friends, it is the duty of sober men to deprive them of this argument, and by an act, which, after all, involves nothing of self-denial, but still an act of great generosity, to enable them to enter into this wholesome obligation, without being openly exposed to the consequences of having acknowledged that they were intemperate."

He then announced the time and place of the meeting, which was in the neighboring town of Drumnabrogue, and concluded by again exhorting them all, without distinction, to attend it and take the pledge. His exhortations were not without effect; many of his parishioners did attend, and among them some of Art's former dissolute companions.

Art himself, when spoken to, and pressed to go, hiccuped and laughed at the notion of any such pledge reforming *him;* a strong proof that all hope of recovering himself, or of regaining his freedom from drunkenness, had long ago deserted him. This, if anything further was necessary to do so, completed the scene of his moral prostration and infamy. Margaret, who was still in the hospital, now sought to avail herself of the opportunity which presented itself, by reasoning with, and urging him to go, but, like all others, her arguments were laughed at, and Art expressed contempt for her, Father Matthew, and all the meetings that had yet taken place.

"Will takin' the pledge," he asked her, "put a shirt to my back, a thing I almost forget the use of, or a good coat? Will it put a dacent house over my head, a good bed under me, and a warm pair of blankets on us to keep us from shiverin', an' coughin', an' barkin' the whole night long in the could? No, faith, I'll not give up the whiskey, for it has one comfort, it makes me sleep in defiance o' wind and weather; it's the only friend I have left now—it's my shirt—its my coat—my shoes and stockin's—my house—my blankets—my coach—my carriage—it makes me a nobleman, a lord; but, anyhow, sure I'm as good, ay, by the mortual and better, for amn't I one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh! Whish, the ou—ould blood forever, and to the divil wid their meetins!"

"Art," said his wife, "I believe if you took the pledge that it would give you all you say, and more: for it would bring you back the respect and good-will of the people, that you've long lost."

"To the divil wid the people! I'll tell you what, if takin' the pledge reforms Mechil *Cam*, the crooked disciple that he is, or Tom Whiskey, mind—mind me—I say if it reforms *them*, or young Barney Scaddhan, thin you may spake up for it, an' may be, I'll listen to you."

At length the meeting took place, and the three men alluded to by Art, attended it as they said they would; each returned home with his pledge; they rose up the next morning, and on that night went to bed sober. This was repeated day after day, week after week, month after month, and still nothing characterized them but sobriety, peace, and industry.

Unfortunately, so far as Art Maguire was concerned, it was out of his power, as it was out of that of hundreds, to derive any benefit from the example which some of his old hard-drinking associates had so unexpectedly set both him and them. No meeting had since occurred within seventy or eighty miles of Ballykeerin, and yet the contagion of good example had spread through that and the adjoining parishes in a manner that was without precedent. In fact, the people murmured, became impatient, and, ere long, demanded from their respective pastors that another meeting should be held, to afford them an opportunity of publicly receiving the pledge; and for that purpose they besought the Rev. gentlemen to ask Father Matthew to visit Ballykeerin. This wish was complied with, and Father Matthew consented, though at considerable inconvenience to himself, and appointed a day for the purpose specified. This was about three or four months after the meeting that was held in the neighboring town already alluded to.

For the last six weeks Margaret had been able to discharge the duties of an humble situation in the hospital, on the condition that she should at least once a day see her children. Poor as was the situation in question,

it enabled her to contribute much more to their comfort, than she could if she had resided with them, or, in other words, begged with them; for to that, had she returned home, it must have come; and, as the winter was excessively severe, this would have killed her, enfeebled as she had been by a long and oppressive fever. Her own good sense taught her to see this, and the destitution of her children and husband—to feel it. In this condition then were they—depending on the scanty aid which her poor exertions could afford them, eked out by the miserable pittance that he extorted as a beggar—when the intelligence arrived that the great Apostle of Temperance had appointed a day on which to hold a teetotal meeting in the town of Ballykeerin.

It is utterly unaccountable how the approach of Father Matthew, and of these great meetings, stirred society into a state of such extraordinary activity, not only in behalf of temperance, but also of many other virtues; so true is it, that when one healthy association is struck it awakens all those that are kindred to it into new life. In addition to a love of sobriety, the people felt their hearts touched, as it were, by a new spirit, into kindness and charity, and a disposition to discharge promptly and with good-will all brotherly and neighborly offices. Harmony, therefore, civil, social, and domestic, accompanied the temperance movement wherever it went, and accompanies it still wherever it goes; for, like every true blessing, it never comes alone, but brings several others in its train.

The morning in question, though cold, was dry and bright; a small platform had been raised at the edge of the market-house, which was open on one side, and on it Father Matthew was to stand. By this simple means he would be protected from rain, should any fall, and was sufficiently accessible to prevent any extraordinary crush among the postulants. But how will we attempt to describe the appearance which the town of Ballykeerin presented on the morning of this memorable and auspicious day? And above all, in what terms shall we paint the surprise, the wonder, the astonishment with which they listened to the music of the teetotal band, which, as if by magic, had been formed in the town of Drumnabogue, where, only a few months before, the meeting of which we have spoken had been held. Indeed, among all the proofs of national advantages which the temperance movement has brought out, we are not to forget those which it has bestowed on the country—by teaching us what a wonderful capacity for music, and what a remarkable degree of intellectual power, the lower classes of our countrymen are endowed with, and can manifest when moved by adequate principles.

Early as day-break the roads leading to Ballykeerin presented a living stream of people hastening onwards towards the great rendezvous; but so much did they differ in their aspect from almost any other assemblage of Irishmen, that, to a person ignorant of their purpose, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to guess the cause, not that moved them in such multitudes towards the same direction, but that marked them by such peculiar characteristics. We have seen Irishmen and Irishwomen going to a country race in the summer months, when labor there was none; we have seen them going to meetings of festivity and amusement of all descriptions;—to fairs, to weddings, to dances—but we must confess, that notwithstanding all our experience and intercourse with them, we never witnessed anything at all resembling their manner and bearing on this occasion. There was undoubtedly upon them, and among them, all the delightfull enjoyment of a festival spirit; they were easy, cheerful, agreeable, and social; but, in addition to this, there was clearly visible an expression of feeling that was new even to themselves, as well as to the spectators. But how shall we characterize this feeling? It was certainly not at variance with the cheerfulness which they felt, but, at the same time, it shed over it a serene solemnity of manner which communicated a moral grandeur to the whole proceeding that fell little short of sublimity. This was a principle of simple virtue upon which all were equal; but it was more than that, it was at once a manifestation of humility, and an exertion of faith in the aid and support of the Almighty, by whose grace those earnest but humble people felt and trusted that they would be supported. And who can say that their simplicity of heart—their unaffected humility, and their firmness of faith have not been amply rewarded, and triumphantly confirmed by the steadfastness with which they have been, with extremely few exceptions, faithful to their pledge.

About nine o'clock the town of Ballykeerin was crowded with a multitude such as had never certainly met in it before. All, from the rustic middle classes down, were there. The crowd was, indeed, immense, yet, notwithstanding their numbers, one could easily mark the peculiar class for whose sake principally the meeting had been called together.

There was the red-faced farmer of substance, whose sunburnt cheeks, and red side-neck, were scorched into a color that

disputed its healthy hue with the deeper purple tint of strong and abundant drink.

"Such a man," an acute observer would say, "eats well, and drinks well, but is very likely to pop off some day, without a minute's warning, or saying good-by to his friends."

Again, there was the pale and emaciated drunkard, whose feeble and tottering gait, and trembling hands, were sufficiently indicative of his broken-down constitution, and probably of his anxiety to be enabled to make some compensation to the world, or some provision on the part of his own soul, to balance the consequences of an ill-spent life, during which morals were laughed at, and health destroyed.

There was also the healthy-looking drunkard of small means, who, had he been in circumstances to do so, would have gone to bed drunk every night in the year. He is not able, from the narrowness of his circumstances, to drink himself into apoplexy on the one hand, or debility on the other; but he is able, notwithstanding, to drink the clothes off his back, and the consequence is, that he stands before you as ragged, able-bodied, and thumping a specimen of ebriety as you could wish to see during a week's journey. There were, in fact, the vestiges of drunkenness in all their repulsive features, and unhealthy variety.

There stood the grog-drinker with his blotched face in full flower, his eye glazed in his head, and his protuberant paunch projecting over his shrunk and diminished limbs.

The tippling tradesman too was there, pale and sickly-looking, his thin and over-worn garments evidently insufficient to keep out the chill of morning, and prevent him from shivering every now and then, as if he were afflicted with the ague.

In another direction might be seen the servant out of place, known by the natty knot of his white cravat, as well as by the smartness with which he wears his dress, buttoned up as it is, and coaxed about him with all the ingenuity which experience and necessity bring to the aid of vanity. His napeless hat is severely brushed in order to give the subsoil an appearance of the nap which is gone, but it won't do; every one sees that his intention is excellent, were it possible for address and industry to work it out. This is not the case, however, and the hat is consequently a clear exponent of his principles and position, taste and skill while he was sober—vain pride and trying poverty now in his drunkenness.

The reckless-looking sailor was also there (but with a serious air now), who, having been discharged for drunkenness, and refused employment everywhere else, for the same reason, was obliged to return home, and remain a burden upon his friends. He, too, has caught this healthy epidemic, and the consequence is, that he will once more gain employment, for the production of his medal will be accepted as a welcome proof of his reformation.

And there was there, what was better still, the unfortunate female, the victim of passion and profligacy, conscious of her past life, and almost ashamed in the open day to look around her. Poor thing! how her heart, that was once innocent and pure, now trembles within a bosom where there is awakened many a painful recollection of early youth, and the happiness of home, before that unfortunate night, when, thrown off her guard by accursed liquor, she ceased to rank among the pure and virtuous. Yes, all these, and a much greater variety, were here actuated by the noble resolution to abandon forever the evil courses, the vices, and the profligacy into which they were first driven by the effects of drink.

The crowd was, indeed, immense, many having come a distance of twenty, thirty, some forty, and not a few fifty miles, in order to free themselves, by this simple process, from the influence of the destructive habit which either was leading, or had led them, to ruin. Of course it is not to be supposed that among such a vast multitude of people there were not, as there always is, a great number of those vagabond impostors who go about from place to place, for the purpose of extorting charity from the simple and credulous, especially when under the influence of liquor. All this class hated the temperance movement, because they knew right well that sobriety in the people was there greatest enemy; the lame, the blind, the maimed, the deaf, and the dumb, were there in strong muster, and with their characteristic ingenuity did everything in their power, under the pretence of zeal and religious enthusiasm, to throw discredit upon the whole proceedings. It was this vile crew, who, by having recourse to the aid of mock miracles, fancied they could turn the matter into derision and contempt, and who, by affecting to be cured of their complaints, with a view of having their own imposture, when detected, imputed to want of power in Father Matthew;—it was this vile crew, we say, that first circulated the notion that he could perform miracles. Unfortunately, many of the ignorant among the people did in the beginning believe that he possessed this power, until he himself, with his characteristic candor, disclaimed it. For a short

time the idea of this slightly injured the cause, and afforded to its enemies some silly and senseless arguments, which, in lieu of better, they were glad to bring against it.

At length Father Matthew, accompanied by several other clergymen and gentlemen, made his appearance on the platform; then was the rush, the stretching of necks, and the bitter crushing, accompanied by devices and manœuvres of all kinds, to catch a glimpse of him. The windows were crowded by the more respectable classes, who were eager to witness the effects of this great and sober enthusiasm among the lower classes. The proceedings, however, were very simple. He first addressed them in a plain and appropriate discourse, admirably displaying the very description of eloquence which was best adapted to his auditory. This being concluded, he commenced distributing the medal, for which every one who received it, gave a shilling, the latter at the same time repeating the following words: "I promise, so long as I shall continue a member of the Teetotal Temperance Society, to abstain from all intoxicating liquors, unless recommended for medical purposes, and to discourage by all means in my power the practice of intoxication in others." Father Matthew then said, "May God bless you, and enable you to keep your promise!"

Such was the simple ceremony by which millions have been rescued from those terrible evils that have so long cursed and afflicted society in this country.

In this large concourse there stood one individual, who presented in his person such symptoms of a low, grovelling, and unremitting indulgence in drink, as were strikingly observable even amidst the mass of misery and wretchedness that was there congregated. It is rarely, even in a life, that an object in human shape, encompassed and pervaded by so many of the fearful results of habitual drunkenness, comes beneath observation. Sometimes we may see it in a great city, when we feel puzzled, by the almost total absence of reason in the countenance, to know whether the utter indifference to nakedness and the elements, be the consequence of drunken destitution, or pure idiocy. To this questionable appearance had the individual we speak of come. The day was now nearly past, and the crowd had considerably diminished, when this man, approaching Father Matthew, knelt down, and clasping his skeleton hands, exclaimed—

"Father, I'm afeard I cannot trust myself."

"Who can?" said Father Matthew; "it is not in yourself you are to place confidence, but in God, who will support you and grant you strength, if you ask for it sincerely and humbly."

These words, uttered in tones of true Christian charity, gave comfort to the doubting heart of the miserable creature, who said—

"I would wish to take the pledge, if I had money; but I doubt it's too late—too late for *me!* *Oh, if I thought it wasn't!*"

"It's never too late to repent,' replied the other, "or to return from evil to good. If you feel your heart inclined to the right course, do not let want of money prevent you from pledging yourself to sobriety and temperance."

"In God's name, then, I will take it," he replied; and immediately repeated the simple words which constitute the necessary form.

"May God bless you," said Father Matthew, placing his hand on his head, "and enable you to keep your promise!"

This man, our readers already guess, was Art Maguire.

Having thus taken the medal, and pledged himself to sobriety, and a total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors, his first feeling was very difficult to describe. Father Matthew's words, though few and brief, had sunk deep into his heart, and penetrated his whole spirit. He had been for many a long day the jest and jibe of all who knew him; because they looked upon his recovery as a hopeless thing, and spoke to him accordingly in a tone of contempt and scorn—a lesson to us that we never should deal harshly with the miserable. Nor, however, he had been addressed in accents of kindness, and in a voice that proclaimed an interest in his welfare. This, as we said, added to the impressive spirit that prevailed around, touched him, and he hurried home.

On reaching his almost empty house, he found Margaret and the children there before him; she having come to see how the poor things fared—but being quite ignorant of what had just taken place with regard to her husband.

"Art," said she, with her usual affectionate manner; "you will want something to eat; for if you're not hungry, your looks belie you very much. I have brought something for you and these creatures."

Art looked at her, then at their children, then at the utter desolation of the house, and spreading his two hands over his face, he wept aloud. This was repentance. Margaret in exceeding surprise, rose and approached him:—

"Art dear," she said, "in the name of God, what's the matter?"

"Maybe my father's sick, mother," said little Atty; "sure, father, if you are, I an' the rest will *go out* ourselves, an' you can stay at home; but we needn't go this day, for my mammy brought us as much as will put us over it."

To neither the mother nor child did he make any reply; but wept on and sobbed as if his heart would break.

"Oh my God, my God," he exclaimed bitterly, "what have I brought you to, my darlin' wife and childre, that I loved a thousand times betther than my own heart? Oh, what have I brought you to?"

"Art," said his wife, and her eye kindled, "in the name of the heavenly God, is this sorrow for the life you led?"

"Ah, Margaret darlin'," he said, still sobbing; "it's long since I ought to a felt it; but how can I look back on that woful life? Oh my God, my God! what have I done, an' what have I brought on you!"

"Art," she said, "say to me that you're sorry for it; only let my ears hear you saying *the words*."

"Oh, Margaret dear," he sobbed, "from my heart—from the core of my unhappy heart—I am sorry—sorry for it all."

"Then there's hope," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, and looking up to heaven, "there is hope—for him—for *him*—for *us all!* Oh my heart," she exclaimed, quickly, "what is this?" and she scarcely uttered the words, when she sank upon the ground insensible—sudden joy being sometimes as dangerous as sudden grief.

Art, who now forgot his own sorrow in apprehension for her, raised her up, assisted by little Atty, who, as did the rest of the children, cried bitterly, on seeing his mother's eyes shut, her arms hanging lifelessly by her side, and herself without motion. Water, however, was brought by Atty; her face sprinkled, and a little put to her lips, and with difficulty down her throat. At length she gave a long deep-drawn sigh, and opening her eyes, she looked tenderly into her husband's face—

"Art dear," she said, in a feeble voice, "did I hear it right? And you said *you were sorry?*"

"From my heart I am, Margaret dear," he replied; "oh, if you knew what I feel this minute!"

She looked on him again, and her pale face was lit up with a smile of almost ineffable happiness.

"Kiss me," said she; "we are both young yet, Art dear, and we will gain our lost ground wanst more."

While she spoke, the tears of delight fell in torrents down her cheeks. Art kissed her tenderly, and immediately pulling out the medal, showed it to her.

She took the medal, and after looking at it, and reading the inscription—

"Well, Art," she said, "you never broke your oath—that's one comfort."

"No," he replied; "nor I'll never break this; if I do," he added fervently, and impetuously, "*may God mark me out for misery and misfortune!*"

"Whisht, dear," she replied; "don't give way to these curses—they sarve no purpose, Art. But I'm so happy this day!"

"An' is my father never to be drunk any more, mammy?" asked the little ones, joyfully; "an he'll never be angry wid you, nor bate you any more?"

"Whisht, darlins," she exclaimed; "don't be spakin' about that; sure your poor father never beat me, only when he didn't know what he was doin'. Never mention it again, one of you."

"Ah, Margaret," said Art, now thoroughly awakened, "what recompense can I ever make you, for the treatment I gave you? Oh, how can I think of it, or look back upon it?"

His voice almost failed him, as he uttered the last words; but his affectionate wife stooped and kissing away the tears from his cheeks, said—

"Don't, Art dear; sure *this now* is not a time to cry;" and yet her own tears were flowing;—"isn't our own love come back to us? won't we now have peace? won't we get industrious, and be respected again?"

"Ah, Margaret darling," he replied, "*your* love never left you; so don't put *yourself* in; but as for me—oh, what have I done? and what have I brought you to?"

"Well, now, thanks be to the Almighty, all's right. Here's something for you to ait, you must want it."

"But," he replied, "did these poor crathurs get anything? bekase if they didn't, I'll taste nothin' till they do."

"They did indeed," said Margaret; and all the little ones came joyfully about him, to assure him that they had been fed, and were not hungry.

The first feeling Art now experienced on going abroad was shame—a deep and overwhelming sense of shame; shame at the meanness of his past conduct—shame at his miserable and unsightly appearance—shame at all he had done, and at all he had left undone. What course now, however, was he to adopt? Being no longer stupified and besotted by liquor, into a state partly apathetic, partly drunken, and wholly shameless, he could not bear the notion of resuming his habits of mendicancy. The decent

but not the empty and senseless, pride of his family was now reawakened in him, and he felt, besides, that labor and occupation were absolutely necessary to enable him to bear up against the incessant craving which he felt for the pernicious stimulant. So strongly did this beset him, that he suffered severely from frequent attacks of tremor and sensations that resembled fits of incipient distraction. Nothing, therefore, remained for him but close employment, that would keep both mind and body engaged.

When the fact of his having taken the pledge became generally known, it excited less astonishment than a person might imagine; in truth, the astonishment would have been greater, had he refused to take it at all, so predominant and full of enthusiasm was the spirit of temperance at that period. One feeling, however, prevailed with respect to him, which was, that privation of his favorite stimulant would kill him—that his physical system, already so much exhausted and enfeebled, would break down—and that poor Art would soon go the way of all drunkards.

On the third evening after he had taken the pledge, he went down to the man who had succeeded himself in his trade, and who, by the way, had been formerly one of his own journeymen, of the very men who, while he was running his career of dissipation, refused to flatter his vanity, or make one in his excesses, and who was, moreover, one of the very individuals he had dismissed. To this man he went, and thus accosted him—his name was Owen Gallagher.

"Owen," said he, "I trust in God that I have gained a great victory of late."

The man understood him perfectly well, and replied—

"I hope so, Art; I hear you have taken the pledge."

"Relyin' on God's help, I have."

"Well," replied Owen, "you couldn't rely on betther help."

"No," said Art, "I know I could not; but, Owen, I ran a wild and a terrible race of it—I'm grieved an' shamed to think—even to think of it."

"An' that's a good sign, Art, there couldn't be betther; for unless a man's heart is sorry for his faults, and ashamed of them too, it's not likely he'll give them over."

"I can't bear to walk the streets," continued Art, "nor to rise my head; but still something must be done for the poor wife and childre."

"Ah, Art," replied Owen, "that is the wife! The goold of Europe isn't value for her; an' that's what every one knows."

"But who knows it, an' feels it as I do?" said Art, "or who has the right either? howandiver, as I said, something must be done; Owen, will you venture to give me employment? I know I'm in bad trim to come into a decent workshop, but you know necessity has no law;—it isn't my clo'es that will work, but myself; an', indeed, if you do employ me, it's not much I'll be able to do this many a day; but the truth is, if I don't get something to keep me busy, I doubt I won't be able to stand against what I feel both in my mind and body."

These words were uttered with such an air of deep sorrow and perfect sincerity as affected Gallagher very much.

"Art," said he, "there was no man so great a gainer by the unfortunate coorse you tuck as I was, for you know I came into the best part of your business; God forbid then that I should refuse you work, especially as you have turned over a new lafe;—or to lend you a helpin' hand either, now that I know it will do you and your family good, and won't go to the public-house. Come wid me."

He took down his hat as he spoke, and brought Art up to one of those general shops that are to be found in every country town like Ballykeerin.

"Mr. Trimble," said he, "Art Maguire wants a plain substantial suit o' clothes, that will be chape an' wear well, an' I'll be accountable for them; Art, sir, has taken the pledge, an' is goin' to turn over a new lafe, an' be as he wanst was, I hope."

"And there is no man," said the worthy shopkeeper, "in the town of Ballykeerin that felt more satisfaction than I did when I heard he had taken it. I know what he wants, and what you want for him, and he shall have it both cheap and good."

Such was the respect paid to those who nobly resolved to overcome their besetting sin of drink, and its consequent poverty or profligacy, that the knowledge alone that they had taken the pledge, gained them immediate good-will, as it was entitled to do. This, to be sure, was in Art's favor; but there was about him, independently of this, a serious spirit of awakened resolution and sincerity which carried immediate conviction along with it.

"This little matter," said the honest carpenter, with natural consideration for Art, "will, of coorse, rest between you an me, Mr. Trimble."

"I understand your feeling, Owen," said he, "and I can't but admire it; it does honor to your heart."

"Hut," said Gallagher, "it's nothin'; sure it's jist what Art would do for myself, if we wor to change places."

Thus it is with the world, and ever will be

so, till human nature changes. Art had taken the first step towards his reformation, and Owen felt that he was sincere; this step, therefore, even slight as it was, sufficed to satisfy his old friend that he would be safe in aiding him. Gallagher's generosity, however, did not stop here; the assistance which he gave Art, though a matter of secrecy between themselves, was soon visible in Art's appearance, and that of his poor family. Good fortune, however, did not stop here; in about a week after this, when Art was plainly but comfortably dressed, and working with Gallagher, feeble as he was, upon journeyman's wages, there came a letter from his brother Frank, enclosing ten pounds for the use of his wife and children. It was directed to a friend in Ballykeerin, who was instructed to apply it according to his own discretion, and the wants of his family, only by no means to permit a single shilling of it to reach his hands, unless on the condition that he had altogether given up liquor. This seemed to Art like a proof that God had rewarded him for the step he had taken; in a few weeks it was wonderful how much comfort he and his family had contrived to get about them. Margaret was a most admirable manager, and a great economist, and with her domestic knowledge and good sense, things went on beyond their hopes.

Art again was up early and down late—for his strength, by the aid of wholesome and regular food, and an easy mind, was fast returning to him—although we must add here, that he never regained the healthy and powerful constitution which he had lost. His reputation, too, was fast returning; many a friendly salutation he received from those, who, in his degradation, would pass him by with either ridicule or solemn contempt.

Nothing in this world teaches a man such well-remembered lessons of life as severe experience. Art, although far, very far removed from his former independence, yet, perhaps, might be said never to have enjoyed so much peace of mind, or so strong a sense of comfort, as he did now in his humble place with his family. The contrast between his past misery, and the present limited independence which he enjoyed, if it could be called independence, filled his heart with a more vivid feeling of thankfulness than he had ever known. He had now a bed to sleep on, with *bona fide* blankets—he had a chair to sit on—a fire on his hearth—and food, though plain, to eat; so had his wife, so had his children; he had also very passable clothes to his back, that kept him warm and comfortable, and prevented him from shivering like a reed in the blast; so had his wife, and so had his children. But he had more than this, for he had health, a good conscience, and a returning reputation. People now addressed him as an equal, as a man, as an individual who constituted a portion of society; then, again, he loved his wife as before, and lived with her in a spirit of affection equal to any they had ever felt. Why, this was, to a man who suffered what he and his family had suffered, perfect luxury.

In truth, Art now wondered at the life he had led,—he could not understand it; why he should have suffered himself, for the sake of a vile and questionable enjoyment—if enjoyment that could be called, which was no enjoyment—at least for the sake of a demoralizing and degrading habit, to fall down under the feet as it were, under the evil tongues, and the sneers—of those who constituted *his* world—the inhabitants of Ballykeerin—was now, that he had got rid of the thraldom, perfectly a mystery to him. Be this as it may, since he had regenerated his own character, the world was just as ready to take him up as it had been to lay him down.

Nothing in life gives a man such an inclination for active industry as to find that he is prospering; he has then heart and spirits to work, and does work blithely and cheerfully; so was it with Art. He and his employer were admirably adapted for each other, both being extremely well-tempered, honest, and first-rate workmen. About the expiration of the first twelve months, Art had begun to excite a good deal of interest in the town of Ballykeerin, an interest which was beginning to affect Owen Gallagher himself in a beneficial way. He was now pointed out to strangers as the man, who, almost naked, used to stand drunk and begging upon the bridge of Ballykeerin, surrounded by his starving and equally naked children. In fact, he began to get a name, quite a reputation for the triumph which he had achieved over drunkenness; and on this account Owen Gallagher, when it was generally known in the country that Art worked with him, found his business so rapidly extending, that he was obliged, from time to time, to increase the number of hands in his establishment. Art felt this, and being now aware that his position in life was, in fact, more favorable for industrious exertion than ever, resolved to give up journeywork, and once more, if only for the novelty of the thing, to set up for himself. Owen Gallagher, on hearing this from his own lips, said he could not, nor would not blame him, but, he added—

"I'll tell you what we can do, Art—come

into partnership wid me, for I think as we're gettin' an so well together, it 'ud be a pity, almost a sin, to part; join me, and I'll give you one-third of the business,"—by which he meant the profits of it.

"Begad," replied Art, laughing, "it's as much for the novelty of the thing I'm doin' it as any thing else; I think it 'ud be like a dhrame to me, if I was to find myself and my family as we wor before." And so they parted.

It is unnecessary here to repeat what we have already detailed concerning the progress of his early prosperity; it is sufficient, we trust, to tell our readers that he rose into rapid independence, and that he owed all his success to the victory that he had obtained over himself. His name was now far and near, and so popular had he become, that no teetotaller would employ any other carpenter. This, at length, began to make him proud, and to feel that his having given up drink, instead of being simply a duty to himself and his family, was altogether an act of great voluntary virtue on his part.

"Few men," he said, "would do it, an' may be, afther all, if I hadn't the ould blood in my veins—if I wasn't one of the great Fermanagh Maguires, I would never a' done it."

He was now not only a vehement Teetotaller, but an unsparing enemy to all who drank even in moderation; so much so, indeed, that whenever a man came to get work done with him, the first question he asked him was—"Are you a Teetotaller?" If the man answered "No," his reply was, "Well, I'm sorry for that, bekase I couldn't wid a safe conscience do your work; but you can go to Owen Gallagher, and he will do it for you as well as any man livin'."

This, to be sure, was the abuse of the principle; but we all know that the best things may be abused. He was, in fact, outrageous in defence of Teetotalism; attended all its meetings; subscribed for Band-money; and was by far the most active member in the whole town of Ballykeerin. It was not simply that he forgot his former poverty; he forgot himself. At every procession he was to be seen, mounted on a spanking horse, ridiculously over-dressed—the man, we mean, not the horse—flaunting with ribands, and quite puffed up at the position to which he had raised himself.

This certainly was not the humble and thankful feeling with which he ought to have borne his prosperity. The truth, however, was, that Art, in all this parade, was not in the beginning acting upon those broad, open principles of honesty, which, in the transactions of business, had characterized his whole life. He was now influenced by his foibles—by his vanity—and by his ridiculous love of praise. Nor, perhaps, would these have been called into action, were it not through the intervention of his old friend and pot companion, Tod Finnigan. Tod, be it known to the reader, the moment he heard that Art had become a Teetotaller, immediately became one himself, and by this means their intimacy was once more renewed; that is to say, they spoke in friendly terms whenever they met—but no entreaty or persuasion could ever induce Tod to enter Art's house; and the reader need not be told why. At all events, Tod, soon after he joined it, put himself forward in the Teetotal Movement with such prominence, that Art, who did not wish to be outdone in anything, began to get jealous of him. Hence his ridiculous exhibitions of himself in every manner that could attract notice, or throw little Tod into the shade; and hence also the still more senseless determination not to work for any but a Teetotaller; for in this, too, Tod had set him the example. Tod, the knave, on becoming a Teetotaller, immediately resolved to turn it to account; but Art, provided he could show off, and cut a conspicuous figure in a procession, had no dishonest motive in what he did; and this was the difference between them. For instance, on going up the town of Ballykeerin, you might see over the door of a middle-sized house, "Tectotal Meal Shop. N. B.—None but Teetotallers need come here."

Now every one knew Tod too well not to understand this; for the truth is, that maugre his sign, he never refused his meal or other goods to any one that had money to pay for them.

One evening about this time, Art was seated in his own parlor—for he now *had* a parlor, and was in a state of prosperity far beyond anything he had ever experienced before—Margaret and the children were with him; and as he smoked his pipe, he could not help making an observation or two upon the wonderful change which so short a time had brought about.

"Well, Margaret," said he, "isn't this wonderful, dear? Look at the comfort we have now about us, and think of—; but troth I don't like to think of it at all."

"I never can," she replied, "without a troubled and a sinkin' heart; but, Art, don't you remember when I wanst wished you to become a Teetotaller, the answer you made me?"

"May be I do; what was it?"

"Why, you axed me—and you were makin' game of it at the time—whether Teetotallism would put a shirt or a coat to your back—a

house over your head—give you a bed to lie on, or blankets to keep you and the childre from shiverin', an' coughin', an' barkin' in the could of the night? Don't you remember sayin' this?"

"I think I do; ay. I remember something about it now. Didn't I say that whiskey was my coach an' my carriage, an' that it made me a lord?"

"You did; well, *now* what do you say? Hasn't Teetotallism bate you in your own argument? Hasn't it given you a shirt an' a coat to your back, a good bed to lie on, a house over your head? In short, now, Art, hasn't it given you all you said, an' more than ever you expected? eh, now?"

"I give in, Margaret—you have me there; but," he proceeded, "it's not every man could pull himself up as I did; eh?"

"Oh, for God's sake, Art, don't begin to put any trust in your own mere strength, nor don't be boasting of what you did, the way you do; sure, we ought always to be very humble and thankful to God for what he has done for us; is there anything comes to us only through him?"

"I'm takin' no pride to myself," said Art, "divil a taste; but this I know, talk as you will, there's always somethin' in the ould blood."

"Now, Art," she replied, smiling, "do you know I could answer you on that subject if I liked?"

"You could," said Art; "come, then, let us hear your answer—come now—ha, ha, ha!"

She became grave, but complacent, as she spoke. "Well, then, Art," said she, "where was the ould blood *when you fell so low?* If it was the ould blood that riz you up, remember it was the ould blood that put you down. You drank more whiskey," she added, "upon the head of the ould blood of Ireland, and the great Fermanagh Maguires, than you did on all other subjects put together. No, Art dear, let us not trust to ould blood or young blood, but let us trust to the grace o' God, an' ax it from our hearts out."

"Well, but arn't we in great comfort now?"

"We are," she replied, "thank the Giver of all good for it; may God continue it to us, and grant it to last!"

"Last! why wouldn't it last, woman alive? Well, begad, after all, 'tis not every other man, any way——"

"Whisht, now," said Margaret, interrupting him, "you're beginnin' to praise yourself."

"Well, I won't then; I'm going down the town to have a glass or two o' cordial wid young Tom Whiskey, in Barney Scaddhan's."

Art," she replied, somewhat solemnly, "the very name of Barney Scaddhan sickens me. I know we ought to forgive every one, as we hope to be forgiven ourselves; but still, Art, if I was in your shoes, the scrra foot ever I'd put inside his door. Think of the way he trated you; ah, Art acushla, where's the pride of the ould blood now?"

"Hut, woman, divil a one o' me ever could keep in bad feelin' to any one. Troth, Barney of late's as civil a crature as there's alive; sure what you spake of was all my own fault and not his; I'll be back in an hour or so."

"Well," said his wife, "there's one thing, Art, that every one knows."

"What is that, Margaret?"

"Why, that a man's never safe in bad company."

"But sure, what harm can they do me, when we drink nothing that can injure us?"

"Well, then," said she, "as that's the case, can't you as well stay with good company as bad?"

"I'll not be away more than an hour."

"Then, since you *will* go, Art, listen to me; you'll be apt to meet Toal Finnigan there; now, as you love me and your childre, an' as you wish to avoid evil and misfortune, don't do any one thing that he proposes to you; I've often tould you that he's your bitterest enemy."

"I know you did; but sure, wanst a woman takes a pick (pique) against a man she'll never forgive him. In about an hour mind."

He then went out.

The fact is, that some few of those who began to feel irksome under the Obligation—by which I mean the knaves and hypocrites, for it is not to be supposed that among such an incredible multitude as joined the movement there were none of this description—some few, I say, were in the habit of resorting to Barney Scaddhan's for the social purpose of taking a glass of the true Teetotal cordial together. This drinking of cordial was most earnestly promoted by the class of low and dishonest publicans whom we have already described, and no wonder that it was so; in the first place, it's sale is more profitable than that of whiskey itself, and, in the second place, these fellows know by experience that it is the worst enemy that teetolism has, very few having ever strongly addicted themselves to cordial, who do not ultimately break the pledge, and resume the use of intoxicating liquor. This fact was well known at the time, for Father Costelloe, who did every thing that man could do to extend and confirm the principle of temperance, had put his parishioners on their guard against the use of this deleterious trash. Consequently, very few of the Ballykeerin men, either in

town or parish, would taste it; when they stood in need of anything to quench their thirst, or nourish them, they confined themselves to water, milk, or coffee. Scarcely any one, therefore, with the exception of the knaves and hypocrites, tampered with themselves by drinking it.

The crew whom Art went to meet on the night in question consisted of about half a dozen, who, when they had been in the habit of drinking whiskey, were hardened and unprincipled men—profligates in every sense—fellows that, like Toal Finnigan, now adhered to teetotalism from sordid motives only, or, in other words, because they thought they could improve their business by it. It is true, they were suspected and avoided by the honest teetotallers, who wondered very much that Art Maguire, after the treatment he had formerly received at their hands, should be mean enough, they said, ever "to be hail fellow well met" with them again. But Art, alas! in spite of all his dignity of old blood, and his redomontade about the Fermanagh Maguires, was utterly deficient in that decent pride which makes a man respect himself, and prevents him from committing a mean action.

For a considerable time before his arrival, there were assembled in Barney Scaddhan's tap, Tom Whiskey, Jerry Shannon, Jack Mooney, Toal Finnigan, and the decoy duck, young Barney Scaddhan himself, who merely became a teetotaller that he might be able to lure his brethren in to spend their money in drinking cordial.

"I wondher Art's not here before now," observed Tom Whiskey; "blood alive, didn't he get on well afther joinin' the 'totallers?"

"Faix, it's a miracle," replied Jerry Shannon, "there's not a more 'sponsible man in Ballykeerin, he has quite a Protestant look; —ha, ha, ha!"

"Divil a sich a pest ever this house had as the same Art when he was a blackguard," said young Scaddhan; "there was no keepin' him out of it, but constantly spungin' upon the daecent people that wor dhrinkin' in it."

"Many a good pound and penny he left you for all that, Barney, my lad," said Mooney; "and purty tratement you gave him when his money was gone."

"Ay, an' we'd give you the same," returned Scaddhan, "if your's was gone, too; ha, ha, ha! it's not moneyless vagabones we want here."

"No," said Shannon, "you first *make* them moneyless vagabones, an' then you kick them out o' doors, as you did him."

"Exactly," said the hardened miscreant, "that's the way we live; when we get the skin off the cat, then we throw out the carcass."

"Why, dang it, man," said Whiskey, "would you expect honest Barney here, or his still honester ould rip of a father, bad as they are, to give us drink for nothing?"

"Now," said Finnigan, who had not yet spoken, "yez are talkin' about Art Maguire, and I'll tell yez what I could do; I could bend my finger that way, an' make him folly me over the parish."

"And how could you do that?" asked Whiskey.

"By soodherin' him—by ticklin' his empty pride—by dwellin' on the ould blood of Ireland, the great Fermanagh Maguires—or by tellin' him that he's betther than any one else, and could do what nobody else could."

"Could you make him drunk to-night?" asked Shannon.

"Ay," said Toal, "an' will, too, as ever you seen him in your lives; only whin I'm praisin' him do some of you oppose me, an' if I propose any thing to be done, do you all either support me in it, or go aginst me, acceordin' as you see he may take it."

"Well, then," said Mooney, "in ordher to put you in spirits, go off, Barney, an' slip a glass o' whiskey a piece into this cordial, jist to tighten it a bit—ha, ha, ha!"

"Ay," said Tom Whiskey, "till we dhrink success to teetotalism, ha, ha, ha!"

"Suppose you *do* him in the cordial," said Shannon.

"Never mind," replied Toal; "I'll first soften him a little on the cordial, and then make him tip the punch openly and before faces, like a man."

"Troth, it's a sin," observed Mooney, who began to dissrelish the project; "if it was only on account of his wife an' childre."

Toal twisted his misshapen mouth into still greater deformity at this observation—

"Well," said he, "no matter, it'll only be a good joke; Art is a daecent fellow, and afther this night we won't repate it. Maybe," he continued "I may find it necessary to vex him, an' if I do, remember you won't let him get at me, or my bread's baked."

This they all promised, and the words were scarcely concluded, when Art entered and joined them. As a great portion of their conversation did not bear upon the subject matter of this narrative, it is therefore unnecessary to record it. After about two hours, during which Art had unconsciously drunk at least three glasses of whiskey, disguised in cordial, the topic artfully introduced by Toal was the Temperance Movement.

"As for my part," said he, "I'm half ashamed that I ever joined it. As I was

never drunk, where was the use of it? Besides, it's an unmanly thing for any one to have it to say that he's not able to keep himself sober, barrin' he takes an oath, or the pledge."

"And why did you take it then?" said Art.

"Bekaise I was a fool," replied Toal; "devil a thing else."

"It's many a good man's case," observed Art in reply, "to take an oath against liquor, or a pledge aither, an' no disparagement to any man that does it."

"He's a betther man that can keep himself sober widout it," said Toal dryly.

"What do you mane by a betther man?" asked Art, somewhat significantly; "let us hear that first, Toal."

"Don't be talking' about betther men here," said Jerry Shannon; "I tell you, Toal, there's a man in this room, and when you get me a betther man in the town of Ballykeerin, I'll take a glass of punch wid you, or a pair o' them, in spite of all the pledges in Europe."

"And who is that, Jerry," said Toal.

"There he sits," replied Jerry, putting his extended palm upon Art's shoulder and clapping it.

"May the divil fly away wid you," replied Toal; "did you think me a *manus*, that I'd go to put Art Maguire wid any man that I know? Art Maguire indeed! Now, Jerry, my throoper, do you think I'm come to this time o' day, not to know that there's no man in Ballykeerin, or the parish it stands in—an' that's a bigger word—that could be called a betther man that Art Maguire?"

"Come, boys," said Art, "none of your nonsense. Sich as I am, be the same good or bad, I'll stand the next trate, an' devilish fine strong cordial it is."

"Why, then, I don't think myself it's so good," replied young Seaddhan; "troth it's waiker than we usually have it; an' the taste somehow isn't exactly to my plaisin'."

"Very well," said Art; "if you have any that 'ill plaise yourself betther, get it; but in the mane time bring us a round o' this, an' we'll be satisfied."

"Art Maguire," Toal proceeded, "you were ever and always a man out o' the common coorse."

"Now, Toal, you're beginnin'," said Art; "ha, ha, ha—well, any way, how is that!"

"Bekaise the divil a taste o' fear or terror ever was in your constitution. When Art, boys, was at school—sure he an' I wor schoolfellows—if he tuck a thing into his head, no matter what, jist out of a whim, he'd do it, if the divil was at the back door, or the whole world goin' to stop him."

"Throth, Toal I must say there's a great deal o' thruth in that. Divil a one livin' knows me betther than Toal Finigan, sure enough, boys."

"Arra, Art, do you remember the day you crossed the weir, below Tom Booth's," pursued Toal, "when the river was up, and the wather jist intherin' your mouth?"

"That was the day Peggy Booth fainted, when she thought I was gone; begad, an' I was near it."

"The very day."

"That may be all thrue enough," observed Tom Whiskey; "still I think I know Art this many a year, and I can't say I ever seen any of these great doing's. I jist seen him as aisy put from a thing, and as much afeard of the tongues of the nabors, or of the world, as another."

"He never cared a damn for either o' them, for all that," returned Toal; "that is, mind, if he tuck a thing into his head; ay, an' I'll go farther—divil a rap ever he cared for them, one way or other. No, the man has no fear of any kind in him."

"Why, Toal," said Mooney, "whether he cares for them or not, I think is aisily decided; and whether he's the great man you make him. Let us hear what he says himself upon it, and *then* we'll know."

"Very well, then," replied Toal; "what do you say yourself, Art? Am I right, or am I wrong?"

"You're right, Toal, sure enough; if it went to that, I don't care a curse about the world, or all Ballykeerin along wid it. I've a good business, and can set the world at defiance. If the people didn't want me, they wouldn't come to me."

"Come, Toal," said Jerry; "here—I'll hould you a pound note"—and he pulled out one as he spoke—"that I'll propose a thing he won't do."

"Aha—thank you for nothing, my customer—I won't take that bait," replied the other; "but listen—is it a thing that he *can* do?"

"It is," replied Jerry; "and what's more, every man in the room can do it, as well as Art, if he wishes."

"He can?"

"He can."

"Here," said Toal, clapping down his pound. "Jack Mooney, put these in your pocket till this matther's decided. Now, Jerry, let us hear it."

"I will;—he won't drink *two tumblers* of punch, runnin'; that is, one aither the other."

"No," observed Art, "I will not; do you want me to break the pledge?"

"Sure," said Jerry, "this is not breaking the pledge—it's only for a wager."

"No matther," said Art; "it's a thing I won't do."

"I'll tell you what, Jerry," said Toal, "I'll hould you another pound now, that *I* do a thing to-night that Art won't do: an' that, like your own wager, every one in the room *can* do."

"Done," said the other, taking out the pound note, and placing it in Mooney's hand—Toal following his example.

"Scaddhan," said Toal, "go an' bring *me* two tumblers of good strong punch. I'm a Totaller as well as Art, boys. Be off, Scaddhan."

"By Japers," said Tom Whiskey, as if to himself—looking at the same time as if he were perfectly amazed at the circumstance—"the little fellow has more spunk than Maguire, ould blood an' all! Oh, holy Moses; afther that, what will the world come to!"

Art heard the soliloquy of Whiskey, and looked about him with an air of peculiar meaning. His pride—his shallow, weak, contemptible pride, was up, while the honest pride that is never separated from firmness and integrity, was cast aside and forgotten. Scaddhan came in, and placing the two tumblers before Toal, that worthy immediately emptied first one of them, and then the other.

"The last two pounds are yours," said Jerry; "Mooney, give them to him."

Art, whose heart was still smarting under the artful soliloquy of Tom Whiskey, now started to his feet, and exclaimed—

"No, Jerry, the money's not his yet. Barney, bring us two tumblers. What one may do another may do; and as Jerry says, why it's only for a wager. At any rate, I for one o' my blood was never done out, and never will."

"By Japers," said Whiskey, "I knew he wouldn't let himself be bate. I knew when it came to the push he wouldn't."

"Well, Barney," said Toal, "don't make them strong for him, for they might get into his head; he hasn't a good head any way—let them be rather wake, Barney."

"No," said Art, "let them be as strong as his, and stronger, Barney; and lose no time about it."

"I had better color them," said Barney, "an' the people about the place 'll think it's cordial still."

"Color the devil," replied Art; "put no colorin' on them. Do you think I'm afeard of any one, or any colors?"

"You afeard of any one," exclaimed Tom Whiskey; "one o' the ould Maguires afeard! ha, ha, ha!—that 'ud be good!"

Art, when the tumblers came in, drank off first one, which he had no sooner emptied, than he shivered into pieces against the grate; he then emptied the other, which shared the same fate.

"Now," said he to Barney, "bring me a third one; I'll let yez see what a Maguire is."

The third, on making its appearance, was immediately drained, and shivered like the others—for the consciousness of acting wrong, in spite of his own resolution, almost drove him mad. Of what occurred subsequently in the public house, it is not necessary to give any account, especially as we must follow Art home—simply premising, before we do so, that the fact of "Art Maguire having broken the pledge," had been known that very night to almost all Ballykeerin—thanks to the industry of Toal Finnigan, and his other friends.

His unhappy wife, after their conversation that evening, experienced one of those strange, unaccountable presentiments or impressions which every one, more or less, has frequently felt. Until lately, he had not often gone out at night, because it was not until lately that the clique began to reassemble in Barney Scaddhan's. 'Tis true the feeling on her part was involuntary, but on that very account it was the more distressing; her principal apprehension of danger to him was occasioned by his intimacy with Toal Finnigan, who, in spite of all her warnings and admonitions, contrived, by the sweetness of his tongue, to hold his ground with him, and maintain his good opinion. Indeed, any one who could flatter, wheedle, and play upon his vanity successfully, was sure to do this; but nobody could do it with such adroitness as Toal Finnigan.

It is wonderful how impressions are caught by the young from those who are older and have more experience than themselves. Little Atty, who had heard the conversation already detailed, begged his mammy not to send him to bed that night until his father would come home, especially as Mat Mulrennan, an in-door apprentice, who had been permitted that evening to go to see his family, had not returned, and he wished, he said, to sit up and let him in. The mother was rather satisfied than otherwise, that the boy should sit up with her, especially as all the other children and the servants had gone to bed.

"Mammy," said the boy, "isn't it a great comfort for us to be as we are now, and to know that my father can never get drunk again?"

"It is indeed, Atty;" and yet she said so with a doubting, if not an apprehensive heart.

"He'll never beat you more, mammy, now?"

"No, darlin'; nor he never did, barrin' when he didn't know what he was doin'."

"That is when he was drunk, mammy?"

"Yes, Atty dear."

"Well, isn't it a great thing that he can never get drunk any more, mammy; and never beat you any more; and isn't it curious too, how he never bate *me?*"

"You, darlin'? oh, no, he would rather cut his arm off than rise it to you, Atty dear; and it's well that you are so good a boy as you are—for I'm afeard, Atty, that even if you deserved to be corrected, he wouldn't do it."

"But what 'ud we all do widout my father, mammy? If anything happened to him I think I'd die. I'd like to die if *he* was to go."

"Why, darlin'?"

"Bekase, you know, he'd go to heaven, and I'd like to be wid him; sure he'd miss *me*—his own Atty—wherever he'd be."

"And so you'd lave me and your sisters, Atty, and go to heaven with your father!"

The boy seemed perplexed; he looked affectionately at his mother, and said—

"No, mammy, I wouldn't wish to lave you, for then you'd have no son at all; no. I wouldn't lave you—I don't know what I'd do—I'd like to stay wid you, and I'd like to go wid him, I'd—"

"Well, darlin', you won't be put to that trial this many a long day, I hope."

Just then voices were heard at the door, which both recognized as those of Art and Mat Mulrennan the apprentice.

"Now, darlin'," said the mother, who observed that the child was pale and drowsy-looking, "you may go to bed, I see you are sleepy, Atty, not bein' accustomed to sit up so late; kiss me, an' good-night." He then kissed her, and sought the room where he slept.

Margaret, after the boy had gone, listened a moment, and became deadly pale, but she uttered no exclamation; on the contrary, she set her teeth, and compressed her lips closely together, put her hand on the upper part of her forehead, and rose to go to the door. She was not yet certain, but a dreadful terror was over her—Could it be possible that he was drunk?—she opened it, and the next moment her husband, in a state of wild intoxication, different from any in which she had ever seen him, come in. He was furious, but his fury appeared to have been directed against the apprentice, in consequence of having returned home so late.

On witnessing with her own eyes the condition in which he returned, all her presentiments flashed on her, and her heart sank down into a state of instant hopelessness and misery.

"Savior of the world!" she exclaimed, "I and my childre are lost; now, indeed, are we hopeless—oh, never till now, never till now!" She wept bitterly.

"What are you cryin' for now?" said he; "what are you cryin' for, I say?" he repeated, stamping his feet madly as he spoke; "stop at wanst, I'll have no cry—cryin' what—at—somever."

She instantly dried her eyes.

"Wha—what kep that blasted whelp, Mul—Mulrennan, out till now, I say?"

"I don't know indeed, Art."

"You—you don't! you kno—know nothin'; An' now I'll have a smash, by the—the holy man, I'll—I'll smash every thing in—in the house,"

He then took up a chair, which, by one blow against the floor, he crashed to pieces.

"Now," said he, "tha—that's number one; whe—where's that whelp, Mul—Mulrennan, till I pay—pay him for stayin' out so—so late. Send him here, send the skamin' sco—scoundrel here, I bid you."

Margaret, naturally dreading violence, went to get little Atty to pacify him, as well as to intercede for the apprentice; she immediately returned, and told him the latter was coming. Art, in the mean time, stood a little beyond the fireplace, with a small beach chair in his hand which he had made for Atty, when the boy was only a couple of years old, but which had been given to the other children in succession. He had been first about to break it also, but on looking at it, he paused and said—

"Not this—this is Atty's, and I won't break it."

At that moment Mulrennan entered the room, with Atty behind him, but he had scarcely done so, when Art with all his strength flung the hard beach chair at his head; the lad, naturally anxious to avoid it, started to one side out of its way, and Atty, while in the act of stretching out his arms to run to his father, received the blow which had been designed for the other. It struck him a little above the temple, and he fell, but was not cut. The mother, on witnessing the act, raised her arms and shricked, but on hearing the heavy, but dull and terrible sound of the blow against the poor boy's head, the shriek was suspended when half uttered, and she stood, her arms still stretched out, and bent a little upwards, as if she would have supplicated heaven to avert it;—her mouth was half open—her eyes apparently enlarged, and starting as if it were out of their sockets; there she stood—for a short time so full of horror as to be incapable properly of comprehending what had taken place. At length this momentary paralysis of thought passed

away, and with all the tender terrors of affection awakened in her heart, she rushed to the insensible boy. Oh, heavy and miserable night! What pen can portray, what language describe, or what imagination conceive, the anguish, the agony of that loving mother, when, on raising her sweet, and beautiful, and most affectionate boy from the ground whereon he lay, that fair head, with its flaxen locks like silk, fell utterly helpless now to this side, and now to that!

"Art Maguire," she said, "fly, fly,"—and she gave him one look; but, great God! what an object presented itself to her at that moment. A man stood before her absolutely hideous with horror; his face but a minute ago so healthy and high-colored, now ghastly as that of a corpse, his hands held up and clenched, his eyes frightful, his lips drawn back, and his teeth locked with strong and convulsive agony. He uttered not a word, but stood with his wild and gleaming eyes riveted, as if by the force of some awful spell, upon his insensible son, his only one, if he was then even that. All at once he fell down without sense or motion, as if a bullet had gone through his heart or his brain, and there lay as insensible as the boy he had loved so well.

All this passed so rapidly that the apprentice, who seemed also to have been paralyzed, had not presence of mind to do any thing but look from one person to another with terror and alarm.

"Go," said Margaret, at length, "wake up the girls, and then fly—oh, fly—for the doctor."

The two servant maids, however, had heard enough in her own wild shriek to bring them to this woful scene. They entered as she spoke, and, aided by the apprentice, succeeded with some difficulty in laying their master on his bed, which was in a back room off the parlor.

"In God's name, what is all this?" asked one of them, on looking at the insensible bodies of the father and son.

'Help me," Margaret replied, not heeding the question, "help me to lay the treasure of my heart—my breakin' heart—upon his own little bed within, he will not long use it—tendherly, Peggy, oh, Peggy dear, tendherly to the broken flower—broken—broken—broken, never to rise his fair head again; oh, he is dead," she said, in a calm low voice, "my heart tells me that he is dead—see how his limbs hang, how lifeless they hang. My treasure—our treasure—our sweet, lovin', and only little man—our only son sure—our only son is dead—and where, oh, where, is the mother's pride out of him now—where is my pride out of him now?"

They laid him gently and tenderly—for even the servants loved him as if he had been a relation—upon the white counterpane of his own little crib, where he had slept many a sweet and innocent sleep, and played many a lightsome and innocent play with his little sisters. His mother felt for his pulse, but she could feel no pulse, she kissed his passive lips, and then—oh, woful alternative of affliction!—she turned to his equally insensible father.

"Oh, ma'am," said one of the girls, who had gone over to look at Art; "oh, for God's sake, ma'am, come here—here is blood comin' out of the masther's mouth."

She was at the bedside in an instant, and there, to deepen her sufferings almost beyond the power of human fortitude, she saw the blood oozing slowly out of his mouth. Both the servants were now weeping and sobbing as if their hearts would break.

"Oh, mistress dear," one of them exclaimed, seizing her affectionately by both hands, and looking almost distractedly into her face, "oh, mistress dear, what did you ever do to desarve this?"

"I don't know, Peggy," she replied, "unless it was settin' my father's commands, and my mother's at defiance; I disobeyed them both, and they died without blessin' either me or mine. But oh," she said, clasping her hands, "how can one poor wake woman's heart stand all this—a double death—husband and son—son and husband—and I'm but one woman, one poor, feeble, weak woman—but sure," she added, dropping on her knees, "the Lord will support me. I am punished, and I hope forgiven, and he will now support me."

She then briefly, but distractedly, entreated the divine support, and rose once more with a heart, the fibres of which were pulled asunder, as it were, between husband and son, each of whose lips she kissed, having wiped the blood from those of her husband, with a singular blending together of tenderness, distraction and despair. She went from the one to the other, wringing her hands in dry agony, feeling for life in their hearts and pulses, and kissing their lips with an expression of hopelessness so pitiable and mournful, that the grief of the servants was occasioned more by her sufferings than by the double catastrophe that had occurred.

The doctor's house, as it happened, was not far from theirs, and in a very brief period he arrived.

"Heavens! Mrs. Maguire, what has happened?" said he, looking on the two apparently inanimate bodies with alarm.

"*His* father," she said, pointing to the boy, "being in a state of drink, threw a little

beech chair at the apprentice here, he stepped aside, as was natural, and the blow struck my treasure there," she said, holding her hand over the spot where he was struck, but not on it; "but, doctor, look at his father, the blood is trickling out of his mouth."

The doctor, after examining into the state of both, told her not to despair—

"Your husband," said he, "who is only in a fit, has broken a blood-vessel, I think some small blood-vessel is broken; but as for the boy, I can as yet pronounce no certain opinion upon him. It will be a satisfaction to you, however, to know that he is not dead, but only in a heavy stupor occasioned by the blow."

It was now that her tears began to flow, and copiously and bitterly they did flow; but as there was still hope, her grief, though bitter, was not that of despair. Ere many minutes, the doctor's opinion respecting one of them, at least, was verified. Art opened his eyes, looked wildly about him, and the doctor instantly signed to his wife to calm the violence of her sorrow, and she was calm.

"Margaret," said he, "where's Atty? bring him to me—bring *him* to me!"

"Your son was hurt," replied the doctor, "and has just gone to sleep."

"He is dead," said Art, "he is dead, he will never waken from that sleep—and it was I that killed him!"

"Don't disturb yourself," said the doctor, "as you value your own life and his; you yourself have broken a blood-vessel, and there is nothing for you now but quiet and ease."

"He is dead," said his father, "he is dead, and it was I that killed him; or, if he's not dead, I must hear it from his mother's lips."

"Art, darlin', he is not dead, but he is very much hurted," she replied; "Art, as you love him, and me, and us all, be guided by the doctor."

"He is not dead," said the doctor; "severely hurt he is, but not dead. Of that you may rest assured."

So far as regarded Art, the doctor was right; he had broken only a small blood-vessel, and the moment the consequences of his fit had passed away, he was able to get up, and walk about with very little diminution of his strength.

To prevent him from seeing his son, or to conceal the boy's state from him, was impossible. He no sooner rose than with trembling hands, a frightful terror of what was before him, he went to the little bed on which the being dearest to him on earth lay. He stood for a moment, and looked down upon the boy's beautiful, but motionless face; he first stooped, and putting his mouth to the child's ear said—

"Atty, Atty"—he then shook his head; "you see," he added, addressing those who stood about him, "that he doesn't hear *me*—no, he doesn't hear *me*—that ear was never deaf to *me* before, but it's deaf now;" he then seized his hand, and raised it, but it was insensible to his touch, and would have fallen on the bed had he let it go. "You see," he proceeded, "that his hand doesn't know mine any longer! Oh, no, why should it? this is the hand that laid our flower low, so why should he acknowledge it? yet surely he would forgive his father, if he knew it—oh, he would forgive that father, that ever and always loved him—loved him—loved him, oh, that's a wake word, a poor wake word. Well," he went on, "I will kiss his lips, his blessed lips—oh, many an' many a kiss, many a sweet and innocent kiss—did I get from them lips, Atty dear, with those little arms, that are now so helpless, clasped about my neck." He then kissed him again and again, but the blessed child's lips did not return the embrace that had never been refused before. "Now," said he, "you all see that—you all see that he won't kiss me again, and that is bekaise he can't do it; Atty, Atty," he said, "won't you speak to me? it's I, Atty, sure it's I, Atty dear, your lovin' father, that's callin' you to spake to him. Atty dear, won't you spake to me—do you hear my voice, asthore machree—do you hear your father's voice, that's callin' on you to forgive him?" He paused for a short time, but the child lay insensible and still.

At this moment there was no dry eye present; the very doctor wept. Margaret's grief was loud; she felt every source of love and tenderness for their only boy opened in her unhappy and breaking heart, and was inconsolable; but then compassion for her husband was strong as her grief. She ran to Art, she flung her arms about his neck, and exclaimed—

"Oh, Art dear, Art dear, be consoled: take consolation if you can, or you will break my heart. Forgive you *asthore!* you, you that would shed your blood for him! don't you know he would forgive you? Sure, I forgive you—his mother, his poor, distracted, heart-broken mother forgives you—in his name I forgive you." She then threw herself beside the body of their child, and shouted out—"Atty, our blessed treasure, I have forgiven your father for you—in your blessed name, and in the name of the merciful God that you are now with, I have forgiven your unhappy and heart-broken father—as you would do, if you could, our lost treasure, as you would do."

"Oh," said his father vehemently, dis-

tracted with his horrible affliction; "if there was but any one fault of his that I could remember now, any one failin' that our treasure had—if I could think of a single spot upon his little heart, it would relieve me; but, no, no, there's nothin' of that kind to remember against him. Oh, if he wasn't what he was—if he wasn't what he was—we might have some little consolation; but now we've none; we've none—none!"

As he spoke and wept, which he did with the bitterest anguish of despair, his grief assumed a character that was fearful from the inward effusion of blood, which caused him from time to time to throw it up in red mouthfuls, and when remonstrated with by the doctor upon the danger of allowing himself to be overcome by such excitement—

"I don't care," he shouted, "if it's my heart's blood, I would shed it at any time for *him;* I don't care about life now; what 'ud it be to me without my son? widout you, Atty dear, what is the world or all that's in it to me now! An' when I think of who it was that cut you down—cursed be the hand that gave you that unlucky blow, cursed may it be—cursed be them that tempted me to drink—cursed may the drink be that made me as I was, and cursed of God may I be that——'

"Art, Art," exclaimed Margaret, "any thing but that, remember there's a God above—don't blasphame;—we have enough to suffer widout havin' to answer for *that.*"

He paused at her words, and as soon as the paroxysm was over, he sunk by fits into a gloomy silence, or walked from room to room, wringing his hands and beating his head, in a state of furious distraction, very nearly bordering on insanity.

The next morning, we need scarcely assure our readers, that, as the newspapers have it, a great and painful sensation had been produced through the town of Ballykeerin by the circumstances which we have related:—

"Art Maguire had broken the pledge, gone home drunk, and killed his only son by the blow of an iron bar on the head; the crowner had been sent for, an' phaise God we'll have a full account of it all."

In part of this, however, common fame, as she usually is, was mistaken; the boy was not killed, neither did he then die. On the third day, about eight o'clock in the evening, he opened his eyes, and his mother, who was scarcely ever a moment from his bedside, having observed the fact, approached him with hopes almost as deep as those of heaven itself in her heart, and in a voice soft and affectionate as ever melted into a human ear, she whispered—

"Atty, treasure of my heart, how do you feel?"

The child made no reply, but as his eye had not met hers, and as she had whispered very low, it was likely, she thought, that he had not heard her.

"I will bring his father," said she, "for if he will know or spake to any one, he will spake to *him.*"

She found Art walking about, as he had done almost ever since the unhappy accident, and running to him with a gush of joyful tears, she threw her arms about his neck, and kissing him, said—

"Blessed be the Almighty, Art—" but she paused, "oh, great God, Art, what is this! merciful heaven, do I smell whiskey on you?"

"You do," he replied, "it's in vain, I can't live—I'd die widout it; it's in vain, Margaret, to spake—if I don't get it to deaden my grief I'll die: but, what wor you goin' to tell me?" he added eagerly.

She burst into tears.

"Oh, Art," said she, "how my heart has sunk in spite of the good news I have for you."

"In God's name," he asked, "what is it? is our darlin' bettther?"

"He is," she replied, "he has opened his eyes this minute, and I want you to spake to him."

They both entered stealthily, and to their inexpressible delight heard the child's voice; they paused,—breathlessly paused,—and heard him utter, in a low sweet voice, the following words—

"Daddy, won't you come to bed wid *me,* wid *your own Atty?*"

This he repeated twice or thrice before they approached him, but when they did, although his eye turned from one to another, it was vacant, and betrayed no signs whatsoever of recognition.

Their hearts sank again, but the mother, whose hope was strong and active as her affection, said—

"Blessed be the Almighty that he is able even to spake; but he's not well enough to know us yet."

This was unhappily too true, for although they spoke to him, and placed themselves before him by turns, yet it was all in vain; the child knew neither them nor any one else. Such, in fact, was now their calamity, as a few weeks proved. The father by that unhappy blow did not kill his body, but he killed his mind; he arose from his bed a mild, placid, harmless idiot, silent and inoffensive—the only words he was almost heard to utter, with rare exceptions, being those which had been in his mind when he was dealt the woful blow;—"Daddy, won't you

come to bed wid *me*, wid *your own Atty?* And these he pronounced as correctly as ever, uttering them with the same emphasis of affection which had marked them before his early reason had been so unhappily destroyed.

Now, even up to that period, and in spite of this great calamity, it was not too late for Art Maguire to retrieve himself, or still to maintain the position which he had regained. The misfortune which befell his child ought to have shocked him into an invincible detestation of all intoxicating liquors, as it would most men; instead of that, however, it drove him back to them. He had contracted a pernicious habit of diminishing the importance of *first errors*, because they appeared trivial in themselves; he had never permitted himself to reason against his propensities, unless through the indulgent medium of his own vanity, or an overweening presumption in the confidence of his moral strength, contrary to the impressive experience of his real weakness. His virtues were many, and his foibles few; yet few as they were, our readers perceive that, in consequence of his indulging them, they proved the bane of his life and happiness. They need not be surprised, then, to hear that from the want of any self-sustaining power in himself he fell into the use of liquor again; he said he could not live without it, but then he did not make the experiment; for he took every sophistry that appeared to make in his favor for granted. He lived, if it could be called life, for two years and a half after this melancholy accident, but without the spring or energy necessary to maintain his position, or conduct his business, which declined as rapidly as he did himself. He and his family were once more reduced to absolute beggary, until in the course of events they found a poorhouse to receive them. Art was seldom without a reason to justify his conduct, and it mattered not how feeble that reason might be, he always deemed it sufficiently strong to satisfy himself. For instance, he had often told his wife that if Atty had recovered, sound in body and mind, he had determined never again to taste liquor; "but," said he, "when I seen my darlin's mind gone, I couldn't stand it widout the drop of drink to keep my heart an' spirits up." He died of consumption in the workhouse of Ballykeerin, and there could not be a stronger proof of the fallacy with which he reasoned than the gratifying fact, that he had not been more than two months dead, when his son recovered his reason, to the inexpressible joy of his mother; so that had he followed up his own sense of what was right, he would have lived to see his most sanguine wishes, with regard to his son, accomplished, and perhaps have still been able to enjoy a comparatively long and happy life.

On the morning of the day on which he died, although not suffering much from pain, he seemed to feel an impression that his end was at hand. It is due to him to say here, that he had for months before his death been deeply and sincerely penitent, and that he was not only sensible of the vanity and errors which had occasioned his fall from integrity, and cut him off in the prime of life, but also felt his heart sustained by the divine consolations of religion. Father Costello was earnest and unremitting in his spiritual attentions to him, and certainly had the gratification of knowing that he felt death to be in his case not merely a release from all his cares and sorrows, but a passport into that life where the weary are at rest.

About twelve o'clock in the forenoon he asked to see his wife—his own Margaret—and his children, but, above all, his blessed Atty—for such was the epithet he had ever annexed to his name since the night of the melancholy accident. In a few minutes the sorrowful group appeared, his mother leading the unconscious boy by the hand, for he knew not where he was. Art lay, or rather reclined, on the bed, supported by two bolsters; his visage was pale, but the general expression of his face was calm, mild, and sorrowful; although his words were distinct, his voice was low and feeble, and every now and then impeded by a short catch—for to cough he was literally unable.

"Margaret," said he, "come to me, come to me now," and he feebly received her hand in his; "I feel that afther all the warfare of this poor life, afther all our love and our sorrow, I am goin' to part wid you and our childhre at last."

"Oh, Art, darlin', I can think of nothing now, *asthore*, but our love," she replied, bursting into a flood of tears, in which she was joined by the children—Atty, the unconscious Atty, only excepted.

"An' I can think of little else," said he, "than our sorrows and sufferins, an' all the woful evil that I brought upon you and them."

"Darlin'," she replied, "it's a consolation to yourself, as it is to us, that whatever your errors wor, you've repented for them; death is not frightful to you, glory be to God!"

"No," said he, looking upwards, and clasping his worn hands; "I am resigned to the will of my good and merciful God, for in him is my hope an' trust. Christ, by his precious blood, has taken away my sins, for you know I have been a great sinner;" he then closed his eyes for a few minutes, but

his lips were moving as if in prayer. "Yes, Margaret," he again proceeded, "I am goin' to love you all at last; I feel it—I can't say that I'll love you no more, for I think that even in heaven I couldn't forget you; but I'll never more have you a sore heart, as I often did—I'll never bring the bitther tear to your eye—the hue of care to your face, or the pang of grief an' misery to your heart again—thank God I will not; all my follies, all my weaknesses, and all my crimes—"

"Art," said his wife, wringing her hands, and sobbing as if her heart would break, "if you wish me to be firm, and to set our childre an example of courage, now that it's so much wanted, oh, don't spake as you do—my heart cannot stand it."

"Well, no," said he, "I won't; but when I think of what I *might* be this day, and of what I *am*—when I think of what *you* and *our childre* might be—an' when I see what you *are*—and all through my means—when I think of this, Margaret dear, an' that I'm torn away from you and them in the very prime of life—but," he added, turning hastily from that view of his situation, "God is good an' merciful, an' that is my hope."

"Let it be so, Art dear," replied Margaret; "as for us, God will take care of us, and in him we will put our trust, too; remimber that he is the God and father of the widow an the orphan."

He here appeared to be getting very weak, but in a minute or two he rallied a little, and said, while his eye, which was now becoming heavy, sought about until it became fixed upon his son—

"Margaret, bring *him* to me."

She took the boy by the hand, and led him over to the bedside.

"Put his hand in mine," said he, "put his blessed hand in mine."

She did so, and Art looked long and steadily upon the face of his child.

"Margaret," said he, "you know that durin' all my wild and sinful coorses, I always wore the lock of hair you gave me when we wor young next my heart—my poor weak heart."

Margaret buried her face in her hands, and for some time could not reply.

"I don't wish, darlin'," said he, "to cause you sorrow—you will have too much of that; but I ax it as a favor—the last from my lips—that you will now cut off a lock of *his* hair—his hair fair—an' put it along with your own upon my heart; it's all I'll have of you both in the grave where I'll sleep; and, Margaret, do it now—oh, do it soon."

Margaret, who always carried scissors hanging by her pocket, took them out, and cutting a long abundant lock of the boy's hair, she tenderly placed it where he wished, in a little three-cornered bit of black silk that was suspended from his neck, and lay upon his heart.

"Is it done?" said he.

"It is done," she replied as well as she could.

"This, you know, is to lie on my heart," said he, "when I'm in my grave; you won't forget that!"

"No—oh, no, no; but, merciful God, support me! for Art, my husband, my life, I don't know how I'll part with you."

"Well, may God bless you forever, my darlin' wife, and support you and my orphans! Bring them here."

They were then brought over, and in a very feeble voice he blessed them also.

"Now, forgive me all," said he, "FORGIVE ME ALL!"

But, indeed, we cannot paint the tenderness and indescribable affliction of his wife and children while uttering their forgiveness of all his offences against them, as he himself termed it. In the meantime he kept his son close by him, nor would he suffer him to go one moment from his reach.

"Atty," said he, in a low voice, which was rapidly sinking;—"put his cheek over to mine"—he added to his wife, "then raise my right arm, an' put it about his neck;—Atty," he proceeded, "won't you give me one last word before I depart?"

His wife observed that as he spoke a large tear trickled down his cheek. Now, the boy was never in the habit of speaking when he was spoken to, or of speaking at all, with the exception of the words we have already given. On this occasion, however, whether the matter was a coincidence or not, it is difficult to say, he said in a quiet, low voice, as if imitating his father's—

"Daddy, won't you come to bed for *me*, for *your own Atty?*"

The reply was very low, but still quite audible—

"Yes, darlin', I—I will—I will for *you*, Atty."

The child said no more, neither did his father, and when the sorrowing wife, struck by the stillness which for a minute or two succeeded the words, went to remove the boy, she found that his father's spirit had gone to that world where, we firmly trust, his errors, and follies, and sins have been forgiven. While taking the boy away, she looked upon her husband's face, and there still lay the large tear of love and repentance—she stooped down—she kissed it—and it was no longer there.

There is now little to be added, unless to inform those who may take an interest in the

fate of his wife and children, that his son soon afterwards was perfectly restored to the use of his reason, and that in the month of last September he was apprenticed in the city of Dublin to a respectable trade, where he is conducting himself with steadiness and propriety; and we trust, that, should he ever read this truthful account of his unhappy father, he will imitate his virtues, and learn to avoid the vanities and weaknesses by which he brought his family to destitution and misery, and himself to a premature grave.

With respect to his brother Frank, whom his irreclaimable dissipation drove out of the country, we are able to gratify our readers by saying that he got happily married in America, where he is now a wealthy man, in prosperous business and very highly respected.

Margaret, in consequence of her admirable character, was appointed to the situation of head nurse in the Ballykeerin Hospital, and it will not surprise our readers to hear that she gains and retains the respect and good-will of all who know her, and that the emoluments of her situation are sufficient, through her prudence and economy, to keep her children comfortable and happy.

Kind reader, is it necessary that we should recapitulate the moral we proposed to show in this true but melancholy narrative? We trust not. If it be not sufficiently obvious, we can only say it was our earnest intention that it should be so. At all events, whether you be a Teetotaller, or a man carried away by the pernicious love of intoxicating liquors, think upon the fate of Art Maguire, and do not imitate the errors of his life, as you find them laid before you in this simple narrative of "The Broken Pledge."

END OF VOLUME I.

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